

Student, Academic & Pastoral Support Handbook

QMUL Malta 2025/2026



“*Supporting
you today,
shaping
tomorrow’s
healers*”

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The Student, Academic & Pastoral Support Office (SAPS)

The Student, Academic and Pastoral Support Office is responsible for student support throughout the undergraduate programme. It plays a key role in student welfare, including the management of physical and mental health.

Students are welcomed, and encouraged, to make appointments with the team, who are available to listen and give advice.

For an appointment, please email student-support-malta@gmul.ac.uk or utilise our booking link: <https://bit.ly/SAPSMaltabooking> or use the QR code below:



We have a highly developed network for pastoral and academic support, with links back to the Barts and London School of Medicine in London. This network is a vital resource for Medical students, who take much of the responsibility for their own learning during their challenging course. At every stage, you will receive support from staff who are experienced in helping and advising students.

During 2024/2025



190+

Student support meetings



53

Referrals to external services

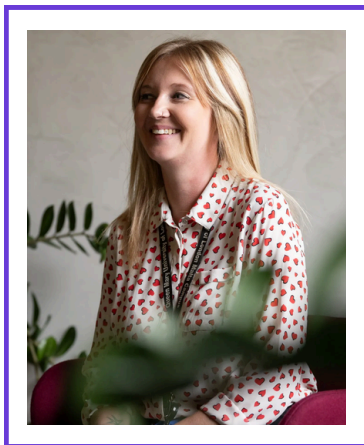
A NOTE ON CONFIDENTIALITY

The Student Academic and Pastoral Support office takes the confidentiality of students very seriously. When accessing SAPS services, student sensitive information will **only** be shared on a need-to-know basis and the SAPS office will always try to contact students first to get their permission to share information. **However**, it is important to note that in order to protect your safety and the safety of others, there may be cases where information may need to be shared more widely e.g. in cases where there is concern of risk of serious harm to self or others, court order, safeguarding or professionalism concerns.

Medical students are offered pastoral support throughout the course. We aim for this support to be a valued part of the course where students are able to build a good relationship with the team providing it. The SAPS office adheres to the GMC guidelines on Pastoral Support.

Staff members who provide pastoral support have been selected for the role based on the skills and personal qualities that the role requires and have undertaken the necessary training. It is important that the Head of the Student Academic and Pastoral Support Unit is not in a position to make decisions on academic progression and assessment. Therefore, we have made this separation of function to allow students to have a safe environment in which they can raise concerns without worrying about any impact on their academic progression.

MEET OUR TEAM



A big hello and welcome to QMUL, Malta. The team are available to support you with a diverse range of needs, ensuring your smooth transition into Gozo, and continue to guide you through your journey with us. Never hesitate to get in touch, no matter how small your query.

Aimee Dent

Head of Student Support

a.dent@qmul.ac.uk 



"As you begin this important chapter in your academic journey, I'm here to provide support, resources, and guidance to help you thrive, not just in your studies, but also in your personal development. Whether you are facing challenges related to your coursework, seeking mental health resources, or exploring extracurricular opportunities, I am here to help. My goal is to connect you with the right services and provide personalised support tailored to your individual needs. I encourage you to reach out to me anytime you have questions or need assistance."

Lorna Ciantar

Student Support Officer

l.ciantar@qmul.ac.uk 



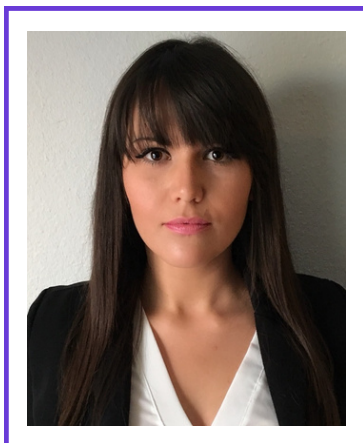
"Welcome to the first year of your medical journey! Starting medical school is a significant step, filled with opportunities to learn, grow, and build lasting connections. While the path may be challenging, know that you are not alone—our team is here to guide you every step of the way. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need advice, support, or simply someone to talk to. Together, we'll work to make your journey fulfilling and successful.

Wishing you a wonderful start and a rewarding journey ahead!"

