MCAST
MALTA COLLEGE of ARTS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The following are the aims and objectives of the foundation courses induction programme:

1. Familiarise students with the campus and its support services as well as with the local area.
2. Provide the foundations for social interactions between students and the development of communities of practice.
3. Introduce new students to Students' Organisations within the college, to encourage participation and make life on campus more active and attractive.
4. Promote the development of good communication between staff and students.
5. Highlight students' academic obligations and the obligations of the staff to the students.
6. Support the development of those independent study habits suitable for further education.

Induction is taken as a set of processes that introduces students to:

1. MCAST as a further education institution and a vocational community.
2. Their campus as a distinctive social organisation and the providers of central support such as counselling and careers guidance.
3. Their institute as an organisational unit within MCAST as one college.
4. Their course of study as the vocational /academic framework in which they will learn.
5. The lecturing staff that will deliver the course and assess their performance.
6. Member/s of staff whose responsibility it is to advise them on both academic and pastoral matters.
7. Their peer group and other students' organisations.

In addition, induction processes should be designed as a bridge between the educational practices and lifestyles formerly experienced and those considered as desirable in the context of further/higher education.

INDUCTION SCHEDULE

The Induction programme shall be spread over a number of sessions as follows:

Session 1 : Induction Week - Common session	
Venue	Main Campus
Presentation by / Ownership	Principal and CEO
Suggested attendees	• Directors / Deputy Directors • Parents of Foundation students (especially those who are still under 18). This will serve to inform parents of current practices, rules, regulations and procedures at MCAST in an attempt to enhance the parents' interest in the education processes of their sons/daughters.
Topics to be covered	• Welcome speech • MCAST Mission Statement • Rules and regulations • Counselling services • Career guidance • Learning support • Extracurricular activities • Progression opportunities

Session 2 : Induction Week – Institute Session / Part 1	
Venue	Institute
Presentation by / Ownership	Director Lecturers Ex-Foundation student/s
Topics to be covered	• Welcome speech by Director / Deputy Director • Introduction of all Lecturers • Sharing of experiences by previous Foundation student/s

Session 2 : Induction Week – Institute Session / Part 2	
Venue	Institute
Presentation by / Ownership	Lecturers
Topics to be covered	**1) Individual group sessions explaining Institute Induction Booklet** Purpose of Handbook Official Policies, Procedures and Regulations Facilities and Services for Students: Library and learning Resource Centre and rules, The Information Centre, Counselling, Career Guidance, Learning Support Unit (LSU), Inclusive Education Unit, Chaplaincy, Sports Department Communication: Student Emails, Institute Notice Boards, Tele/Mobile Phones and SMS, Mail Institute's Regulations and Promotion of Positive Behaviour: Dress Code, Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices, Vehicle Permits, Restricted Areas, Health and Safety (Workshop/ Lab/ Class Regulations), Workshops /Fieldwork /Labs, Use of Equipment, Food and Drinks, Smoking Regulations Promotion of Positive Behaviour Disciplinary Procedures Formal Assessment Appeals Maintenance Grants: Useful information on Maintenance Grants Attendance Procedure: Strike-Off Procedure, Justification of Absence and Extenuating Circumstances, Resigning From a Course Students Suggestions and Comments MCAST Academic Year Calendar MCAST Administration and Support Service Contact Details Institute's Administration and Academic Staff Contact Details MCASTLINK Lost and Found **2) Informal session with lecturing staff** **3) Tour of Campus**

Session 3 : Library	
Venue	Library
Presentation by / Ownership	Institute librarian assisted by lecturers
Topics to be covered	Information Services (Library, Resource Centre, Computer Network) Plagiarism, How to Avoid Plagiarism.

Session 4 : Individual meetings with Institutes regarding students with particular needs (end October)	
Venue	Institute
Presentation by / Ownership	IEU Representative and Foundation Programme Moderator
Topics to be covered	• Briefing of Institute Lecturers on students with particular needs and necessary arrangements for support. • Feedback from Institute Lecturers regarding students who are showing difficulties but are not statemented • Information sessions with second-intake students

Session 5 : Information meetings regarding Support Services (November)	
Venue	Institute
Presentation by / Ownership	IEU Representative and Foundation Programme Moderator
Topics to be covered	Roles of: Career Advisor Counsellors Pastoral care lecturer Foundation Programme Moderator (as required)

Rationale for session 1: Welcome speech by Principal & CEO

The early establishment of a communication link between the Learners, their parents and the Principal and CEO will facilitate the process of induction. Good, open relationships with Senior Management promotes student commitment to the course and supports student retention.

Rationale for Session 2: Induction week

Much information may be contained in the prospectus, course and/or handbooks and web sites. Nevertheless, key elements will need to be highlighted for students and an early opportunity should be taken to ensure that students understand the contents of such materials. Induction activities should highlight students' academic obligations and the obligations of the staff to the students.

Being at a tertiary education institution is a social experience for students. Induction events should provide the foundations for social interactions between students to enhance the development of communities of practice. Class coherence and peer support are important characteristics of those who are successful. Socially isolated students and those who feel that they do not belong are the most likely to leave.

The early establishment of a peer support group (a community of practice) should be a priority for all students. Particular attention should be paid to students who are entering the institution for the first time in the second or later years of a course to join an existing cohort and to those with special needs.

Induction activities should promote the development of good communication between staff and students. Good, friendly relationships with academic staff promote student commitment to the course and aid student retention. Students who feel that they are on the same team as the staff are more likely to achieve their potential than those who feel that they are on opposing sides.

