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# magastlink

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE MALTA COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



# FOUNDATION DAY

Friday 24 October



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# mcastlink

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE MALTA COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**THIS IS YOUR  
MAGAZINE!**

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and pictures to:  
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**YOUR  
IDEAS ARE  
WELCOME!**

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**Welcome to the start of another academic year!**

**A major milestone for the College this year is the provision of degree courses for students that successfully complete the Higher National Diploma in the areas of Art and Design, ICT, Business and Commerce and Electrical and Electronics Engineering. Students are now being given the opportunity to obtain a vocational degree in Malta that will provide them with better knowledge, skills and competencies that are required by industry. An interview with Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal/CEO, can be found inside the magazine.**

This issue features the launch of the Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence by MCAST and the MFOI. This Diploma, a major step in the development of professional and vocational education and training of employees, is targeted at those employees in industry that have acquired skills and competences through informal and non-formal routes and are interested in polishing their skills and advance in their career. Once completed successfully, the Diploma will enable students to meet the entry requirements for a variety of Higher National Diploma courses.

This edition includes an interesting article by the Librarian, Mr Laurence Zerafa, on his visit to Switzerland and the Netherlands. Mr Zerafa visited several academic libraries in order to get ideas for the building of the new Library and Learning Resource Centre on the new MCAST Campus. He identified those main library design features that may be incorporated into the new building.

An important event for the Maritime Institute was the launch of the Bridge and Communications Simulator. This simulator provides hands-on training opportunities for students registered for the Certificate of Competence. The College is grateful to Grimaldi Group (Naples) and Malta Motorways of the Sea for sponsoring the simulator.

This issue sees the closure of two important international exchange programmes that the College has been working on for the past years, namely Roofs of Europe co-ordinated by the Institute of Building and Construction Engineering and BALSTA co-ordinated by the Institute of Mechanical Engineering. Pictures and details on the projects can be found inside.

On the fourth Friday of October the College celebrates Foundation Day. Many activities are being planned for this year's celebrations including live bands, a football and tug-of-war tournament, a mobile rock climbing wall, and a car boot sale amongst others. The list of activities and the location of each event are indicated inside. I wish you all a great MCAST Foundation Day!

**Once again I would like to thank all the active contributors and look forward to continued correspondence with you all!**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline".

Caroline Balzan  
Communications and PR Manager

All new and progressing students and members of staff are encouraged to submit any interesting articles and pictures to the Communications Office on this e-mail address: [caroline.balzan@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:caroline.balzan@mcast.edu.mt)



MALTA FEDERATION OF INDUSTRY



MCAST AND THE MFOI LAUNCH NEW COURSE

**DIPLOMA IN  
MANUFACTURING  
EXCELLENCE**



From left: Ms Helga Ellul, Chairperson, Education Committee MFOI, Mr Martin Galea, President MFOI, Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST BOG and Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal/CEO

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and the Malta Federation of Industry (MFOI) have designed a tailor-made Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence catering for the current and foreseeable trends in the local manufacturing industry. This initiative is in line with the College’s Mission Statement and Strategic Plan 2007-2009 as it serves to meet the training demands needs of industry and the economy. This Diploma is an outcome of the partnership agreement that the College signed with the MFOI last November. Amongst the other objectives of this agreement, the two bodies agreed to develop initiatives relating to the provision of industry-demanded programmes and courses.

This eleven unit Diploma, aiming at validating informal and non-formal learning and based on learning outcomes, is a hybrid of class work and hands-on mentored training, targeting employees in industry. It covers topics such as Manufacturing Strategy, Operations Management, Manufacturing Management, Materials in Manufacturing, Quality Management, Energy and Water Management, Lean Manufacturing, Financial Management, Product Development and Innovation, Supply Chain Management and Project Management.

The Manufacturing Diploma is directed to those employees in industry who have not followed a formal route

of education and are interested in developing their skills and advancing in their career. It has been designed to match Level Four, according to the Malta Qualifications Council, and has been accredited by City & Guilds.

The course has also been approved by Malta Enterprise, whereby participants are eligible for tax credits.

**“This Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence characterises what MCAST stands for. Right from inception, the College was intended to place the students at the heart of everything it did and establish itself at the hub of industry, business and commerce. We wished its curriculum to be responsive to industry’s particular needs and to the ever-expanding highly competitive knowledge-based economy within the context of globalization. Finally we wanted the College to attract returnees from the workforce and adults who wished to skill-up, re-skill or**



**upgrade their competences within a lifelong learning context. It gives us pride that the alliance and close collaboration with the MFOI has enabled us to put all this together and launch the Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence."**

Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST  
Principal/CEO

As stated in the College's Strategic Plan 2007-2009, 'At MCAST we actively engage with professional bodies so as to follow developments in skills, competences and knowledge required for the proper carrying out of professional activities and to ensure that the curricula and the related teaching and learning taking place at MCAST are relevant, valid and internationally recognised.'

The Diploma is spread over two years and will be offered on a part-time basis.



# SPEECH BY MR PAUL A ATTARD, PRESIDENT MCAST BOARD OF GOVERNORS



The promotion of the Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence is another milestone in the history of both the MFOI and MCAST. MCAST is still very young but has already showed its potential. MFOI is much older and it shall be sharing its experience with MCAST. For the benefit of both. This event is a major step in the development of professional and vocational education and training of employees through a close collaboration between the MFOI and MCAST. This is the result of various fruitful approaches and collaboration between the two institutions in the last few years that eventually culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2007.

The holding of a course leading to a Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence aimed at employees in industry who have no formal qualifications but who would like to develop and accredit their knowledge, skills and competences, is a most worthy initiative particularly since the Diploma will actually be accredited by City and Guilds, a leading awarding body in the United Kingdom. City and Guilds has built a very close relation with vocational education and training in Malta during the last several decades – as early as the late 1950s.

In its Lisbon Agenda intended to make the European Union “the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”, the European Union laid an enormous stress on the potential contribution of professional and vocational education and training in the promotion of “more and better jobs”, and in the development of industry in a highly competitive and fast changing industrial world where creativity and innovation are not just buzzwords but a stark demand if Malta and Europe wish to survive and possibly prosper. Malta is in the European Union, but it is competing in a very challenging world where only the fittest survive.

A very important aim of the planned course is the stress that will be laid on “excellence” in manufacturing. It is important not only to produce but to produce to a very high quality level to satisfy the more demanding and discerning clients, be they Maltese or foreigners, be they individuals or institutions.

Markets can be guaranteed only if the product is a quality product. This is what makes the difference and attracts and maintains clients.

The Diploma course is aimed at employees already in industry who have acquired knowledge, skills and competences through a number of years at their place of work but might not have relevant paper qualifications to attest their competences. It is a course that is taking into consideration and acknowledging prior learning through experience. At the same time, the Diploma course will be building on what the employees already know while fine-tuning, updating and upgrading it so that they will be empowered to deliver more and better. An ambitious mission of the Malta Qualifications Framework is the recognition of non-formal and informal education and training. And this is what the course intends to do, plus.

The beneficiaries of this course will be both the employees and the enterprises that are receiving their expertise and experience. I am pleased to note that employers will be facilitating the participation of their employees while the employees are sacrificing some of their time and energy in order to take part in their own professional development to be in a better position to contribute more towards the success of their enterprise and their own future career.

At the same time, MCAST is fulfilling its stated mission “to provide universally accessible vocational and professional education and training with an international dimension, responsive to the needs of the individual and the economy”.

Moreover, according to the Education Act (89, e), MCAST is mandated to “respond at a relevant time and in a relevant manner to the needs of the labour market by networking an effective partnership at all levels of educational and training experiences with the economic, industrial and services sectors, while being aware that the greater part of enterprises are small or medium sized”. Although some enterprises can and do provide in-house training and development, many other small and medium enterprises do not have the expertise, the facilities and the finances to do so. MCAST can contribute towards the filling of this need.

So far MCAST has been better known for the provision of initial vocational education and training, particularly at further and higher education levels. However, primarily through its shorter evening courses, MCAST has been contributing to the upgrading, updating and reskilling of employees but also through a number of specifically designed courses requested by different sectors of industry. In the process, MCAST and industry have gained experience on which the Diploma on offer has been planned.

Collaboration is essential between the MFOI and MCAST in providing education and training programmes that are directly related to the needs of industry, particularly when they are actually answering the call of industry. No need to stress the fact that MCAST itself has limited resources. During the last few years MCAST has invested heavily, through Government and European Union funds, in the latest equipment in various industrial areas and will continue to invest to ensure quality education and training. Moreover, MCAST is planning very substantial investment in the professional development of its human resources, the primary element of MCAST's success story.

However, industry itself could provide both specific expertise in particular areas as well as training resources that cannot be provided by MCAST itself. I believe that industry can also open its doors wider to MCAST and offer both students and staff the opportunity to see and experience in practice industrial processes and innovations through orientation visits that may last a few hours or days. There is nothing more effective than personal experience to supplement both book knowledge and simulated workshop practice. MCAST is blessed with a healthy mix of academic lecturers and lecturers coming from industry, including part-time lecturers. Both lecturers must be fully aware of the environment in which industry works.

Government would like industry to offer more apprenticeship opportunities to MCAST students. This is an area that should grow fast. Suffice it to refer to the current situation in such technologically advanced and industrialized countries as Austria and Germany where traditionally a high percentage of students at post

compulsory education age, sometimes even before, participate in the dual system of vocational education and training where students attend a VET college for two days or less a week while the rest of the week is spent at the workplace where appropriately qualified trainers complement with a hands-on approach the training that students receive at the college. This is an investment by industry in the future of industry. At the same time, MCAST notes that some employers are training more young people than they actually need in order to increase the availability of qualified personnel in their area of activity.

The Minister could not be present for this important event to celebrate the collaboration between industry and MCAST but the Hon. Dolores Cristina augurs that this major step forward will be another success story for both the MFOI and MCAST and will be followed by other initiatives in the development, growth and updating of local industry and, as importantly, in the personal and professional growth of the employees as an integral part of their lifelong learning process. Government means to spread the lifelong learning culture. And industry has a very important role to play in this important development.

May I thank all those at MFOI and MCAST who have facilitated the planning and running of this Diploma Course and I wish all participants success in their endeavours.



# MCAST LAUNCHES NEW PROSPECTUS 08/09

On Tuesday 24 June 2008 the MCAST launched its eighth Prospectus since its inauguration in October 2001. Since then the College has expanded to incorporate nine institutes as well as the Gozo Centre, offering 106 different full-time courses in Malta and 16 in Gozo besides a very wide range of short courses, including those funded by the ESF specifically targeted at mature students.

A major College achievement is the decision to offer degree programmes. This year students applying for Higher National Diplomas in Art and Design, Business and Commerce, Information and Communication Technology and Electrical and Electronics Engineering will have the opportunity to further their studies to degree level on successfully terminating of their diploma. Next year a similar opportunity will be offered to students studying within the other institutes. The offering of degree programmes provides students with an alternative route to university education.

MCAST has continued to expand and offer a wider variety of programmes. These have different entry points into the vocational educational framework and exit points in the world of work and offer the possibility to progress with one's education and training. The College is offering five new courses for 2008/09 namely:





## 1. MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN INTERACTIVE MEDIA

The MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma in Interactive Media has been designed to prepare learners to work in interactive media related careers e.g. web design, TV and video editing, multimedia design and 3D animation.

The course provides opportunities for students to develop their ability in the interactive media area through effective use and combination of creative knowledge and computer skills.

## 2. MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN FINE ARTS

This exciting new course will encourage students to experiment and develop skills across a broad range of fine art media and methodology. It is a 16-unit

qualification of which seven are compulsory. These core units may be considered a synthesis of the most important elements of professional fine art practice.

## 3. MCAST AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN COURSE (LEADING TO PART 66 CAT B 1.1 EXAMINATIONS)

This course is designed to equip students with the necessary theoretical and practical underpinning knowledge and experience at technician level leading to Part - 66 CAT B1.1 Examinations. Apprentices

following this course shall obtain theoretical and practical experience on aircraft structures, power plant, mechanical and electrical systems.

## 4. MCAST 'O' LEVEL REVISION COURSE

This course is intended for students who have already followed a course of study leading to the Secondary Education Examination Certificate and sat for the examinations of the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examination Board. MCAST is

thus providing the opportunity to students who did not manage to obtain the desired grades to undertake a revision programme with a view to obtaining the necessary entry requirements for further study at MCAST or elsewhere.

## 5. MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN CIVIL ENGINEERING

The National Diploma in Civil Engineering is based on both off-the-job and on-the-job training and provides an in-depth knowledge and experience of the general as well as specialized areas in the field of building and construction.

This course will enable the successful learners to carry out duties, at a professional and technical level, normally required in an architect's office or firm engaged in the building and construction business.

MCAST understands the needs of the students and the demands of a knowledge-based economy. That is why it places so much importance on the holistic development of its students. With this in mind it has revised and restructured its Foundation Courses in order to offer students a more holistic education. Irrespective of the field of study, language, information technology, team building capability, problem solving, entrepreneurship and positive attitudes and values are essential skills that contribute to the holistic development of the student and also to a forward- looking knowledge-based economy.

The Gozo Centre, as from October 2008, will also be offering a new course namely the MCAST Foundation Certificate in Computing.