Dawn Burgess

SAPS Coordinator

dawn.burgess@qmul.ac.uk



"On behalf of the Student Experience team, I extend a warm welcome to each of you as you embark on this exciting journey at Queen Mary University of London-Malta campus. Starting university is a significant milestone filled with opportunities for growth, learning, and forging new friendships. As your Student Experience Coordinator, my role is to ensure that your transition into university life is smooth and fulfilling. Whether you have questions about campus resources, student activities, or simply want to chat about your experiences, my door is always open. You can find me at the Student Office located on the first floor."

Milica Adzic

Student Experience Coordinator

m.adzic@qmul.ac.uk 

WHAT CAN WE SUPPORT YOU WITH?

- Mental health support
- Financial struggles
- Health concerns
- Family concerns
- Pregnancy
- Workload and motivation
- Interruption of studies
- Occupational health
- Study skills support
- Disability and dyslexia guidance
- Exam access arrangements
- Student support cards
- Referrals to specialised services, therapists, psychologists, counsellors, LGBTI+ support, careers advisor, etc.
- UKFP queries
- Volunteering opportunities & community services
- Training programmes & activities aimed at fostering mental well-being
- General guidance or a friendly chat

OUR SUPPORT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE, ALL-YEAR ROUND EXCEPT FOR BRIEF CLOSURES AT CHRISTMAS AND ON OTHER PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

OPENING HOURS

Term time: MONDAY TO FRIDAY 10AM - 4PM
URGENT WALK-INS FROM 9AM

Summer: MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8AM - 2PM
(July & August)

**MAKE AN
APPOINTMENT**



IF YOUR LIFE IS IN DANGER OR IF YOU HAVE A MEDICAL EMERGENCY (INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH) CALL 112

SENIOR TUTORS

Each year group has a Senior Tutor who is on hand to support any student who encounters academic difficulties with their studies. The academic progress of all students is reviewed throughout the year and any student who is identified as struggling can request a meeting with their tutor.

The tutor will, in conjunction with the student, explore specific areas of difficulty and put together a plan to help address these until the student is back on track. A Senior Tutor may identify issues of pastoral care affecting academic performance and make appropriate referrals to other support groups within the School i.e. SAPS.

In addition to the academic and personal support, which you will receive within the School, there are many other support and advisory services available.

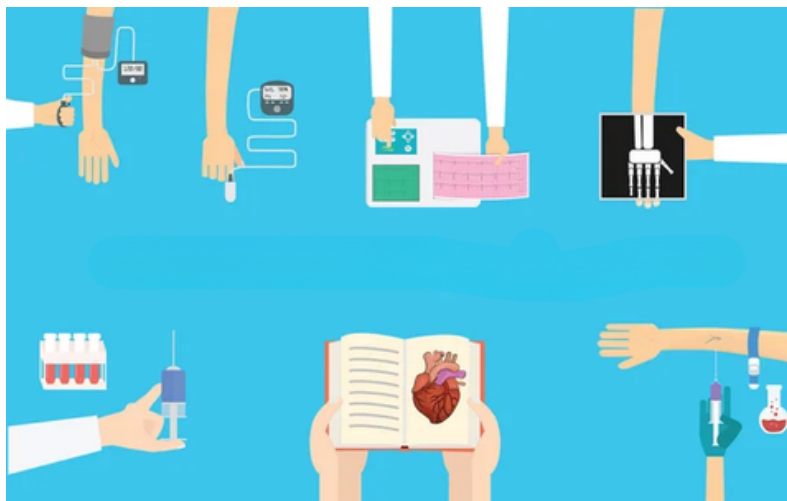


STUDY SKILLS SUPPORT

We can signpost and refer students to specialist study skills support if you feel you are struggling academically.

We have a network of external service providers who offer specialised study skills appointments. They can meet with students individually and help develop skills such as reading effectively, writing, exam technique, revision, note-taking, time-management, critical thinking, avoiding plagiarism, presentation skills and organising group work.

Please note: you can also set up a meeting with your senior tutor and/or head of year for study skills support.



ACADEMIC ADVICE SERVICE

The academic advice service is an independent, free and confidential service open to all Queen Mary students, run by the Student Union.