The monitoring of students' social and academic progress early in the course is a significant component of student care and contributes to the design of effective student support. Therefore course teams should consider means of meeting new students informally during the early stages of the course.

During work-based learning students will adopt behaviours necessary to the workplace but which are not necessarily supportive of academic study. They need to be prepared to adapt rapidly to academic

study on their return. In addition, new teaching methods may be introduced during a course or between one course and another so students need constant monitoring and support.

It is essential that information gathered about a student with a disability or a specific learning difficulty should be forwarded, after full consultation with the student and with the student's consent, to work-based learning providers, to other course directors, etc. to ensure that a smooth transition for these students takes place.

The following is a list of recommended activities:

1.1)   Common Activities

Induction activities should familiarise students with the campus and its support services as well as with the local area.

1) Welcome speech by Director / Deputy Director
2) Introduction of all Lecturers
3) Sharing of experiences by previous Foundation student/s
4) Individual group sessions explaining Institute Induction Booklet
5) Informal session with lecturing staff
6) Tour of Campus

1.2)   Institute Activities

The following is a list of recommended activities:

1) Welcome speech by Director / Deputy Director
   Welcome introduction by the Director and Deputy Directors of Institute. Introduce lecturers and administration staff – clerks, secretaries.

2) Introduction of all Lecturers
   Individual lecturers introduce themselves and the course in general.

3) Sharing of experiences by previous Foundation student/s
   Presentation by previous Foundation Students. Students who were in foundation courses and have progressed to higher levels may share their experience with the students.

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4) Individual group sessions explaining Institute Induction Booklet.

In smaller groups (where necessary) the students go to classrooms with a lecturer. They are given the students' handbook and some important areas are briefly discussed. The students are given general information regarding the running of the institute. They should be made aware of the need to attend all teaching sessions and to submit assignments on time but staff should also be made aware of their obligations to support students' learning. Consideration should be given to providing all such materials in a format (hard copy and online) accessible by students with disabilities or specific learning difficulties.

Students may fill in the Student Profile Form (developed by IEEE staff) and then they may ask any questions that they might have.

5) Informal session with lecturing staff

   While refreshments are served students and staff are given the opportunity to get to know each other in a less formal environment and on an individual basis.

6) Tour of Campus

   After refreshments the students go on an organised tour of the campus, classrooms, library, laboratories, workshops, classrooms with lecturer/librarian/technician.

Rationale for Session 3: Induction Follow-up (After 3 weeks)

Many new students need to be weaned from teacher-dependent study skills that they may bring from their previous educational experiences (e.g. dependence on notes, treating information as fact rather than as evidence). Peer support, information re-organisation and searching for evidence need to be promoted. Students would need more information about how to gain access to the institution's information services such as the library, resource centres and the computer network.

Course teams should consider:

• How students are initiated into ways of studying appropriate to tertiary education.

• How the expertise of library, resource centre, information technology user services and staff can best be utilised to support the development of skills and attitudes to work.

1) Information Services (Library, Resource Centre, Computer Netwrok)

A practical session in the library carried out with individual classes would help. The librarians have a lot of expertise in this area and can offer good guidance to students. Lecturers who would usually have the students at that particular time assist the librarian.

Rationale for Session 4: Individual meetings with Institutes regarding students with particular needs (end October).

The Institute should have in place provision of a pastoral support system for students and the means by which staff can facilitate students' access to student support services. Students should have a person (lecturer/ pastoral care lecturer etc.) assigned to them with whom they can organize a tutorial/ meeting and discuss their issues which may later be referred to other more competent staff.

Special attention should be given to second-intake students who might find it harder to fit in already established groups of students. If they do not settle in quickly they might be discouraged and drop out.

Map sessions with students, parents, support staff and management should be organized to agree on ways of procedure that have to be followed. Where necessary peer preparation should take place to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities and enhance the development of communities of practice.

The assignments covering learning outcomes of individual study units and the course expectations should be carefully scrutinised to ensure that they are achievable by students with a disability or a specific learning difficulty. (If necessary, lecturers may contact Students' Services, LSU or the Foundation Programme Moderator for advice and assistance).

Course teams should consider:

• Methods of promoting collaboration, such as small group tutorials, or collaborative project work. (This could be very helpful if taken through maybe we should consider the idea that short tutorials become part of the time-table).

• Variety in the opportunities to meet teaching staff to reduce dependency on a single point of contact.

• Means of monitoring student development, the diagnosis of problems and the implementation of specific remedies. (LSU is to be informed as soon as possible when problems are identified).

• Lecturers should be informed about the required assistance for the particular needs of students with disabilities or specific learning difficulties (already registered at IEU) and the provision of support staff should be in place. In case of students showing evidence of significant difficulties but who are not registered at IEU, lecturers should inform the Institute administration and contact the LSU to make the necessary arrangements for support.

• Also, students joining existing cohorts would need to be filled in with the information they had missed. This information may be given to them in a session organised by the Pastoral Care lecturers or with the Foundation Programme Moderator.

Rationale for Session 5: Information meetings regarding Support Services (November)

At this stage students would be facing their first assignments and they might start encountering difficulties so they would need more information about how to make contact with student counselling and guidance service and about the services they provide. This information may be provided through a meeting with staff from the Students' Support Services (career advisor/councillor/pastoral care lecturer/Foundation Programme Moderator).