## MCAST PARTICIPATES IN MALTA INTERNATIONAL FAIR

**This year MCAST participated in the Malta International Fair held at Ta' Qali Grounds between 27 June and 6 July 2008. The MCAST Counsellors and other MCAST staff provided information on the MCAST courses and the newly introduced opportunity to obtain degree programmes.**

< Counsellor Marthese Vassallo at the MCAST stand



## Art & Design



## Business & Com

## VOCATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES AT MCAST BY PROF MAURICE GRECH, MCAST PRINCIPAL AND CEO

Since its inception seven years ago MCAST has moved from strength to strength, having registered several significant achievements from which Maltese students and the country in general have benefited. The College started out with just over 1,500 students trebling this number to over 4,500 full-time students. Part-time learners almost match the same figure of those attending full-time courses.

MCAST is now in the process of pooling its resources to formulate yet another challenging initiative which would continue to satisfy industry's pressing demands for a professionally trained workforce. At the same time these plans will go a long way towards satisfying the legitimate requests of the college's expanding cohort of higher education students attending the various institutes. Part of this new development comes in the form of top-up degrees which MCAST is planning to deliver in the near future. Vocational degrees will permit the more senior students to progress further with their studies on completion of their two-year Higher National Diploma course.

A number of students who have obtained their HND while at MCAST are already reading for a first degree in British universities. Indeed some of them have progressed even further and are now reading for a postgraduate degree. There is

no denying it that studying in a reputable institution abroad is recommendable for various reasons. Yet such a venture often works out to be prohibitively expensive and the majority of students are discouraged to press on with the idea of studying abroad. There are other hurdles which may also preclude students from leaving Malta for a long stretch of time.

Not everyone can afford the tuition fees set by foreign universities. Food and accommodation, and other costs are not insignificant and complicate matters even further. Those who are more determined and enterprising may have managed to borrow money from the family whereas several have had to apply for bank loans. The fact that MCAST is now well-poised to offer degree programmes on its own campus in Malta should come as a relief to those students who are unable to progress to universities abroad.

The idea is not to replicate or compete with the University of Malta. MCAST attracts different students and offers different courses. Learners opting to join MCAST are more vocationally inclined. Courses are industry oriented and designed with employability in mind.

MCAST has foreign partner universities who will be working with the college to design

courses which meet the demand for local skills and according to the needs of our students while maintaining international quality standards.

Through the feedback we have received from the learners themselves, their lecturers and parents, students have already shown a marked interest in the planned provision and they will be looking forward to read for a first degree at MCAST. It must be stressed that vocational degree courses, will equip students with better knowledge and understanding, specialist skills and competences which industry values highly and which it should be able to put to good use.

MCAST includes nine institutes and two centres in Gozo out of which, initially, the College is planning to offer first degree studies in Art and Design, Business and Commerce, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, and Information and Communication Technology.

### THE COLLEGE MISSION

One of the key elements underpinning the College mission relates to providing access to all students who are willing to learn by removing existing artificial hurdles. Students may join the vocational courses of their own preference and at an appropriate level of competence. In order

## ICT



merce

## Electrical & Electronics Engineering

to facilitate the assimilation of students who would have different qualifications and/or experiences, MCAST courses have several entry points which may be availed of, depending on the learner's achievement to date. Likewise there are multiple exit points, all of which lead to a variety of job opportunities which reflect the learner's level of competence and which will hopefully lead to a profitable career within the learner's field of preferences.

Students with a school-leaving certificate may apply to join the College for a Foundation Certificate Programme. Those possessing a number of ordinary level passes may opt to follow a First Diploma or a National Diploma course, depending on qualifications. Students with passes at Advanced level, including one in their main area of study, may qualify to follow an HND course. The prospectus, which MCAST publishes on a yearly basis, contains all the necessary information and updates about the courses on offer.

Students may opt to progress from one level to the next, and it is expected that they will continue to follow this route up to the highest possible levels which they are able to contend with. Students are encouraged to seek guidance and advice and to think twice at least, before deciding to quit MCAST too early, especially if they have been doing well on their course of study. Career-specific vocational degrees allow students to transfer easily and successfully into well-established professions.

The MCAST formula makes much sense. At MCAST students are formally credited for the level of course (or even parts of the course) which they have completed successfully. More and more students are now able to plan their own preferred route. They appreciate the opportunity to take decisions as they gradually feel their way while progressing from one level to the next. This is a significant advantage since students do not feel obliged to commit themselves too early. Knowing that they may choose an exit point based on their own assessment of circumstances is an attractive proposition.

Professor Grech believes that initially a total of one hundred to one hundred and fifty students will opt for the vocational degree courses on offer, a number that is expected to grow at a fast rate as the system develops and establishes itself.

### INDUSTRY'S NEEDS

We are aware of the saying 'put your money where your mouth is'. About one in every four students at MCAST is following an ICT course. This is not surprising since this already strong sector of the economy received a further boost following the announcement of Smart City Malta, the largest ever ICT private sector project and foreign direct investment as well as the largest ever new source of knowledge-based jobs to be secured by Malta.

In today's dynamic and competitive world, it has become crucial, more than ever before, for student, employees and entrepreneurs alike to abide by the adage 'carpe diem', and

thus seize opportunities they come across. In an age where society's needs and tastes are evolving at an unprecedented pace, and where firms operate in a highly competitive environment, opportunities have become ephemeral events, present only for a brief duration. Once an opportunity surfaces, it will not be long before it is exploited and changing demands give rise to new, distinct opportunities. Consequently, only those who have an eye for identifying opportunities and who act quickly upon these opportunities will savour the rewards they bring forth.

In response to these rapidly changing needs the college also provides upskilling and reskilling programmes to those workers who want to move ahead or those who are constrained to change their job perhaps as a result of unforeseen circumstances. The college organises tailor-made courses which are specifically designed for those employers involved in niche areas of the economy, such as furniture manufacturers wanting to supply the super yacht industry. There are manufacturing sectors on the look-out for highly skilled technicians including the aviation maintenance, plant and maintenance, marine engineering and the financial services fields, areas which are expanding rapidly.

Industry seeks to tap niche markets, and students who are well-qualified in specific areas will be the first ones to be offered good jobs. There is an ongoing demand for the more educationally-mature students and experience shows that they do not have to wait too long before they are recruited.

# new administration manager

Irene Bugeja, born in 1967, received her primary education at St. Joseph School Blata l-Bajda and her secondary education at the Junior Lyceum, Blata l-Bajda. After finishing her 'O' Levels, she took up secretarial duties and obtained her 'A' Levels privately.

With these qualifications she started working at Marsovin as an Area Sales Representative in 1987. During this period, she attended courses in Effective Selling, Customer Care and later, Marketing Management in 1989.

She became Area Sales Manager Designate in 1988 and in June 1990 she took up the post of Area Sales Manager which she held for six years. During this time, Ms Bugeja attended the Chamber of Commerce short course 'The Effective Manager' in 1991, and achieved the Marsovin Sales Achievement Award as 'The Best Profitable Area' in 1994 – the 75th Anniversary of the Company.

Following this achievement she embarked on the first stages to achieve a Master's Degree (Msc.) in Management at the University of Anglia in Cambridge, U.K. In 1994 she obtained the Certificate in Management (CIM), in 1995 the Diploma in Management (DMS) and in 1997 she started her final stages to the Master's Degree. It was during this year that she resigned from her post at the time as Administration Manager at Marsovin (Sales & Distribution) Ltd. in order to finalise her studies by travelling to the U.K. and complete her dissertation based on Michael Porter's Value Chain Analysis (Competitive Strategy) of fast moving consumer goods. In 1999 Ms Bugeja graduated in Cambridge.

After her graduation, she became a Board Member of the Junior Chamber International (JCI) Malta Board where she held the title of Vice President Business in 1999. (JCI is the worldwide federation of young leaders and entrepreneurship with nearly a quarter of a million members.) Following that year she was chosen by Junior Chamber Malta to attend a training course on leadership skills in Gothenburg. This training, sponsored by Volvo, gave her the

opportunity to test drive the various Volvo cars on their race track and to understand the capabilities of the Volvo Penta engines whilst being driven on their power boats. However, above all, the Volvo management gave her an in depth view as to how strategic methods and decisions were taken. On her return to Malta, Ms. Bugeja was voted as Local Organisation President 2000 on the Junior Chamber Malta Board.

Her contact with Volvo introduced the possibility of negotiations with W.E.T. Automotive Systems (Malta) Ltd., the Company where she was employed in March 1999 as Administration and H.R. Manager. W.E.T. Automotive Systems (Malta) Ltd. at the time produced car seat heaters in Malta for BMW together with other brands and was embarking on the Toyota Production System. During her employment she ensured that the administrative activities met the Company's and hence, this led to the general Human Resources duties. Shortly after this time, the Company was gearing up to move production to China. Therefore her responsibility was to ensure that Maltese operators were specifically trained in Germany in order to prepare for China. Shortly after this time, Ms. Bugeja resigned from her post as Administration and H.R. Manager.

In 2000, Irene Bugeja was chosen as Awards Judge for the Junior Chamber International World Congress in Cannes where the most outstanding annual awards are presented. Keeping strategic management in mind she took up the post of PA to Chairman of Vassallo Builders Group for two years. During this time she gained insight in the hospitality sector and the construction industry. Following this experience, she gained new experience in administration during her employment at the Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit from 2003 to 2007. This Unit, the Anti Money Laundering Unit in Malta, involves research, therefore her main duties revolved around in-depth research.

In December 2006, Ms Bugeja was offered the post of PA to the Chairman of AX Holdings and due to the fact of already having



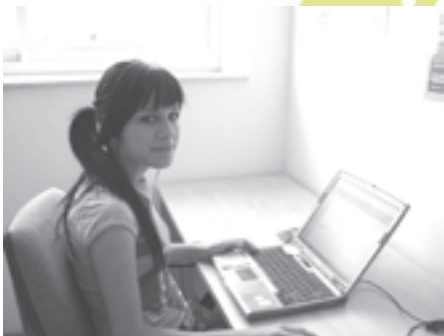
## IRENE BUGEJA NEW ADMINISTRATION MANAGER

experience in construction and hospitality, she was interested in being involved in the construction and completion of the new hotel in Sliema, updating and setting up new procedures in the Group's health insurance scheme and carrying out other duties apart from AX Holdings.

Ms Bugeja's main interest is in dancing Argentine tango. After dancing for five years she still attends workshops and takes lessons both locally and abroad. No doubt she enjoys tango music especially by Astor Piazzolla. She enjoys travel, mainly due to having most of her family abroad and has been going to practical philosophy classes for over two years. She believes it helps her open her thoughts to wisdom, passion for life in general and positive thinking.

## WORK PLACEMENT EXPERIENCES – SUMMER 2008

# LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: WORKPLACE KNOW-HOW



Annalise Gatt at Vodafone



Bjorn Zammit at Vodafone



MCAST Students with Gabriella Cappitta, Vodafone HR Senior Assistant & Annalise Gatt at Vodafone

### VODAFONE EXPERIENCE

BY CLAUDETTE FARRUGIA,  
VODAFONE CORPORATE AFFAIRS  
SENIOR EXECUTIVE & GABRIELLA  
CAPPITTA, VODAFONE HR SENIOR  
ASSISTANT.

The Summer Work Placement initiative is an excellent opportunity for students to obtain business acumen, skills and experience in the workplace before they leave College. It is an excellent opportunity for students to gain practical knowledge and experience of what it is like to be part of the workforce, preparing them for what to expect in a full-time job.

The Student Summer Work Placement for 9 students at Vodafone Malta took place between 23 June and 25 July 2008. The selected students were Jessica Falzon, Jessica Magri, Elaine Mamo, Kelly Grech, Bernice Vella,

Annalise Gatt, Stephanie Bonaci, Bjorn Zammit and Matthew Borg. These students are following different courses including Certificate in Administrative and Secretarial Studies, National Certificate in Business, Intermediate Certificate in Business, Foundation Certificate in Business, Accounting Technicians Certificate, Certificate in Marketing Studies and Diploma in Accounting and they were assigned to different departments within the organisation. All students proved to be self-motivated, team players, organised, efficient and reliable, so much so that they were offered a part-time contract until their return to their new academic year.

**Work placement is an ideal stepping stone for students with benefits both for them and the employer; and Vodafone has, in the past, offered full time employment to previous participants.**

**Consequently should the opportunity present itself in the coming years, Vodafone will be more than willing to participate in such an exercise.**

It is evident that most students who participate in work placements have a more successful transition from College to full-time employment.

## MONSOON / ACCESSORIZE

BY CHARLENE MIFSUD, GENERAL MANAGER INDIA LTD OPERATORS OF MONSOON / ACCESSORIZE

Although the demand for retail work experience is high and most often we are overwhelmed with requests, every year the management at Monsoon Accessorize seeks to provide placement opportunities for MCAST students from the Institute of Business and Commerce. Our enthusiasm towards the idea of work placements is due to several reasons. First and foremost, we view work placements as a manner in which we can do our bit for the community and in turn feel the satisfaction of corporate responsibility. Secondly, we seek to offer work placement opportunities because most often students are very positive, eager, and enthusiastic, as well as willing to learn and gain experience. Indeed, we believe that students on work placements can offer many qualities to

our organization as well as offer fresh ideas. In fact, very often students have brought additional skills and energy and offered 'out-of-the-box' solutions. Of course, these benefits can only accrue by, as an organization, being able and willing to invest some time and effort into making the work experience a success.