Through this service, you can obtain confidential advice and representation on a range of academic issues including:

- Applications for extenuating circumstances
- Requests for a review of an exam board decision
- Allegations of plagiarism or an examination offence
- Allegations of breach of the Code of Student Discipline
- Appeals against the outcome of a disciplinary hearing, either under the examination offences regulations or the Code of Student Discipline
- Appeals against de-registration from a module or course
- Complaints regarding a member of staff / course delivery
- Bullying or harassment by a member of staff or student
- Fitness to practice issues
- Advice on statements and accompany students to hearings either to represent the student or to provide moral support. We also act as a referral point on matters such as immigration, finance or mental health.

To book an appointment, please fill in the Academic Representation Form and email a.c.mitchell@qmul.ac.uk with your completed form (which you can find here - <https://www.qmsu.org/advice/academic/> or via the QR code)



DISABILITY AND DYSLEXIA SERVICE

The University offers support to students with disabilities and dyslexia. Support and guidance is also offered to students who have long-term or short-term medical conditions, or other conditions, which may have an impact on studies. Sometimes, a condition, which might not be considered a disability in daily life, can become a substantial difficulty when studying in higher education.

Specialist staff can assist you in finding strategies to help overcome the impact of a particular disability or learning difficulty on studies. Our Disability and Dyslexia service can be reached at dds@qmul.ac.uk (please discuss with SAPS first).

Scan for more information about DDS



STUDENT SUPPORT (YELLOW CARDS) & HEALTH PASSPORTS

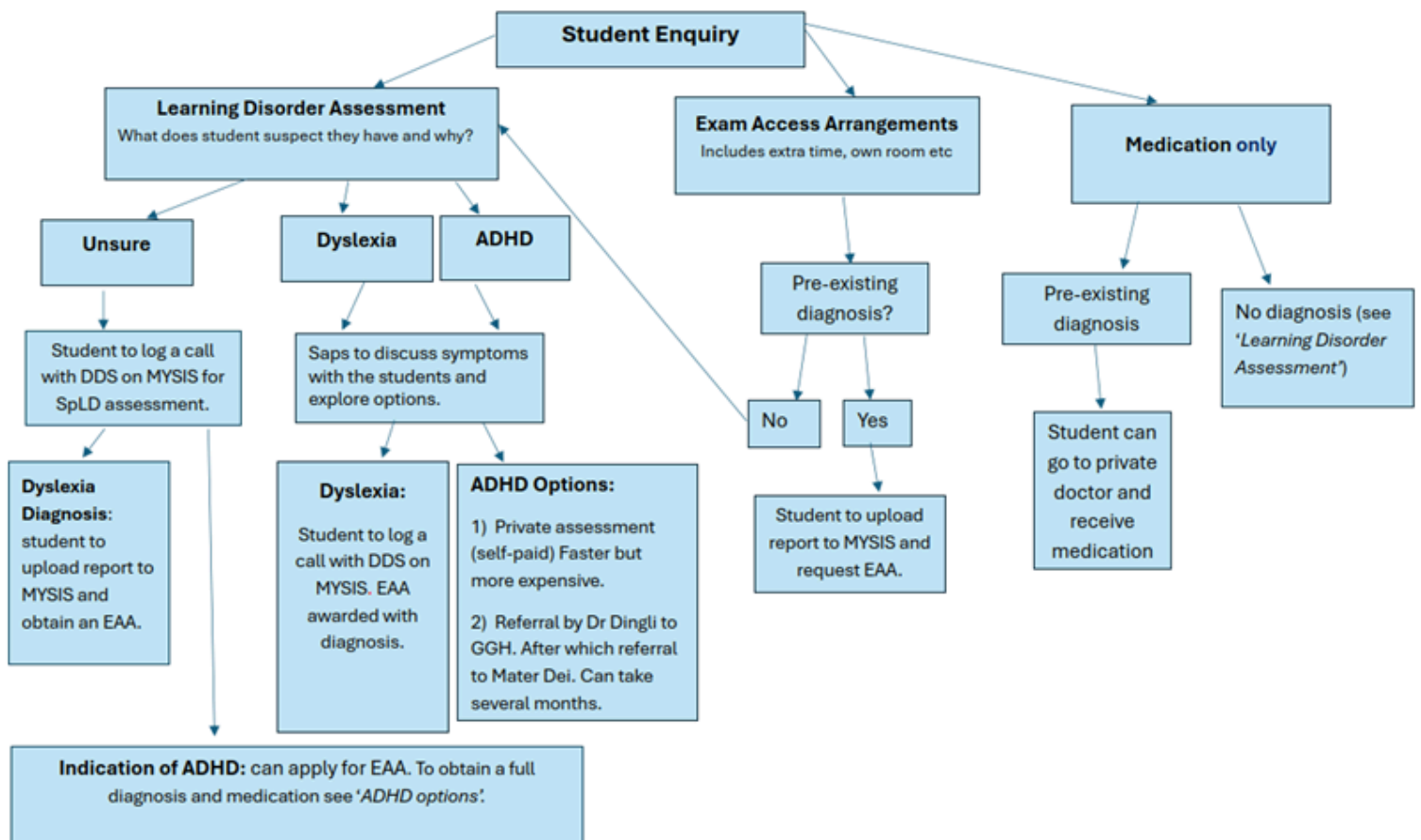
In the instance that a student is not able to perform all the tasks required of them during a Paper D (OSCE) Examination and/or in the time given, due to an unexpected or temporary injury or a chronic disability, they can request a yellow SAPS card. This card will state suitable adjustments factoring in the specific needs of the student.

On the other hand, a Health Passport can be a useful tool to transfer medical information into a central document, held within Student Support, to aid in supporting and communicating specific needs ahead of the student's arrival onto clinical placement.

Please make an appointment with the SAPS office if you require a **Student Support card** or a **Health Passport**.

SPLD ASSESSMENT AND EAA PATHWAY

Specific learning difference (SpLD) Assessment & EAA Pathway



For any queries, discuss with SAPS

Q CAPTURE

Queen Mary University of London has an in-house lecture capture system called 'Q-Review', which uses the Echo 360 system. Click the link for more information or scan QR code.

<https://elearning.qmul.ac.uk/learning-applications/q-review/>



QM PLUS



Queen Mary University of London's virtual learning environment is called 'QM Plus', which is our branding on the Moodle system. Staff utilise this resource by uploading documents such as lecture slides in advance of lectures and allowing students to post questions to staff. Click the link for more information or scan QR code.

<https://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk/>

Reading Lists Online – *available on request*

Our colleagues in Library Services manage a resource called Reading Lists Online that allows staff responsible for teaching modules to upload the reading lists for their subject, along with a commentary on the most relevant sections of text. This is particularly helpful for our visually impaired students who may require texts in an accessible format.

You can also find the SAPS area on the landing page of QM Plus, where you can find this handbook, quarterly newsletters, and other resources related to the SAPS service.

CAREERS ADVICE

Stefan Crouch is a dedicated FMD Careers Consultant within the QMUL, London Careers team, particularly for those students who are to be deregistered. Stefan can also discuss topics around future planning, part-time jobs, pensions and so on. Students can book a slot online by contacting him stefan.couch@qmul.ac.uk.

Malta Students can access the careers advice information desk and book an appointment (online or phone) at a time that suits them.

Telephone: 00 44 20 7882 8533

Email: careers@qmul.ac.uk



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

We provide an occupational health service ensuring all students undergo a thorough health assessment and are provided with any necessary vaccines, making sure they are safe and fit for placement in the later academic years.

Refer to our occupational health policy on QMPlus:



FINANCE

UK students studying in Malta are unable to apply for a student loan via the Student Loans Company. International students will need to check whether a student loan is available from their home country.

If you have exceptional or unforeseen costs or you are in financial hardship, you could be eligible for help. We have a student hardship fund (max. 750 euros per student) to help students in emergencies. The fund is available to help any eligible student. An independent panel assesses each application.

For further information, please contact the SAPS Unit. **Please note the fund cannot be used to pay your tuition fees.**

FAQ's

How can I access services for disability and dyslexia support and/or Exam access arrangements (EAA)?

Students are requested to get in touch with Student Support on student-support-malta@qmul.ac.uk to discuss the most appropriate pathway, depending on individual circumstances.

Typically, students will be referred to the Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) for an assessment/review. You can open a ticket via your MySIS portal under the 'disability and dyslexia' tab.