**At Monsoon Accessorize, we believe that a successful work placement needs a proper induction and a proper supervision throughout the placement, in order to be able to aid the student to bridge the gap between their education and outside work.**

Thirdly, work placements give us a chance to assess potential employees, add valuable employees to our team and enrich the culture of our workplace as well as helping us to find out how to support our staff more effectively. In

fact, most of MCAST previous students have now established a full-time role within our company, some even being promoted to senior levels.

In sum, we fully appreciate the potential benefits of students participation and also see the need for it. We not only help the student learn about being in the frame of mind to do a day's work, but also aid them to enhance their prospects for the future within a commercial setting.

## MALTA TOURISM AUTHORITY

BY MARIO GALEA, MEDIA AUDIO & VISUAL ASSISTANT, COMMUNICATIONS & PR AND TREVOR VELLA, FINANCE MANAGER AT MALTA TOURISM AUTHORITY

Four students have been assigned to the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) for their short period of work placement experience. Three of them were primarily assigned to the Communications and PR Department hospitality section, whilst the fourth was assigned tasks within the Finance Section.

Within the former section, Martha Spiteri, Joseph Tanti and Joseph Barber, had the opportunity to learn how the Malta Tourism Authority sponsors some journalists and film crews to come to Malta so that when they go back to their respective countries, they write or create

promotional stories about Malta. It is one of the best ways to promote Malta abroad and it is literally one of the best investments in tourism.

The hospitality section is in charge from A – Z for the journalist who comes to Malta, therefore invoices from hotels, restaurants etc will come to this section to be paid by MTA. Students learn how to sort these invoices and fill in the respective forms for authorizing the payments for our sub-companies.

Students also had the opportunity to have a brief experience in the Media and Audiovisuals department, where they learnt how to classify, archive and upload images and footage in a database.

Within the Finance Section, Steve Diacono was given the task of updating some backdated filing that was required by Finance. He also processed invoices within the accounting system.

Other general duties such as postage distribution, banking duties and outgoing cheques processing were also performed.

**Students adopted a professional approach to work, with the willingness to use this work placement at the Malta Tourism Authority to learn more about office and other accounting duties as well as related work.**

Students have been very hard working and they kept to the rhythm of the very busy environment at MTA. They gave their best in the work they did and also they learned new experiences of how our tourism industry works.

## CENTRAL BANK OF MALTA

BY DANIEL FRANK PULLICINO,  
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER, CENTRAL BANK OF  
MALTA

As in previous years, the Central Bank of Malta has once again favourably acknowledged its assistance in taking under its helm a number of students for a five week unpaid work placement experience. Between 23 June and 25 July 2008, two Diploma in Banking and Financial Services students, namely Ms Sarah Vella and Ms Luana Attard, were attached with the Internal Audit Office and the Currency Issues Office respectively.

Ms Vella was assigned to help the Support Officer, in the day-to-day general office duties (office filing, typing, tracking of deadlines, and issuing reminders). She gained exposure on the function's system of internal communication, organisation,

storage and retrieval of data and internal audit documentation. Her main contribution involved working on a specific project embarked upon some months before.

This project consisted in digitising the function's physical documents database to free storage space and enhancing the use and dissemination of audit information. The job required good organisation and attention whilst maintaining a high level of confidentiality. Sarah rose to the occasion demonstrating that she was a mature, hard working individual, very productive and level headed. She fitted in very well within the office environment.

Ms Attard was attached to the numismatic sales section within the Currency Issue Office. Her first task was to integrate and categorize two customer mailing lists; and then use these lists to mail advertising. She was also assigned a marketing case study

aimed to challenge her feel for practical issues in market share competition.

**Manager Currency Issues Office noted with great satisfaction both her dedication and practical acumen. She carried out both tasks very well. Luana was a very good team worker and efficient in her job.**

## BANK OF VALLETTA

BY GRACE ANN CACHIA, HEAD HR  
BANK OF VALLETTA PLC

Once again BOV provided the opportunity for MCAST Finance and Banking students to gain a work experience on several aspects of banking during their summer holidays.

From the classroom theoretical environment, these students were placed in suitable offices through which they had the opportunity to learn and assist in actual banking functions. They were also assigned several appropriate tasks, which they were motivated to perform well, enabling them to gain a useful work experience. This experience will help them to improve their practical skills and would also be beneficial for their future career. The students disciplined themselves to a working environment.

They were very glad to observe several specialized systems and

technologies used in this industry. They also interacted favourably with bank personnel and adapted to our highly organized working environment.

**This practical summer work experience should contribute to the improvement of their skills and should be beneficial in their career planning and character development.**

On the other hand, the Bank benefited from the students' contributions and also fulfilled its role to provide a relevant experience to students who will in future form part of the upcoming working generation.

**WANTED...**  
**DYNAMIC YOUNG PEOPLE**  
**WITH A CARING VISION OF LIFE**  
**CREATE A TREND**  
**SHOW YOU CARE**







## OUR MISSION:

**To enhance one's personal development and the formation of the character whilst generating a spirit of dynamic creativity.**

**To propagate spiritual values and social awareness through the promotion of various initiatives, highlighting skills and talents put to the service of all members of society.**

We all strongly feel the need to instill in our environment a positive sense of values. Living such a hectic life, demands a greater need for moments of calmness and internal peace.

With this in mind, students attending the Institute of Business and Commerce (IBAC) are being invited and encouraged to form part of a dynamic team of young people who have labeled themselves as "Comunio".

The roles and functions of this team include the following:

- Initiate and foster a Social Care Project amongst young children and adolescents residing in institutions whereby students from IBAC will organise themselves in a roster in which they will attend at a particular Children's Institute and help children with their homework as well as play with the younger ones. On occasions, Comunio will organise social activities for these children such as Film Viewing, Picnics, Bar-B-Qs, Hikes etc. Throughout the year various other Charity and Solidarity stunts and Charity Campaigns are organised.
- Organise Social Events which enhance the vital aspects of team work and a community spirit within the Institute of Business and Commerce. This is achieved through – amongst others - Sports Events, Treasure Hunts, Get Togethers, Celebration of Talent, etc.
- Promote a positive social awareness of a Pro-Life Message through various Health Awareness Activities and Healthy Life Style Initiatives.
- Organise youthful and dynamic Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. On special occasions throughout the year, Youth Vigils are also organised.
- Organise vibrant and modern prayer meetings through which one will really find an opportunity to share some moments of peace and reflection.
- Provide foras for discussion on themes which are the basis of ongoing social discussions. This is done through Debating Societies as well as the publication of social reflection newsletters, together with Food for Thought Campaigns.
- Publication of monthly e-zine by the name of "footSTEPS". This is a bilingual electronic magazine distributed primarily via electronic mail featuring various features and articles written by students as well as a number of well known contributors.
- Life Blocks: Facilitate events which explore Character Formation and Personality Development.
- Participate in International Foras related to the various aspects forthcoming from the group's Mission Statement and Vision policy. The group has been actively involved in EVS and Youth Programmes.
- Organise other events on a national scale whereby the promotion of peace and mutual respect in our society is given high priority.
- Organise any other initiative which will respond to the current signs of the times.

**Awaiting your valid participation and dedicated commitment towards the promotion of love, peace, and service to others.**



# BE PART OF IT AND SHARE LOVE, SERVICE & PEACE

**JOIN  
NOW!**



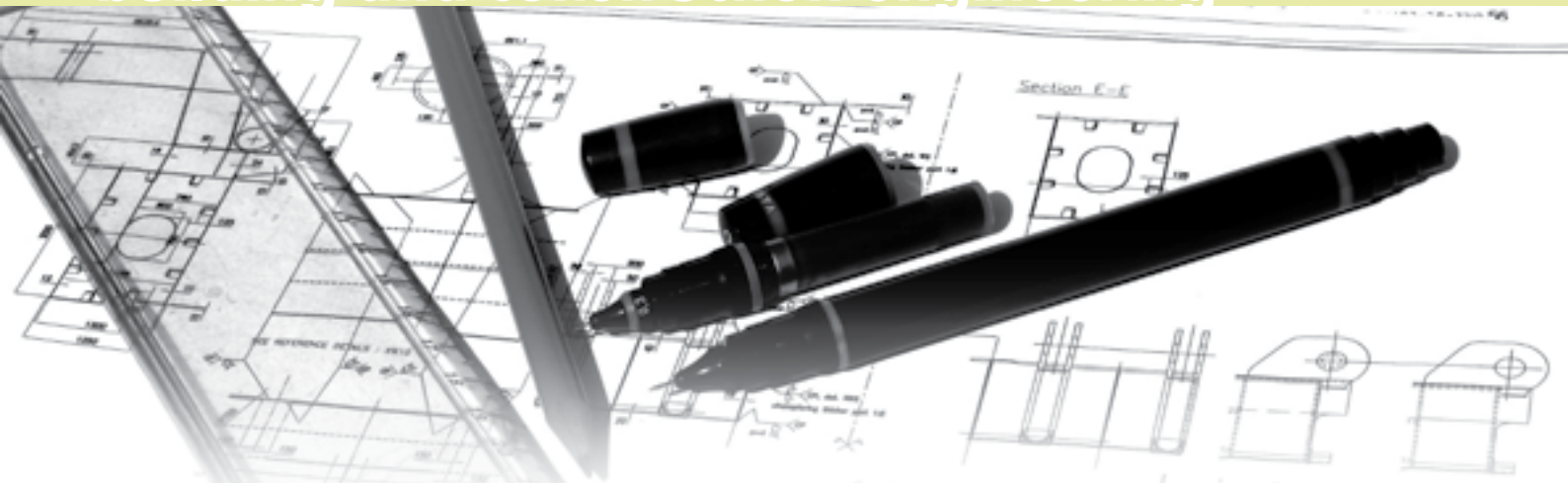
#### **Forthcoming Events and Initiatives organised by Comunio:**

- Leadership Training Seminars
- Social Care Projects
- Celebrate Life
- Treasure Hunt
- Battle of the Bands
- Comunio Charity Tournament
- Celebrations 2008

**Further information may be obtained by communicating through :  
[comunio@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:comunio@mcast.edu.mt)**

**Look out for further information through Notices, Flyers, Posters etc.**

**Keep in touch all throughout the year:  
[www.comuniomalta.org](http://www.comuniomalta.org)**



## PRESIDENT OF MALTA VISITS THE INSTITUTE OF BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING



His Excellency Dr. Edward Fenech Adami and Dr. Maria F. Deguara at the Design Workshop



At the Masonry Heritage Skills Workshop

His Excellency The President of Malta, Dr. Edward Fenech Adami, K.U.O.M., B.A., LL.D. visited the MCAST Institute of Building and Construction Engineering on Friday 23 May 2008. This visit was coordinated by the Naxxar Local Council.

Accompanied by Naxxar Mayor Dr Maria F. Deguara MD, Dr Edward Fenech Adami was welcomed by Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO and Mr James Pearsall, Institute Director as well as all students and members of staff.

The President was first given an overview of the Institute, its objectives and its role in the training of qualified students to meet the needs of industry. He was then given a tour of the Institute. He met with students and viewed the technical projects. He also visited the masonry/heritage skills workshops and the woodworking, painting and decorating workshops.

He was presented with a memento at the end of his visit.



At the Design Studio



Josef Sant restoring a statue



From left: Shawn Emmanuel Zerefa and Adolf Xuereb

## MCAST STUDENTS RESTORE STATUES

Heritage Malta has just finished conservation and restoration work on five street shrines in Santa Venera. The work was carried out by final year students of the Masonry Heritage Skills course organized by the MCAST Institute of Building and Construction Engineering in conjunction with Heritage Malta. These students were assisted by students from other years, all under the supervision of qualified conservators and lecturers. The work, which started in May, was carried out for the Santa Venera Local Council.

The work on the statues consisted in cleaning and the removal of deposits which had accumulated over the years using nylon brushes and de-ionised water. The areas damaged by deterioration were plastic repaired using a lime-based mortar. At the end, some of the statues were given a fine lime wash which will be acting as a sacrificial layer for pollutants.

The oil-based paint of one of the statues, that of St George found at the corner between Triq Brighella and Triq San Gorg, and its niche was stripped down using an appropriate paint remover and surgical knives. The statue was then repainted with a lime-based paint.

All the statues had to be lowered down and taken to the Stone Laboratory at the Conservation Division of Heritage Malta in Bighi for conservation work. Three of them were in a bad state of repair due to severe alveolar deterioration and had to be intervened on by recreating their sculptured drapery by using plastic repair.

**ROOFS OF EUROPE**  
OCTOBER 2005 – JUNE 2008





The participants of the 'Roof of Europe' Project

The Institute of Building and Construction Engineering has just concluded a Comenius project titled "Roofs of Europe" which spanned over three academic years. The project partnership was formed together with similar European vocational centres from Germany, Spain and Ireland. The Institute of Building and Construction Engineering was the coordinator of the project and has been involved in other projects within the life long learning programme since 2003.

Roofs of Europe was a learner-focused project and the learning outcomes that developed were embedded in the respective curricula of the participating educational institutions. The learners involved in the project followed National Diploma Courses in Building and Construction Engineering.

A number of thematic issues were identified for the project and the mobilities were planned with the objective of developing the themes identified and producing a number of specific end products. The four central concepts developed were:

- Construction Techniques
- Sustainability in the Built Environment
- Structural forces and effects
- Drafting procedures and design.

The structure of the programme throughout the three years of the project was developed in such a way that the participating learners focused on one specific theme at a time by initially conducting a literature review and research. The end products for the project include:

- Technical glossaries
- DVDs
- Model construction
- Multimedia presentations
- AutoCAD drawings
- Design using StudioMax.

Each respective learning group was involved in a mobility during which the learners presented their product, worked together in international groups to synthesize

the information gathered and socialized together in extra-curricular activities that were planned. The work conducted within the international groups proved to be an effective tool as it allowed the learners to compare and contrast the different construction techniques used by each country and also to gain knowledge in materials used for construction.

Issues of sustainability in the built environment were also investigated throughout the project and the thematic concepts developed included building integrated photovoltaics (BiPV), passive solar heating, rain water harvesting systems and green roofs. The learners involved, apart for gaining relevant knowledge about the subjects, designed possible systems incorporating renewable sources of energy within the building envelope itself. This work was produced by using AutoCAD and StudioMax software and presented as multimedia presentations.

Another important aspect of each project was the analysis which was conducted at the end of the programme. In each mobility the learners performed an evaluation exercise asking them to rate the level of project organization, activities, learning concepts investigated and relevance of project. The gathered data was statistically treated and presented. The results obtained were both positive and encouraging. To this end, a number of areas for further improvement were identified. The role of associated partners in such projects was highlighted and the involvement of direct links with the construction industry was evaluated. The work done by the learners themselves during the project could also be embedded within the respective learning criteria of the diploma courses offered by the vocational institutions concerned.

The project also highlights the importance of adopting an integrated approach to vocational education and training as this will allow the learners to further contextualize their learning process through such educational projects.

# MCAST BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN APPLIED SCIENCE AT THE EXPO-SCIENCES 2008, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

BY BERNICE BONELLO, FIRST YEAR STUDENT; GERVAIS MARCEL CISHAHAYO AND MARIA PIA GRISCTI, LECTURERS BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN APPLIED SCIENCE, INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES



From left to right: First Year BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science student Bernice Bonello, with Dorothy Meli, Director of the Institute of Community Services and Maria Pia Griscti, lecturer and project supervisor

After winning the 3rd prize in this year's CONTEST FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS organised by the NSTF Malta, I was given the opportunity to participate in the Expo-Sciences 2008, organised in Budapest, Hungary, between the 13 July and the 20 July 2008.

The aim of the Expo-Sciences is to promote scientific projects created by children and young people around the world through an exhibition in a multi-cultural environment, also allowing the participation of institutions which want to assist young people in their projects. The programme of the Expo-Sciences was varied and consisted of a variety of activities such as exhibition of projects, workshops, animation and conferences. It also included scientific and cultural visits. The exhibits totalled approximately 200 scientific projects, prepared by 400 youngsters. All the projects focused on specific scientific themes and promoted the ability of youngsters in various fields of science.

The aim of my project, FERMENTATION BY PRODUCTS OF BEER, mentored by my lecturer, Maria Pia Griscti, at the Institute of Community Services, was to investigate the amount of the chemical compound sulfur dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ ) in beer.

This project also explained what sulfur dioxide is and its importance in the brewing industry. In order to carry out the experiment, the 'distillation and titration' method was chosen as it is used in industry and a model of it could be easily constructed for the exhibit. The amount of sulfur dioxide in ten beer samples was determined using the 'distillation and titration' method stated above. Three bottles were selected and a mean value of the sulfur dioxide content was calculated. We left on Sunday 12 July 2008, on a typical summer day in Malta, and we arrived in Vienna airport in a cold and rainy weather and drove from Vienna, Austria to Budapest, Hungary in a thunderstorm! Upon our arrival we were met by the Expo organisers and given a full and varied programme for the whole week of the exhibition. We were then allocated our accommodation rooms.

The following Monday morning, we registered our projects and then proceeded with the setting up of our projects stands. The stands were grouped according to the field of science that was being studied in the project. My stand was on the chemistry side of the EXPO which was being held in Millenaris Park. The EXPO was inaugurated by the president of MILSET (Mouvement International pour le Loisir Scientifique et Technique).

The opening of the Expo was followed by a sight-seeing tour of the city by coaches and although it was raining heavily we could see many places of interest, including the 'Square of Heroes', 'Basilica of Saint Stephen' and the 'Houses of Parliament' which we were told we would visit on Friday. In the evening we had a welcome party at Kossuth Klub where we could meet and get to know members of other delegations. Here one could appreciate the usefulness of language skills: the Spanish and Greeks spoke English, so it was easy to communicate with them. On the other hand, it was more difficult to communicate with some of the German and French delegation members.

During the exhibition, we had to be present on our stands in order to explain our projects to the visitors from other delegations and even the locals from Hungary. All the hours spent at the stands on a daily basis, were a good opportunity to make new friends and enrich our relationships.

But we also had some free time during which we were able to visit many places of interest such as Mammut: a large shopping complex, ten storeys high; the Budapest Zoo and others. One evening was dedicated to a 'Cultural night' during which each delegation made a presentation about their country. Our delegation showed some wonderful pictures of Malta and mentioned some interesting facts about our country. Some of the presentations were really funny and nice especially the one of the Spanish whereby they were celebrating their success in the Euro Cup 2008.

One particular morning was reserved for a scientific activity during which we visited RICHTER GEDEON, the largest pharmaceutical company in Hungary, established by a pharmacist Mr Gedeon Richter in 1901. The company is a highly recognized manufacturer of Lecithin products, antiseptic and febrifuge products (medicine that reduces temperature) as well as painkillers. After the Expo we went for a walk around the city and visited some interesting squares like 'Moscow Square' and once again the 'Square of Heroes'. On Friday morning we joined the Spanish delegation for a visit to the 'Houses of Parliament', an edifice very rich in arts and gold artefacts! As the exhibition came close to the end, we had our last five hours at our stands. Everyone was moving from one stand to the next to review the projects that each one had found most interesting. After the Expo closed we dismantled our stands, had a closing party and then went to Margit Island, which houses some places of entertainment.

Our last day in Budapest was a day full of activities since the Expo had ended the day before. We went to Szentendre, a town outside Budapest, and to an open air museum, which exhibits the folklore, architecture and culture of the Carpathian basin. In the afternoon we had a cruise over the River Danube where we could see many interesting parts and buildings of Hungary. In the evening the various delegations met at a disco in Margit Island to enjoy our last night together. On Sunday, it was the difficult part of our Expo in Hungary: we had to pack and say goodbye to everyone, even though to be honest, I was looking forward to come back to Malta.

Today when I look back I miss everything and everyone I encountered during my visit to Budapest, but I still keep contact with some of the friends I made in the Expo through e-mail. I can recall this experience as one of a lifetime since I felt so proud to represent MCAST and my country in such a memorable important science event! Unfortunately, I regret that my project supervisor and my colleague Roderick Grech could not make it to Budapest due to other commitments.

Special thanks are due to my project supervisor Maria Pia Griscti and the Director of the Institute of Community Services, Ms Dorothy Meli, for having given me such an opportunity, and valuable support and guidance to participate in the Contest for Young Scientists organised by the NSTF Malta and ultimately in the Expo-Sciences 2008, in Budapest, Hungary.

**by Bernice Bonello**  
**(BTEC Higher National Diploma in Applied Science)**



Prof. Maurice Grech, delivering his message



Ms Dorothy Meli, Director of Institute opening the event



Lecturer and symposium organiser Maria Pia Griscti presenting the BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science course content and assessment procedures



The second year BTEC Diploma in Applied Science students who made various scientific presentations



Third year students Leanne Buhagiar and Dorianne Cutajar during their presentation on the Mechanism of HIV penetration in human cells and its detection by ELISA Test

Guest speakers: Former students Roslyn DeBattista and Matthew Grima currently reading for a BSc. (Hons.) in Applied Science and Forensic Investigation, University of Teesside, Middlebrough, UK





# MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN APPLIED SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

The Institute of Community Services (ICS) is currently providing an EDEXCEL Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science (Laboratory and Industrial Science) which has the equivalence of three Advanced Level qualifications, according to the Malta Qualifications Council. This is a three year course that consists of a total of three components: 20 BTEC units totaling 1080 hours split into 6 compulsory Core units (330 hours) and 14 Specialist units (750 hours) selected from the prescribed BTEC list; 5 College modules chosen by the course management in line with the College objectives in consultation with the industry; and a compulsory Work placement and ETC Apprenticeship scheme. One of the 5 College modules is Seminar & Symposium presentation which has become now a permanent feature of the course.

The third edition of the Applied Science Symposium was organized by the BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science team of lecturers and students on 5 June 2008 at the Radisson SAS, St Julians. This year the Symposium included the contribution and the participation of students from the three years of enrollment. It consisted of presentations on a variety of selected science topics and included presentations by students of their work placement and apprenticeship experiences. The presentations are part of the coursework of one of the units that the students must cover during the programme of studies.

The Symposium was opened by Ms Dorothy Meli, Director of the MCAST Institute of Community Services followed through by opening remarks by Prof Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO gave the audience an overview of the finality and employment prospects of the laureates of the course in various sectors of the industry.

One member of the applied science lecturing team and symposium organizer, Maria Pia Griscti, gave a detailed presentation of the BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science course programme, assessment policies and internal and external verification procedures by Edexcel, UK which is the awarding body for all BTEC courses run by MCAST.

This was followed by a programme of various presentations on a number of selected scientific topics and presentations prepared by students under the supervision of their lecturers.

The core of the programme consisted of presentations on a number of selected scientific topics and work placement and apprenticeship scheme. A special presentation was made by former students on the Applied Science who were invited as guest speakers and made a presentation on their experience of furthering their university degree studies abroad after completing their BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science at MCAST.

In addition to the ICS Management, lecturers, students enrolled in the Applied Science course and their parents, the symposium was attended by a large audience that included the Employment and Training Corporation representatives; past, present and potential employers who provide work placements and/or apprenticeships; a number of guests including representatives of the Pharmacy Council, NSTS Head of Cultural Affairs. All the MCAST Management was present for this event. This presence was a strong signal that MCAST top Management throughout supports all initiatives of the course that contribute to enhancing the image of MCAST as a credible and reliable vocational training institution with a sound academic dimension. This symposium was supported throughout by the Director of the Institute of Community Services where the BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science has been hosted since September 2007.

The symposium was also attended by a number of individuals and organizations who supported and sponsored and sent their representatives to this symposium. These included but were not limited to: Attard Giglio and Co; Mr Mario Zammit; Noel Attard of San Giorgio Pharmacy; Simonds Farsons Cisk plc; Cartridge World; IZZY INC Creative Solutions; Radisson SAS Bay Point Resort. This support was another tangible testimony to the increasing interest of the employing organizations in the Applied Science course as a strong provider of a so much needed qualified and motivated technical workforce to the local industry and beyond.

The members of the lecturing staff on the Applied Science course who organised and supervised the symposium were Gervais Marcel Cishahayo, Maria Pia Griscti, Mario Zammit and Joseph Giglio. The other lecturers on the course are Patrick Dunster and Mario Balzan.



# ANNUAL SOIRÉE



The Annual Soireé, organised by the Institute of Community Services, was slightly different from that of previous years, as it was a Farewell Performance given by students who concluded their course this year.

The theme “A Taste of Carnival” had been decided months ago after suggestions given by students were accepted and discussed among administration and lecturers.

Mr. Anton Calleja who teaches Art and Design at the Institute of Community Services co-ordinated the eight groups. Students did some research about how Carnival is celebrated in different parts of the world. The performance took the spectators from Venice to Spain, from Brazil to Africa and from Egypt to Gozo. Lecturers were consulted on hairstyles, props, costumes, make up and also choreography. In order for the programme to flow smoothly two students linked one dance number with the other.

This year’s show was held on Campus outdoor area, starting late in the evening to maximise light effects which made the whole performance more colourful.

The stage set up was enhanced with surrounding trees which were lit up for the occasion. A gentle summer breeze kept the spectators comfortable while they watched the show.

The evening continued with short speeches from Ms Dorothy Meli, Director of Institute, and from Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors. The final part of the soireé was dedicated to the presentation of special awards to students in the various courses. Nominees were anxiously waiting for the announcement of the award winner amidst cheers and applause from all those present for this special evening.







Tea for two by Dawn Baker

# CREATIVE PROMISE

by Donald Friggieri



Selection of a costume  
by Mariella Bezzina



Artwork from over a hundred students attending the MCAST Institute of Art and Design at Targa Gap was on show at the Upper Galleries in the St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity, Valletta. All specialist areas relating to Graphic Design and Three-Dimensional Design were well-represented in the exhibition.

This was the sixth exhibition the Institute has organised since MCAST was set up in 2001. The institute equips students with the skills necessary to earn a living in their preferred pathways with courses that respond to the economic realities of being a professional artist, craftsperson and designer, and with professional training and development for related disciplines and careers.

The exhibition as a whole reflected a grasp of creative practice and a confident adoption of functional design methodologies. The ability to design would already exist within the young student, even though it is largely intuitive and often unorganised. The vital question is how this can be built upon, to bring learners to a point where they are able to express their own ideas and interests in satisfying, creative and competent technical terms.

A good grasp of “design” and “problem solving” provides significant transferable values. This is because “designing” calls for a variety of skills. Perhaps one of the most useful definitions of design is the one endorsed by design theorist John Chris Jones – who referred to design as “the purposeful action of man to bring about change”. As designers, we not only believe in change but we must be agents of change ourselves.