How can I access study skills support?

Students can access study skills support via the following pathways. Students are encouraged to meet with Student Support in the first instance so the team can signpost you accordingly.

- Arrange an appointment with your Head of Year and/or Senior Tutor for direct study skills support.
- If your Head of Year/Senior Tutor feels you would benefit from additional support, Student Support colleagues can refer you to an external study skills instructor.
- Students may be eligible for specialist study skills support – offered by the Disability & Dyslexia Service (DDS) – following an assessment for specific learning difference (SpLD). This will be offered to you following an assessment and diagnosis. If it does not, you can email the team on dds@qmul.ac.uk.

There is a short study skills course available here:

<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/outreach/students/academic-study-skills/#/>



How can I access counselling services?

Students can get in touch with Student Support to discuss the type of therapy required and a referral to one of our mental health specialists can be made for you. This is at no cost to yourself*.

*To support our students in their therapeutic journeys, the university will be providing coverage for up to 12 sessions of therapy per academic year, per student. This initial support is designed to help students engage in essential mental health services and address a range of psychological concerns effectively. We encourage students to utilise these sessions as needed, rather than feeling compelled to exhaust all available sessions.

Refer to the following diagram as an indication of the referral process and timeline expected.

REFERRALS THROUGH SAPS

Request Support

Reach out to SAPS to express concerns and request services.

Discuss referral

Obtain a referral from SAPS. Consent is given by student.

SAPS submits referral

Student agrees to referral. Referral is submitted by SAPS within 3 working days.

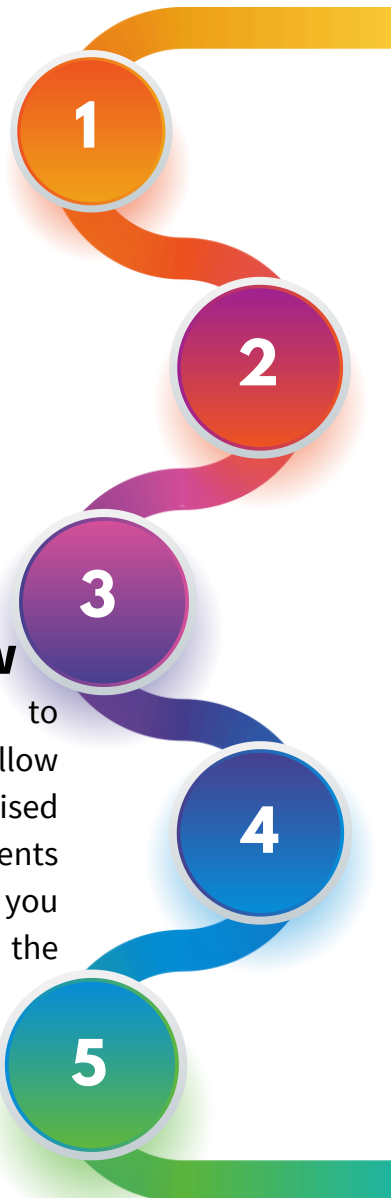
Clinician/Specialist review

Clinician/specialist/SAPS will reach out to student with an appointment date*. Kindly allow maximum of 2 weeks. **NOTE:** Specialised medical services such as psychiatry assessments (at hospitals) can take up to 2/3 months*. If you opt to book a private appointment, note the location, cost and waiting time.

***Appointment waiting time may vary.**

Services begin

Student will begin receiving services directly from clinician or specialist. SAPS will still be available for support if required.



WELLBEING

Mood on Demand with Immersive Worldsapes

Medical students often experience high levels of stress, particularly during exam and results season. Recognizing this challenge, the Learning Innovation Team from the Institute of Health Sciences Education (IHSE) partnered with the Student Support Office to introduce Virtual Reality (VR) Mindfulness, providing guided meditation sessions through VR. The project uses TRIPP, a platform designed to improve focus, calmness, and sleep quality through immersive mindfulness experiences. These immersive sessions provide a unique and innovative way to improve mental well-being.

Learn more:



Book a session:



WELLBEING JOURNAL

The wellbeing journal is a practical and interactive guide to a range of topics that may come up for you while studying.

In this electronic copy, you can navigate from the contents page by clicking on the section or page headings. Any hyperlinks or QR codes within the journal are also clickable.