It was Jones who came up with the idea of design as an educational

discipline that unites art and science and can even go further than that. “Ultimately, both arts and sciences are manifestations of the basic human need to explore, to discover, to create and to improve. They are both part of the human quest for truth and beauty.” (EU Commissioner Janez Potocnik, Creativity and Science in Arts, International Conference, “New Paradigms, New Models”, Ljubljana, May 2008).

At the St James Centre for Creativity, students demonstrated theoretical understanding, appropriate practical and technical skills, and an ability to analyse and evaluate their work. There was also evidence of critical awareness with an ability to research selectively and efficiently while communicating informed and reflective perceptions.

The diversity of work produced, the fabrication skills evident, and the unique and sustained conceptual flavour of the Institute’s exhibitions over the years, were the result of a clear understanding of design practice, conceptual development, personal research, and last but not least, quality time and hard work.

The work was not limited to the functional; indeed visitors to the exhibition were encouraged to question their preconceived notions of contemporary, non-figurative expression – abstract shapes and forms which may also result from a delight in the manipulation of materials.

Coupled with the development of design skills and production techniques, cultural awareness and expression, MCAST lays much emphasis on an indispensable range of key skills, such as literacy and numeracy, digital competence, basic science and technology, initiative and entrepreneurship. Besides, we have always believed in the enhancement of our students’ personal qualities (social and civic competences) and attitudes as essential elements for successful performance in professional working life.

For several students, particularly those who have completed their Higher National Diploma, this exhibition is the culmination of a good number of years of highly successful full-time study. It is not by coincidence that as many as fifteen HND students are joining BA Hons courses in England in two months time, bringing the total of MCAST art and design students on BA top-up courses abroad to twenty-seven.

Quality is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skilful execution and the vision to see obstacles as opportunities.

**Well done to students and staff!**



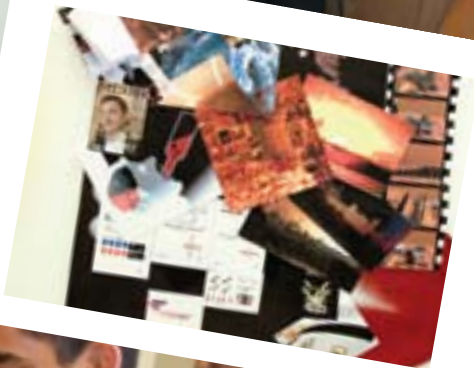
Centre piece in Stone by Shawn Grima



# PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF OPPOSITION VISIT ART EXHIBITION

The Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Laurence Gonzi as well as the Leader of the Opposition Dr. Joseph Muscat, visited the exhibition on two separate occasions. The students guided the distinguished guests through the exhibition explaining the concept behind their individual projects. Both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition praised the very high standard achieved by the students.

The exhibition was held at the St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity and it was open for visitors between the 5 July and the 27 July. Over 110 projects were on display by students attending various courses, namely the First Diploma in Art and Design, National Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art and Design, National Diploma in Design Crafts, Higher National Diploma in Graphic Design and Higher National Diploma in 3D Design.





# MAIN CAMPUS MAP

- |                                                     |                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Institute of Business & Commerce [Block A]        | 9 Mechanical Workshops                             |
| 2 Institute of Business & Commerce [Block B]        | 10 Gym                                             |
| 3 Institute of Community Services                   | 11 Football Tournament                             |
| 4 Institute of Mechanical Engineering               | 12 Mass                                            |
| 5 Library & Learning Resource Centre                | 13 Climbing Wall                                   |
| 6 Administration Block                              | 14 Food Stalls                                     |
| 7 Student House                                     | 15 Kick Boxing; Tug of War; Police Dogs            |
| 8 Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineering | 16 Firefighting Demonstrations; AFM Demonstrations |





No cars will be allowed to leave the parking area between 08:00hrs and 15:00hrs

# FOUNDATION DAY<sup>∞</sup>

| Date: Friday 24 October 2008 | Time: 9am onwards

A DAY OF ACTIVITIES & EVENTS FOR MCAST STUDENTS!

## Sports Activities

(Mobile Rock Climbing Wall; Kick boxing; Tug-of-War and Football Tournaments)

## Live Bands

## Fun Games

(Car Boot Sale; Nail Art Stand; AFM Demonstrations; Firefighting Demonstrations; and Police Dog Demonstrations)

89.7  
**Kaay**

live life the **bay way**

89.7  
**Kaay**



## ST ALBERT STUDENTS AT MCAST

BY JUANITA SAPIANO

The main aim of the staff at St Albert the Great College is for each student to succeed. The needs of our students are at the centre of the learning process. Our students come from different strata; have different personalities and capabilities, motivations and hence different needs.

Over the last years, most teachers at the college and students alike have been embarked on the Let Me Learn project, which is a process in which participants become aware of their preferred learning patterns. This process also provides students with an opportunity to identify their strengths and weaknesses so as to be able to stretch the former and address the latter. Once the students become aware of their preferred learning patterns, they are encouraged to find tools they can use to perform better in school subjects. The whole process also requires teachers to adapt their teaching to their students' learning styles and preferences.

The aim of the half day workshop at MCAST, which would not have been possible without the help of Mr John Sciberras, Director of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, was precisely to provide another

opportunity for the Form II students to work with the different tools they need to improve their performance.

The workshop was divided into two parts. In Part One, students were encouraged to think about their preferred learning patterns and to compare these to the patterns needed to complete the different tasks they come across in the different subjects they learn at school. In this way, students were made aware of the importance of stretching their patterns in order to excel in learning. This process of awareness is beneficial for the students because it motivates them to think and apply their learned knowledge to school life. Furthermore, this process of learning is effective because it involves the learners themselves and leads to autonomous learners. The aim of the workshop went beyond school life since students also became aware of the way in which their learning patterns influence the way they deal with the different situations they find themselves in, outside school.

The Second Part of the workshop consisted of a 'hands-on' activity in the Computer labs, where students were asked to apply what they had learnt by

completing a challenging task in pairs using the internet. Students were given various sites to work with. The task had to be completed by using the different learning patterns they are familiar with, including sequence, confluence, precision and above all technique. The students were also given the opportunity to practise other social skills including working in a team, sharing of ideas, and listening. Students had to research information, select relevant material, summarise the information and work on a PowerPoint presentation. The day was indeed a success and an enjoyable one.

St Albert the Great College has its students at its heart. They are the centre of the learning process. Such opportunities which are created with our learners in mind reflect the school's commitment to the success of our learners.

The teachers responsible for the workshops organised for the Form II students, were Ms Juanita Sapiano (Year co-ordinator and English Teacher), Ms Anne Axiaq (French Teacher), and Ms Rosella Bonnici (Science Teacher).



RF Controlled Robot sensing LP Gas by Leonard Zammit (National Diploma in Electrical & Electronics Engineering)



Control of Two Football Stands (National Diploma in Electrical & Electronics Engineering)



Jonathan Cassar (National Diploma in Electrical & Electronics Engineering) explaining his project to Hon. Dolores Cristina, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports.



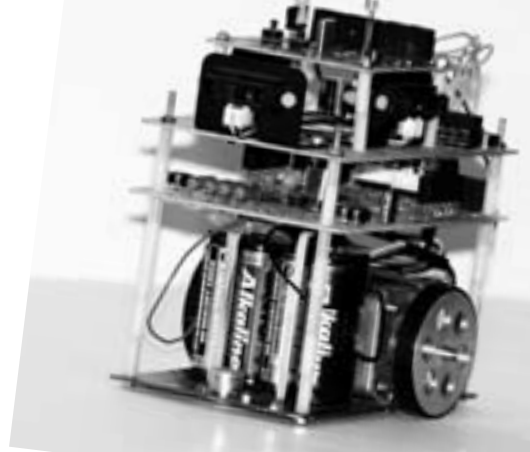
Dean Debattista (National Diploma in Electrical & Electronics Engineering) receiving an award for his project entitled "Gerber Code Interfaced PCB Routing Machine"



Home Alarm System by Franklin Grima (National Diploma in Electrical & Electronics Engineering)



Gerber Code Interfaced PCB Routing Machine by Dean Debattista



Maze Solving Robot (Best Overall Prize) by Darren Abela

# INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING ANNUAL PROJECTS EXHIBITION

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering Annual Projects Exhibition was held between Friday 20 to Monday 23 June 2008 at St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity, Valletta.

The Annual Projects Exhibition, besides being a calendar event in one of the prominent places in Malta, is a showcase of various final year projects of students that followed the Diploma in Industrial Electronics, Diploma in Computer Engineering and the National Diploma in Electrical and Electronics Engineering.

This year there were seventy projects on exhibition. They covered a broad range of technological fields including Robotics, Control, Home and Industrial Automation, Automotive Applications, Renewable Energy, Control, Process Investigation and Data Logging amongst others. Some of the projects are directly supported by local industry as it is the Institute's aim to provide the highest level of technical skills that will cater for the current and future needs of industry.

The Projects Exhibition is an opportunity for industry to view student works and levels of achievement and to discuss and exploit ideas with the students. It is also an excellent opportunity for prospective students interested in joining the Institute to obtain further information on the Institute and the courses on offer.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering is a leading provider of quality vocational education and training in Malta. It works closely with local industry through various projects and sustains itself by providing a range of commercial technical services and educational schemes to both the local industry and to markets outside the island.

The Institute boasts of up-to-date facilities and modern, good quality equipment. These are important in order to keep abreast with the latest developments in this fast-changing technological field. In this regard the Institute has recently set up an Electronics Laboratory funded through the European Regional Development Fund. This laboratory includes a variety of Electronic boards that interface with computer systems to enable students to carry out virtual experiments and practical exercises through installed software. The Institute has lately also invested in more new modern equipment namely precision instruments and automation equipment.

These up-to-date facilities and equipment together with the variety of engineering programmes offered at the Institute demonstrate the College's commitment to prepare students for tomorrow's challenges and rewarding career opportunities.

# OFFICIAL OPENING OF BRIDGE AND COMMUNICATIONS SIMULATORS AT MCAST MARITIME INSTITUTE

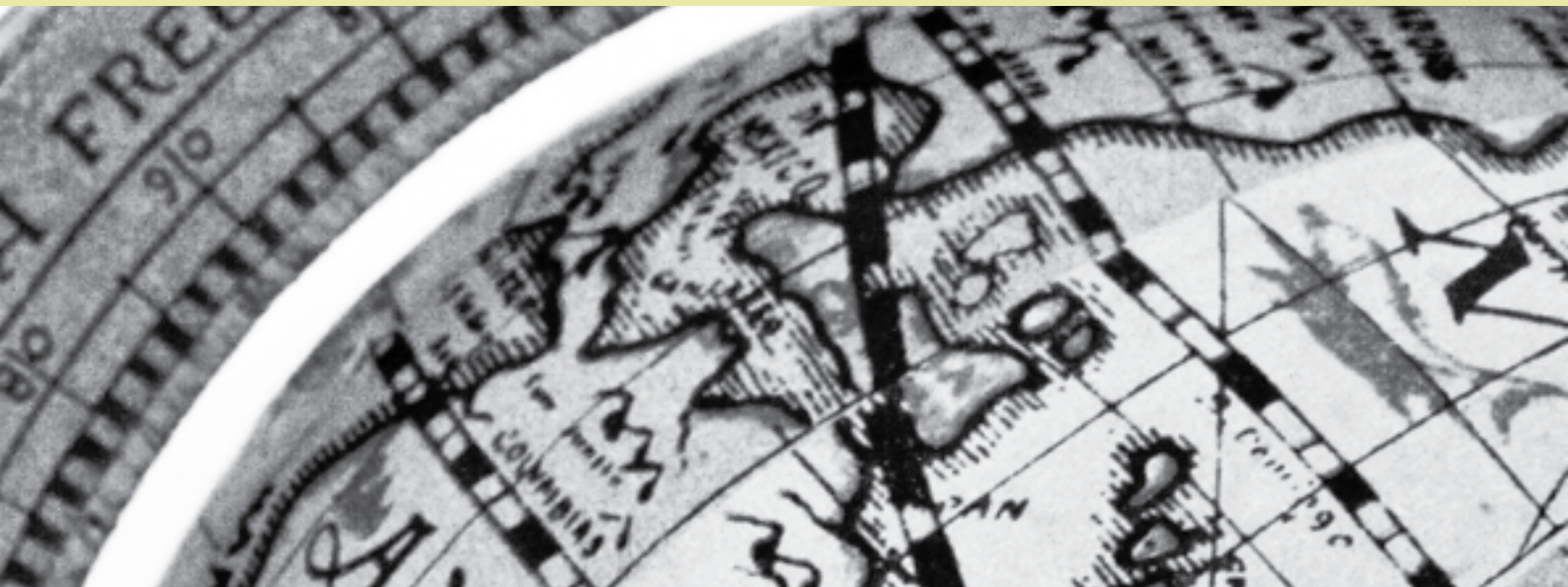


Officer Cadets “navigate” a vessel in the fairway to Valletta Grand Harbour in the Institute’s ship bridge simulator during the official opening ceremony.

Dott. Emanuele Grimaldi, of Grimaldi, Naples and Chairman, Malta Motorways of the Sea, officially launched the Bridge and Communications Simulator at the MCAST Maritime Institute on Thursday 22 May 2008. The Official Ceremony was attended by the Hon. Dr Austin Gatt Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications, Mr Paul Attard, President, MCAST Board of Governors, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO, Capt Reuben Lanfranco, Director, Maritime Institute, as well as senior representatives from Malta Motorways of the Sea.

Earlier, in March 2007, the Grimaldi Group, Naples had donated € 133,000 to the Maritime Institute. These funds contributed to the upgrading of the Institute’s Bridge and Communications Simulator.

Simulation training is an essential part of Maritime Training especially as MCAST is to create training opportunities that will lead to employment within a European and International context. Simulation training is also an International Maritime Organisation (IMO) requirement for Standard of Training and Certification for Watchkeepers (STCW) courses. This



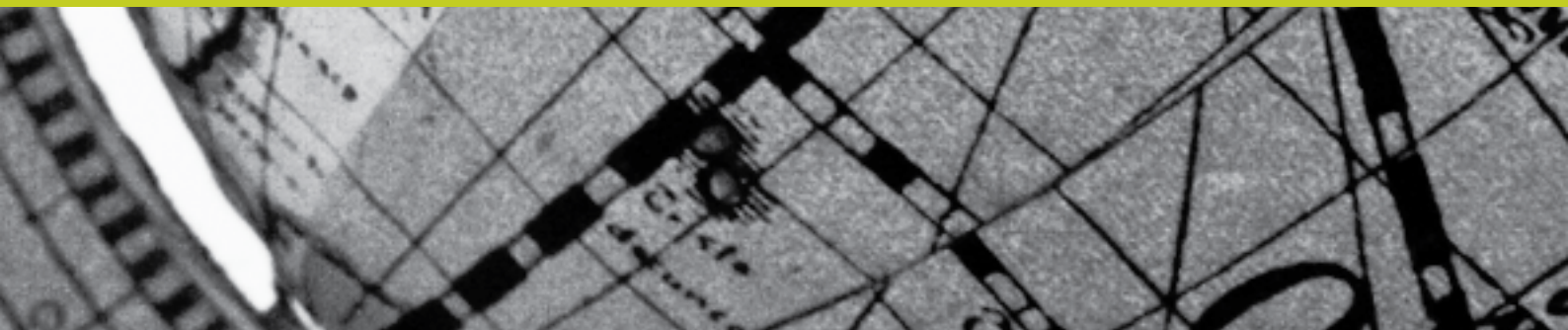
simulator upgrade is an important tool for officers to qualify and be able to obtain their final Certificate of Competence. It also provides hands-on training opportunities for the mariner to further his or her studies with the latest technology and equipment.

Malta Motorways of the Sea has entered into a cooperation agreement with MCAST's Maritime Institute. Through this agreement, Malta Motorways of the Sea has committed itself to support the training of Maltese cadets in the process of becoming young officers. Maltese cadets are offered opportunities to undertake their sea time training on board vessels sailing under the flag of Malta Motorways of the Sea and other companies of the Grimaldi Group. It was through this close and positive relationship developed with MCAST's Maritime Institute that Malta Motorways of the Sea has sponsored the upgrading of a modern simulator to support the training of Malta's maritime human resources.

Simulation training is an essential part of Maritime Training especially as MCAST is to create training opportunities that will lead to employment within a European and International context. Simulation training is also an International Maritime Organisation (IMO) requirement for STCW courses. All officers wishing to work on any Foreign Trading Merchant Vessel require simulation training in communications (GMDSS), Navigational Aids, and Vessel Handling (Bridge). This simulator upgrade is an important tool for officers to qualify and be able to obtain their final Certificate of Competence. It also provides hands-on training opportunities for the mariner to further his or her studies with the latest technology and equipment.

If the simulator did not follow the upgrading project to the latest specifications, MCAST Maritime Institute students would not be able to complete their course to the current international standards required, hence reducing the chances to pursue their career. The project focused on having a fully operational 'Bridge' simulator, Bridge Instructor Station, 'GMDSS' Communications Instructor station and six work stations for trainees.

Shortly after the opening ceremony, Dr. Grimaldi presented Officer Cadet Abigail Sammut with the Grimaldi Award for the best Officer Cadet in the OIC Navigational Watch course.





Maritime Institute Officer Cadets at the Marsa Rugby pitch playing a game of touch-rugby with students from St. Aloysius College during the Schools' Touch-Rugby Tournament



Maritime Institute Officer Cadets on their J24 Sailing boat "Tetide" before leaving port for the races

## MARITIME INSTITUTE OFFICER CADETS ATTAIN SECOND PLACE IN NATIONAL SCHOOL TOUCH-RUGBY TOURNAMENT

Since mid-December 2007, Maritime Institute Officer Cadets have been following a regular training programme introducing them to the sport of Rugby. The training is being organized by the Malta Rugby Football Union, Youth Development Officer, Mr. Sam Ramage and training sessions were regularly being held in the Marsa sports grounds Rugby Pitch. On the 10 April 2008, a team of Officer Cadets from the Maritime Institute took part in the National School Touch-Rugby Tournament and although playing for the first time against more experienced schools, managed to attain second place in the tournament.

## OFFICER CADETS PARTICIPATE IN XXV TROFEO ACCADEMIA NAVALE IN LIVORNO

Five MCAST Maritime Institute Officer Cadets accompanied by Capt. R. Lanfranco, Director, Maritime Institute, represented Malta at the XXVth Trofeo Accademia Navale e Città di Livorno (T.A.N.) Sailing Regatta held in Livorno, Italy, between the 28 April and 5 May 2008.

The regatta consisted of a series of races off the coast of Livorno, over a period of four days, with different classes of sailing vessels from Italy and other countries participating. The Maritime Institute Officer Cadets took part in the J24 Class races and were joined in this event by representatives from another 23 Naval Academies from all over the world. Crews from local Italian Sailing Clubs also participated in the J24 events increasing the total number of boats in these races to over 60.





MCAST Maritime Institute Officer Cadets on the J24 "Tetide" (centre) waiting for the wind to pick up during the Livorno Regatta. On their right is the boat of the German Naval Academy and on their left the boat of the Portuguese Naval College.



Maritime Institute Staff and Officer Cadets pose for the annual group photograph at the entrance to Villa Portelli on the 22nd May 2008.

The MCAST Maritime Institute Officer Cadets did considerably well during the races when one considers that the crew had no previous experience in J24 Class Sailing and that the Maltese cadets were the youngest from all the Naval Academies taking part.

During their stay in Livorno, the Maritime Institute Cadets shared dormitories with Cadets from other participating nations at the Italian Naval Academy and during their free time in the evenings visited the cities of Livorno and Florence with their Italian counterparts.

The five Officer Cadets attending the regatta were:

**Nav Officer Cadet Benjamin Vassallo**  
**Nav Officer Cadet Mauro Darmanin**  
**POC Dustin Mifsud**  
**POC Gavin Galea**  
**POC John Cachia (Helmsman)**

Special thanks go to the Italian Military Mission in Malta for their intervention in making this event possible as well as to Mr. Charles Vella from the Vikings Sailing Club for his assistance in training the cadets.

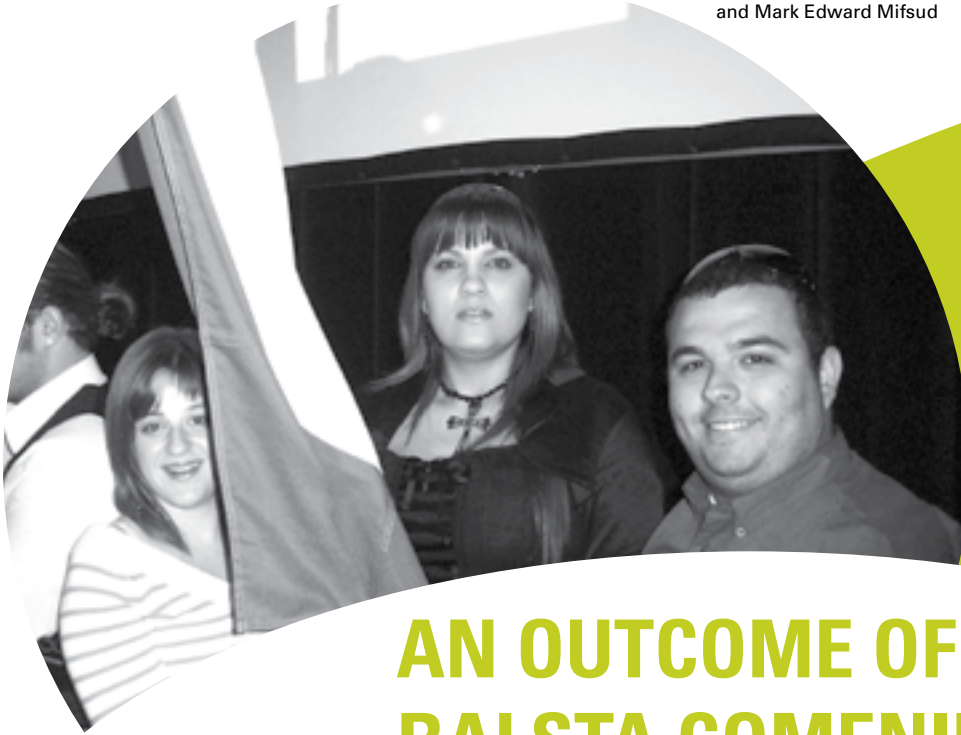


# OFFICER CADETS AT SEA

The Following Officer Cadets were at sea on the following vessels during the period this article was written:

<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Cadet</b>	<b>Date Embarked</b>
MV Grande Benelux	Christian Grima	30/04/08
MV Grande Mediterraneo	Jacqueline Spiteri	26/07/08
MV Repubblica del Brasile	Laura Falzon	25/07/08
MV Grande Napoli	Clyde Camilleri	05/08/08
HS Bizert	Angele Marie Agius	20/04/08
MV Grande Italia	Chris Bugeja	30/04/08
MT Salina Bay	Brandon Lee Camilleri	28/07/08
MV Grande Spagna	James Vella	26/04/08
MV Grande Ellade	Alessandro Zerafa	13/04/08
	Andre Agius	15/08/08
MV Grande Anversa	Sergio Zahra	29/05/08
CMA CGM America	Dylan Bartolo	05/06/08
MV Grande Lagos	Vivienne Chircop	09/08/08
MV Grande Portogallo	Dorian Grech	22/08/08
MV Eurocargo Napoli	Mauro Zammit	26/04/08
MV Eurocargo Salerno	Keith Marshall	14/04/08
MV Eurocargo Valencia	Benjamin Vassallo	11/08/08
CMA CGM Sambhar	Jesmar Vassallo	09/07/08
MSC New York	Charlot Cassar	22/04/08
MSC Boston	Luke Saliba	31/07/08

From left: Louisa Bonnici, Ms Vanessa Mifsud and Mark Edward Mifsud



## AN OUTCOME OF THE BALSTA COMENIUS PROJECT

One of the aims of the **BALSTA Comenius project**, which was concluded in June 2008, was to enhance the relationship between the different partners. This has been clearly achieved and was very evident when the Institute of Mechanical Engineering received an invitation from the Liceo Leonardo da Vinci in Italy to participate in a European Seminar which was to be held in Senigallia, Italy in May 2008. Lecturer Vanessa Mifsud accompanied by two students, Mark Edward Mifsud and Louisa Bonnici, participated in the seminar.



Senigallia, Italy

### OUR EXPERIENCE AT SENIGALLIA BY MARK EDWARD MIFSUD AND LOUISA BONNICI

Monday 5 May 2008, the day we were anticipating, finally arrived. We met at the airport at around 2.30 pm, all quite excited and anxious to leave. After a long journey we arrived in Senigallia at around midnight and we were given a very warm welcome by the Italian leaders.

One of the exciting parts of this seminar was that we could meet people from different countries like: Jordan, Ireland, Greece, Morocco, Israel, Sweden, Spain, Portugal and more. The Seminar was entitled "Lo sguardo, il silenzio e la parola" meaning "The glance, the silence and the word". Meetings were held in the mornings in the main city hall, Teatro La Fenice, and a number of well-known Italian speakers gave their opinions.

The subjects tackled were:

- "The Experience of the Glance" by Maurizio Viroli who spoke about how just a simple glance can affect our lives;

- "How to Control the Glance" by Marco Moschini who explained how to react towards other persons' glances;

- "The Glance in Art" by Stefani Papetti who talked about the looks on portraits done by famous artists like Leonardo Da Vinci etc.;

- "The Silenced Journey of the Eyes" by Alessandro Miola who gave a presentation on a number of photos of people in different situations in life.

In the afternoons, we were taken to different places around the city and we were given the chance to express our opinions regarding the talks. We could debate with other people and listen to different ideas from different backgrounds and cultures.

It was a great experience for us all; we looked forward to every talk as they were very interesting and informative. We would like to thank Ms. Vanessa Mifsud for taking care of us and Mr. Emmanuel Zahra, Institute Director, who gave us the opportunity to attend this seminar.



## WORKSHOP COMPLEX IN XEWKIJA, GOZO INAUGURATED

Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo together with Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors and Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO

A complex of workshops was inaugurated at the MCAST Centre in Xewkija, Gozo, by the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo. The inaugurated works included the construction of a complex incorporating two new workshops which were also furnished with modern equipment relating to the teaching and appropriate training in electrical installation as well as welding and fabrication. Another workshop was refurbished in order that it may be used during mechanical engineering training. This will allow Gozitan students to be adequately trained in accordance with present labour market demands in these areas.