If you would prefer a paper copy, you can pick one up from the Student Support Service reception on Level 2 of the Malta Campus.



Explore our recorded webinars to learn more about topics that may affect you while studying, including strategies for support.



Your Mind Matters (recorded webinars)



HELP IN A CRISIS

IF YOUR LIFE IS IN DANGER OR IF YOU HAVE A MEDICAL EMERGENCY (INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH) CALL 112

For help and support at times of personal crisis

Once you have had immediate support with your crisis using some of the options below, please arrange an appointment to see the Head of Student Academic and Pastoral Support – Malta, so that any follow up care and support can be put in place to help you manage your studies alongside any mental health issues.

Please contact the Student Support Office for an appointment via student-support-malta@qmul.ac.uk or a.dent@qmul.ac.uk

Accident and Emergency Department

Gozo General Hospital will be able to assist you in a Mental Health crisis. If you do not need an ambulance but you might be at risk of harming yourself or others, you can simply travel to and walk in to GGH, A&E department for help. Professionals will be able to skillfully manage your situation and refer onwards to local psychiatrists, counsellors and group support if necessary. <http://gozo-hosp.com/>



Victoria Health Care Centre/Walk in Clinic

If you have noticed changes in the way you are thinking or feeling over the past few weeks or months that concern you and/or cause you distress, you should consider going to see a doctor at the Victoria Health Care Centre.

The Health Centre is open daily from 7am to 8 pm for walk-ins. Doctor's will also be able to refer students to local psychiatrists, counsellors and group support if necessary.



Address: Victoria Health Centre, Triq Enrico Mizzi, Victoria-Gozo, Gozo VCT 2041, 22156820



External Support

Students can also access external support directly. Below is a list of external services:

Emergency Services

- 112 – Police and Ambulance Emergency Service
- 2545 0000 – Mater Dei Hospital Emergency Department (ED)
- 2344 6000 – Gozo General Hospital

Free 24/7 Mental Health Services

- 1579 – National Mental Health Helpline
- 1770 – Richmond Foundation Mental Health Helpline
- 179 – Supportline 179 is the national helpline offering support, information about local social welfare services and other agencies.
- 9933 9966 – Crisis resolution Malta.
- Olli.chat – Mental health chat service offered by Richmond Foundation.
- Kellimni.com – Online support service run by trained staff and volunteers reachable through chat, email and smart messaging.
- 2141 5183 – Mental Health Services Malta refer to a national mental health services offering both inpatient and community services.

Other Free Support Services

- 2122 4580 – Richmond Foundation offer all-round support to anyone experiencing mental health problems and the people who live and work with them.
- 2122 8333 – Victim Support Malta provide assistance to victims of crime, such as theft, burglary, domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, discrimination and cybercrime.
- 2388 5110 – Sedqa Malta is the national agency carrying out health promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services to persons with drug, alcohol and compulsive gambling problems and their families.
- 2219 9000 – Caritas Malta offer a number of outreach community services in relation to alcohol and drug abuse. They also provide support to others in need including the homeless, victims of usury, the elderly, people with HIV and Aids and people with epilepsy.
- 2295 9000 – Aġenzija Appoġġ is the national agency providing psycho-social welfare support to individuals and families. Their services include the provision of support to those experiencing domestic violence, child abuse, homelessness, loneliness and human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.
- 2256 8000 – Aġenzija Support is the national agency offering services for persons with disability and their families.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

EU students can access free medical care or can access private healthcare for approximately €15 per appointment with a local GP. There are some conditions that can be diagnosed and treated by a family doctor, however they also provide referrals to other medical professionals.

Find a family doctor near you



Remember your European Health Insurance Card and Passport. Non-EU students are required to have private health Insurance. As you are not paying social security in Malta you are required to take out private health care insurance.

You are legally obliged to apply for residency of Malta if you stay here for more than 90 days. Then you can no longer use your European Health Card.

Course info & Student Support links:



Course Information
QMPlus



Meet the SAPS Team
Study Medicine Malta



Student Support
QMUL

We value your feedback.
Scan the code and
share your thoughts



STUDENT,
ACADEMIC &
PASTORAL
SUPPORT