This project required an investment of € 396,000 through the Structural Fund Programme for Malta 2004-2006, specifically through the European Regional Development Fund. The Government of Malta financed 25% of the total cost of this project.

The Director of the MCAST Gozo Centre, Mr Godwin Grech, explained how these new facilities represented better quality with regards to educational infrastructure and equipment used by MCAST in Gozo. He also mentioned how other projects that were submitted for financing through the second programming period 2007-2013 had been approved. Around € 133,000 will be used for the procurement of new equipment for the mechanical engineering machine shop as well as the wood-working workshop. The acquisition of new computers and other ancillary equipment to be used mainly during information technology lessons as well as new courses relating to Call Centre Training and a General Science Laboratory were also being projected. Mr Grech also said that in line with the development of the Master Development Plan for the building of a new campus at MCAST in Corradino, it was also envisaged that a Masterplan on a minor scale would be implemented in Gozo.

This would allow for adequate plans to amalgamate all MCAST facilities in one centre in order to ensure appropriate vocational training for today's times.

The MCAST Principal/CEO, Prof. Grech said that the project was proof of MCAST's commitment towards Gozitan students and thanked all those involved in the realization of this project. The President of the Board of Governors, Mr Paul A Attard, reminded those present that MCAST was not only a further and higher education College for the young generation but also a community College offering training and re-training opportunities to those already in employment. He augured that the new workshops would serve this scope as well, for the benefit of the Gozitan adult community.

The Minister for Gozo gave some details of the work involved, involving herself, Mr Frederick Fearne and Mr Paul A Attard to open an MCAST Centre in Gozo, way back in 2001. Hon. Debono noted with satisfaction that time proved that it was a wise decision as demonstrated by the success registered by the initiative which eventually meant more post-secondary study and training opportunities for Gozitan students in Gozo. She joined the previous speakers in thanking the MCAST Projects Office, particularly Mr Frederick Fearne for their commitment towards the MCAST Gozo Centre from its inception to date, with the latest development being the completion of these workshops

After the speeches, the Minister exposed a commemorative plaque and declared the new workshops complex open. Fr. Alfred Farrugia, the Gozo Centre Chaplain, blessed the new facilities and the staff and students present who will be working in them.



## CHOOSING A CAREER PATH

BY JOHN BARTOLO, PRINCIPAL COUNSELLOR

**Choosing one's career path can be a complex process which may affect one's entire life. A career provides a major source of personal identity while at the same time is a medium through which one can express his/her personality.**

**We have recently witnessed a huge increase in educational and training opportunities. If one does not find what one wants locally, it has become easier to obtain other qualifications or a job or career abroad. But unfortunately not all individuals know enough about the existing opportunities and professional services offered. What is contributing to certain individuals becoming uncertain and confused about which course of study / career path to follow? My experience as a counsellor has taught me that some students face difficulties when deciding which course or career path to choose.**

**There are many factors that influence the choice of a course or career. The major factors are mentioned below:**

### PARENTAL INFLUENCE

Parents exercise an important role in the formation of their children, but the extent of their activity is judged to be commensurate with the family's economic and social standing. Parental influence is very strong. This can be positive or negative. The strong sense of family identity and belonging in Malta can be a rich source of support, yet at times this can be a burden in terms of loyalty that is expected to an often rigid set of values. Sometimes students suppress their true wishes for the sake of their family. A student once confessed:

"My parents always pushed me to follow the engineering course at university. My father wanted me to achieve what he did not. However, I never wanted to become an engineer; the career of a technician was more appealing for me."

Autonomy in this regard includes the way towards evaluating the extent to which people are open to their own experience.

### FRIENDS

Friends can also be influential in the choice of a career path, particularly during the adolescence and young adult phase.

However, usually the more the individual grows, the less the effect of peer pressure.

As in the case of parents and relatives, friends' influence can be both positive and negative. This aspect places responsibility on the individual to use all information and influences in order to make a well-founded and informed decision.

### TEACHERS

Teachers also play an important role in influencing the educational process and career choice of students. Among others, Law's 'ragbag of community' includes teachers who can influence individuals in five ways:- expectations, feedback, support, modelling and information. It is a fact that teachers' attitudes and interventions can have a great impact on the developing student, leaving either positive or negative results. ►

## ◀ EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

Examination results and assessments can limit the students' educational and career choices. The effects vary according to the individuals and their families.

From my experience, generally students do not want to be with others whose academic ability is very different than their own, and usually they select courses where they have a good chance of being accepted on the course. Thus examinations, qualifications and assessments are fundamental principles that one has to consider when choosing an educational or career path.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Another factor that can influence the choice of a career training programme is work experience. Through the exposure to the labour market, one can get a better picture of the different types of jobs and careers. The experience of a non-rewarding and unsatisfying job could help the individual to better appreciate the learning experience. Furthermore, the acquisition of skills and the exposure to tasks related to jobs or careers can also be met elsewhere, such as in organizations and through voluntary work. The skills learnt during apprenticeships and other job experiences serve both educational and occupational purposes.

## GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING ACTIVITIES

Various guidance and counselling activities are being organized with the main goal of assisting individuals to manage their personal, educational, vocational or occupational life paths effectively. In spite of these activities, a local common practice is that of seeking advice from a friend, but one has to be careful where and how to seek such advice. One has to bear in mind that in spite of all the help,

advice, and support given, the final decision would always remain with the individual concerned.

## SELF CONCEPT

A clear understanding of the 'I' and the development of a personal identity with the personal characteristics and potential capabilities are crucial aspects for establishing personal occupational life paths. Then, through this understanding one can develop personal reachable goals. It is this vital force of Self Concept that establishes a career pattern which one will follow throughout life. Self Concept is a key factor to career selection because people want jobs or careers that are compatible with their self-image. As people project into the work world, they usually choose occupations that are appropriate to their social class, intellectual level and sex-typing. One has to distinguish between the 'Heart option', which refers to their personal interest and self fulfilment and the 'Mind option', referring to the prospects of employment and financial income.

In 1992 the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported that one half of the entire working population were unhappy in their jobs and as many as ninety per cent may be spending much of their time and energy in work that brings them no closer to their goals in life. More alarmingly, the WHO reported that about seventy five per cent of those who consulted psychiatrists were experiencing problems that could be traced to a lack of job satisfaction. (Jayasinghe, 2001: 55)

Evidently self awareness is a dynamic process and an integral aspect of developing one's Self Concept. Decisions involved are based upon personal values and goals followed by the implementation procedure in order to move towards one's careers' aspirations.

## CONCLUSION

One can conclude that the characteristics of career development are a complex of political, psychological, social and economic variables. These influences can have a distinct impact on the individual. During a counselling session the needs of the individual should be the main focus. It is evident that the role of emotion needs more attention in the developmental process of choosing a career path. The emotions involved in the choice of a career path should not be isolated from the cognitions and behaviour. The provision of learning experiences with the necessary skills will enable individuals to minimise and if possible free themselves from the effects of negative influences and would help them to compete in a complex and uncertain work environment. The process is one of continuously differentiating one's ego identity, processing developmental tasks, and resolving psychological crises. Guidance and counselling can assist students in the acquisition of skills which would better equip them in the decision to choose a career path. Through these skills, individuals would be able to take more responsibility for managing their own careers and foster life-long learning in today's changing environment. ■

**Mr. John Bartolo, MCAST Principal Counsellor can be contacted on 2198 7133/134 or by email: [counsellors@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:counsellors@mcast.edu.mt)**



# MCAST LIBRARIAN VISITS ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN SWITZERLAND AND THE NETHERLANDS



Top: Zurich Law School Library  
Bottom: Wageningen - University and Research Library

The MCAST Library and Learning Resource Centre ([www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/](http://www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/)) presently consists of a system of 5 geographically separate libraries in different parts of the island of Malta and another one on the sister island of Gozo. Together all 6 libraries however form one library system catering for all the information needs of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology ([www.mcast.edu.mt](http://www.mcast.edu.mt)) presently a learning community of about 4,500 students besides the lecturing and non academic staff. The Main Library is found in Paola and serves as a headquarters for all the other libraries. Library operations started in 2003 and over these first 5 years there has been rapid development but greater developments are in the making for the whole College and the Library. The next stage of development, over the coming 3-8 years, will see three major events happening;

MCAST will start awarding degrees in some study areas, beyond the present highest level (Higher National Diplomas) while still retaining the latter and lower levels.

All nine Institutes will be physically centralised into one new Campus in Paola, where the present Main Library is. The current full-time student population (4,500) will more or less double.

For the Library these developments will mean greater demand on its collections and services (degree students vs diploma students), centralisation of all

collections and clients (one Campus rather than five geographically distinct ones) and finally a bigger user population (doubling of students). At the time these three important decisions were being debated, the Library was consulted to advise on implications and it was immediately apparent that the present Main Library building (4 storeys with a total floor space of about 1,550 m<sup>2</sup> and about 1 km of potential shelving space) would not cater for these new conditions. So in spite of having just finished settling into a recently renovated building (May 2005) the decision was taken to build a new Library and Learning Resource Centre roughly 3 times bigger than the present building.

It is in this context that during the first week of May, over 6 working days the MCAST Librarian, Mr. Laurence Zerafa, visited 5 academic libraries in Zurich as follows:

- Medical Library Careum  
[www.hbz.uzh.ch](http://www.hbz.uzh.ch)
- Law School Library  
[www.rwi.uzh.ch/bibliothek.html](http://www.rwi.uzh.ch/bibliothek.html)
- Zentralbibliothek  
[www.rwi.uzh.ch/bibliothek.html](http://www.rwi.uzh.ch/bibliothek.html)
- Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Library  
[www.ethbib.ethz.ch/about\\_e.html](http://www.ethbib.ethz.ch/about_e.html)
- Grüne Bibliothek  
[www.ethbib.ethz.ch/dez/gruen\\_e.html](http://www.ethbib.ethz.ch/dez/gruen_e.html)

and another 8 academic libraries in The Netherlands (various towns) as follows:

- Leeuwarden – Stenden Hogeschool CHN [www.chn.nl/](http://www.chn.nl/) ►



Delft University Library outside



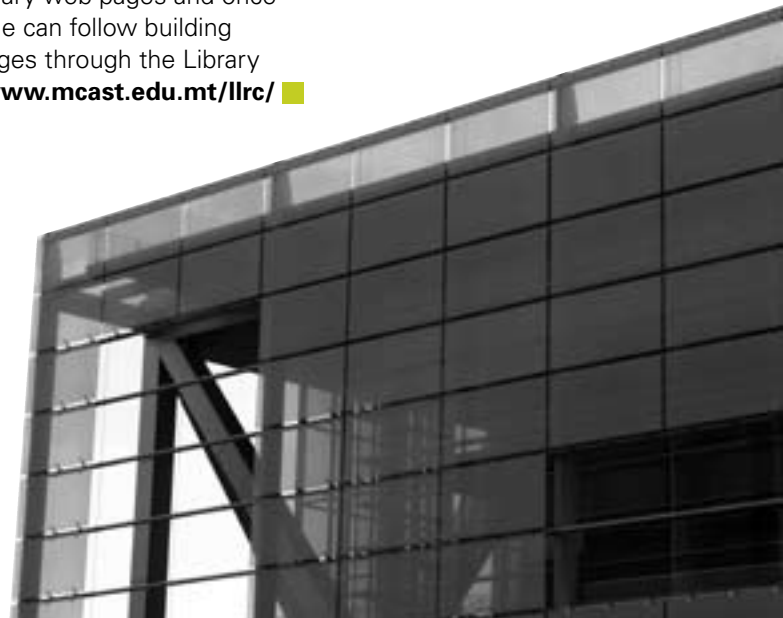
Delft University Library inside

- The Hague - University Library [portal.hhs.nl](http://portal.hhs.nl)
- Nijmegen - Radboud University Main Library [www.ru.nl/library/](http://www.ru.nl/library/)
- Nijmegen - Radboud University Faculty of Science Library [www.ru.nl/library/](http://www.ru.nl/library/)
- Wageningen - University and Research Library [www.wur.nl/](http://www.wur.nl/)
- Utrecht - University Library [www.library.uu.nl/182main.html](http://www.library.uu.nl/182main.html)
- Maastricht - University Library [www.unimaas.nl](http://www.unimaas.nl)
- Delft - Technical University Library [www.library.tudelft.nl/ws/index.htm](http://www.library.tudelft.nl/ws/index.htm)

Besides visiting these libraries the opportunity was taken, where time permitted, to visit the Public Library of the town/city being visited, besides the National Library of The Netherlands in The Hague. All academic libraries visited were mostly through pre-set appointments and I must state that Swiss and Dutch librarians are very helpful colleagues. Even on the few occasions when I turned up unannounced, and I introduced myself at their reception, somebody did accompany me. Each visit (3 hours or so) consisted of an overview verbal explanation of the scope of the library, a walk-through the building including the areas not accessible to the public, followed by a question and answer session with the technical person involved with designing the mostly newly built building or recent renovations.

As a result of these visits the Librarian identified those main library design features that would be good to incorporate into the new building which is being designed as a Library on the new Campus on Corradino Hill. Unlike the present Main Library building which 5 years ago was a 60s building converted over 1½ years into a library building, the new library building will be designed and built from afresh. This gives us the opportunity to build exactly to our requirements, within the budget allocated. The new design features that are being envisaged for the new building include the extensive use of glass enclosed group study rooms which will help to keep the rest of the library quiet, space for exhibitions and presentations and informal spaces for leisure reading, light refreshments and social interaction.

As soon as the preliminary plans for the new library are approved they will be placed on our library web-pages and once building starts one can follow building development stages through the Library News page at [www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/](http://www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/)







# I WANT TO SEE THE WORLD!

Another Academic Year is starting and yet you already find yourself thinking about your next vacation and probably travel is top on your list particularly if you are at the end of your course. Students all over the world travel to enjoy themselves, to learn more about the world around them, to make new friendships and to open up their minds and attitudes towards to other people and cultures and that is how it should be! Student life is not only about academic development but also, and probably more importantly, about gaining life experiences – travelling is one of the best ways to do so.

Fast forward to next May. You've finished your exams, the long summer vacation is looming, and you've got a burning desire to get out of this little island and explore the world. If you're taking a break before starting work or continuing your studies, you'll be familiar with the highs and lows of budget travel. But for those who haven't ventured beyond a school trip or family holiday, taking off on your own for the first time can be daunting.

## WHAT TYPE OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCE ARE YOU AFTER?

The first thing to ask yourself is what kind of travelling experience you want to have. Are you after an adventure in a far-away place, trekking in the jungle or backpacking around as many countries as possible. Or would you rather spend time in one area delving deeper into the culture, the people and the entertainment?

Students around the world tend to go for a mix of adventure outdoors and entertainment in the cities, affordable lodging and transport but longer stays and wherever they go they want to find fun-loving individuals like themselves to have a good time with. Apart from the usual travel one could try backpacking around the less visited European countries, taking the plunge in more exotic countries like Morocco, taking a haggis tour around Scotland, England and Wales, a sailing trip in Croatia, climbing in the Alps, diving in the Red Sea, a Safari in Africa, backpacking in Thailand and South-East Asia, a working holiday in Australia and so much more. If you just want a short break why not try visiting Ireland for St. Patrick's Day or Venice during its Carnival or why not try a long weekend break anywhere around Europe? What is important when choosing your destination and the length of stay is to focus on travel packages that are within your budget.

A short stay in Europe could cost you as much as a month in South-East Asia depending on where you go, how you travel, and where you stay.

Once you've decided on the type of holiday you are after and the region in the world you want to visit, the next likely question is what you can get for your (probably limited) budget? A key to low-budget travel is to avoid the high season. You might not get the best weather in low-season but your money will last you longer and the chances are you will get better service and deals. Another way to get good rates is by booking early and NSTS offers a book now and pay later scheme.

## GET YOURSELF AN INTERRAIL CARD AND AN ISIC CARD

For those intending to visit a number of countries, an InterRail pass or a round-the-world ticket can give you the flexibility you need. Don't forget too that, as a student, you're eligible for a wide range of discounts. The ISIC is the only card providing both local and international benefits for full-time students and has been used by 40 million students worldwide since 1968. With access to a global network of affordable and specialised student services, the ISIC is your passport to more than 41,100 discounts and benefits in 106 countries worldwide.

If you like travelling and discovering other countries and cultures then the card is an essential part of your travelling bag. As an ISIC holder, you become part of a worldwide community of over 4.5 million students who share a passion for travel, adventure and discovery. In Malta there are a considerable amount of benefits and these are being further expanded.

## WORK AND TRAVEL

Another great opportunity to travel and learn is through a working holiday with the work fuelling your travel and giving you a great learning experience. NSTS offers a unique opportunity to enhance personal development through the experience of work overseas. The programmes currently being offered are for Australia, Spain, Italy and UK.

Australia - Work & travel is a good way for travellers to see everything that Australia has to offer from its architectural landmarks to its diving adventures.

Spain - The culture, the climate and the Costa are some of the things that promise to spice up work and travel in Spain.

Italy - The prospect of working and travelling through Italy is another "offer you cannot refuse", being able to savour all that Italy has to offer as you work your way at your own pace exploring its culture and cuisine.

United Kingdom - Working in London or any other major city in the UK offers a diversity of cultures, nationalities and lifestyles. You will be able to work side by side with people from all over the world and make friends for life.

## VOLUNTEERING PROJECTS ARE A GREAT WAY TO SEE THE WORLD

If you're planning an exciting volunteering or research project, whether it's saving an area of rainforest in Ecuador or teaching English in China, you need to make sure you are well informed and start working on it well in advance.

## GROUP STUDY TOURS

NSTS also offers tailor-made travel experiences based on the needs of students and youths. We are promoting the idea of a Group Study Tour where travel can also become synonymous with an educational travel experience. The tour will mostly focus on the educational aspect of travel, giving students the possibility to realistically familiarize themselves with the various aspects being studied.

Moreover, due to the educational aspect of these Group Study Tours students are allowed to pay their expenses through the Smart Card.

NSTS-Student and Youth Travel has been established since 1954 as a travel organisation that offers specialised travel services for young people, Maltese students and foreigners alike. Throughout the years we have created a number of travel experiences that are designed to enhance personal development. We strive to provide students and youth with opportunities to learn, work, study and develop skills. Our main objective is: "to promote and facilitate travel for students and youths, on a not-for-profit basis, for them to enhance their personal development through the experience of travel."

## CLOSURE OF TWO COMENIUS PROJECTS AT MCAST



▲ Roof of Europe Coordinator and Lecturer Martin Borg (fourth from right) during the Tenerife mobility between 14-18 April 2008

◀ The Maltese delegation from the Institute of Building and Construction Engineering students with Martin Borg

Two MCAST Comenius approved projects, BALSTA and Roofs of Europe have come to an end with a closing ceremony held at the MCAST new Student House at the MCAST Main Campus. BALSTA was coordinated through the MCAST Institute of Mechanical Engineering while the Roofs of Europe project through the Institute of Building and Construction Engineering.

BALSTA's idea was developed by Ms. Edel Cassar, the ex-EU Projects Coordinator at MCAST's International Office during a contact seminar held in Sweden. BALSTA happened to be the name of the place where the idea originated so the same name became the project title. The other partners, France, Italy, Slovenia and Finland, were recruited at the same seminar. Malta became the coordinating country and consequently hosted the first project meeting.

The BALSTA project has enforced co-planning and co-tutoring lessons within different vocational and academic contexts. This was the best methodology practised by the participating partners to integrate content and language learning.

All the lecturers have reported that the students' motivation increased significantly during the co-planned or co-tutored lessons. Students involved in the BALSTA lessons in the various partner countries appreciated the lecturers' efforts, showed more interest in both the content and the language learning, and some have also requested more co-tutored lessons in the future. Students have learnt more technical terms in English and have notably improved their communication skills. The usual complaints concerning the irrelevance of English were forgotten as most students felt that these type of lessons will help them in their future job, whether this will be in their country or abroad.

Using the techniques presented will make MCAST students more confident in the way they communicate with co-workers from other countries, thus making them more efficient at work and more employable.

Moreover, co-planning and co-tutoring lessons was also beneficial to the lecturers. It has been a great way to involve lecturers from different fields to co-operate and learn from each other. Content teachers have improved their English, while language teachers have learnt more technical terms. This methodology can be adapted to various levels and fields. Co-tutoring is mostly associated with the teaching of students with learning difficulties or disabilities. However, this manual clearly shows that co-tutoring, together with co-planning, can be a great tool in any classroom. The sample lesson plans included in this manual cover different fields of study

at different levels. The main requirements for successful co-tutored or co-planned lessons are dedicated and motivated lecturers who are ready to spend time planning lessons together. Several lecturers have reported that they found it difficult to co-tutor lessons due to schedule restrictions, and so they resorted to just co-planning a lesson (or series of lessons). A more flexible schedule would further improve the results of this approach to teaching, as it would make it possible to co-plan and co-tutor lessons with an established amount of teaching time. Lecturers who are willing to try this methodology must find time to evaluate the lessons together. Evaluation sheets for lecturers and students are also provided in this manual. Working through these evaluation sheets will help the lecturers to improve their lessons and to develop their working partnership. Co-planning and co-tutoring might seem a little daunting at first. However once tried one will realize its positive outcomes. This approach to teaching is advantageous to both students and lecturers, and in the long term the results will be more than satisfying.

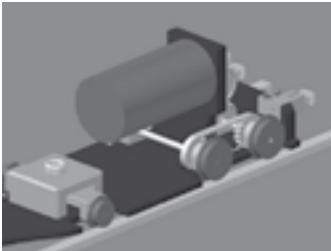
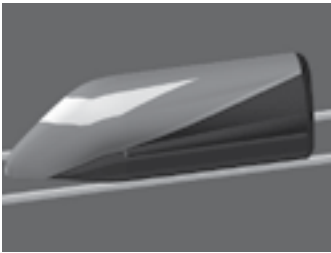
The other project was entitled Roofs of Europe. The Institute of Building and Construction Engineering coordinated a Comenius project together with similar vocational centres located in Germany, Ireland and Spain. The project started in November 2005 with a planning meeting held in Malta. Learners following respective diploma courses in Building and Construction Engineering formed the learning groups for the project activities and motilities. The project planning revolved around a number of aims and objectives which were successfully met during the three years of the project. A number of thematic issues were identified including Construction Techniques, Sustainability in Construction Structural Effects, Drafting and Design.

These thematic issues were developed by the respective learning group by conducting work prior to the actual mobility. During the mobility, the learning group from each respective project partner was engaged in international groups to conduct a specific type of work. The products developed for the project included: model construction multimedia presentations, DVDs, AutoCAD drawings and designs and glossaries.

The BALSTA Manual was actually launched during this ceremony and was presented to the MCAST Principal/CEO Prof Maurice Grech, European Union Programmes Agency Comenius Official and to the MCAST Institute Directors present. Students that benefitted from the Roofs of Europe project were presented with certificates. Both experiences will surely increase both MCAST students' and lecturers' interest in EU funded programmes. MCAST looks forward to such similar successes in the near future. The College has submitted four new projects, two of them Comenius projects.



## TOULOUSE OR **NOT** TO LOSE



The Train for Europe Designs

Last December a group of lecturers from the MCAST Institute of Mechanical Engineering, visited Albi, Toulouse, to embark on a Comenius project entitled "Train for Europe." This being the largest Comenius project ever, it consisted of twenty one participating countries and twenty four colleges from all over Europe. In Albi the colleges were divided into three groups. Each group had to design, build and implement a locomotive. Three locomotives will be officially manufactured using CNC technology, with the work distributed amongst each group. A steam engine will be produced by group I; and two electric engines will be produced by groups II and III respectively. Malta is in group II which is made up of ten participating countries, namely Croatia, Czech Republic, Italy, Spain, Hungary, Romania, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia and

Malta. The common language is English. Every country had to submit its design for a locomotive. Malta chose to design a contemporary engine based on the fact that the design had to portray Europe in the year 2000. A vote was taken in Ivrea for six designs; each country could vote once, excluding itself. Malta came out triumphant with six votes out of ten, one for Hungary, one for Italy, one for Spain and one for Croatia. In Ivrea the group consisted of three lecturers namely Mr. Pierre Vella (Coordinator), Mr. Ray Cassar (CAD and Design) and Ms. Elaine Zarb Giorgo (Business and Finance). Three students accompanied the lecturers namely Johann Karl Dalli who originated the design, Christopher Xuereb who produced most of the CNC parts, and Alexander Borg who was sponsored by Brand International Ltd.



The Train for Europe Maltese delegation on their way to Toulouse

# MCAST SPORTS DEPARTMENT ORGANIZES YOUTH EXCHANGE ENTITLED 'FIGHTING OBESITY THROUGH SPORT'

BY ADELE MUSCAT, MCAST SPORTS CO-ORDINATOR AND JASON MUSCAT, SPORTS ASSISTANT



From left: Dalton Wingfield, Clint Buttigieg and Marco Cremona trying their hand at cooking



Stephanie Des Jardins with the German participants, winners of the beach soccer match



The participants

The MCAST Sports Department has over the past years participated in various youth exchanges in Germany, France and now Finland too. All such exchanges have been centred around sport with topics such as 'Street Soccer for Tolerance' and 'Violence in Sport' being discussed.

Between the 1st and the 8th of June 2008 the MCAST Sports Department hosted 20 youths and their leaders from Finland, Scotland, France and Germany to an exchange entitled 'Fighting Obesity through Sport'. Eleven Maltese students currently studying for an MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Sport (Development, Coaching and Fitness) also participated in this exchange.

The varied programme these young people followed included a number of sports activities such as canoeing, mountain biking, sailing, a night hike and beach games including beach soccer, swimming and beach volley. Physical activity is seen as a great medium to fight the problem of obesity our country is facing.

The youths also participated in various discussions on the topic and these included a talk by a Health Promotion nutritionist. The groups prepared a powerpoint presentation on obesity in their own country and how their country was tackling the problem. It was interesting to see what the different cultures presented especially in terms of hours of physical activity they engaged in and in terms of food intake. The youths also had the opportunity to ask people in the street about their eating and exercise habits.

Another activity which turned out very well was the visit to the Institute of Tourism Studies where a presentation on Maltese Gastronomy and a demonstration on how to cook healthy Maltese snacks were given. Students also donned the chef's hat themselves and had a try in the kitchens preparing the food themselves.

The students also visited St. James Hospital in Sliema. Here Ms Simone Sammut, a gym instructor, spoke about her work in the gym.

The nurses also gave a short talk regarding their job with obese people. The students also visited the physiotherapy area in the gym to learn more about the programme these people followed.

Evening activities were varied too. The intercultural night by the hotel pool was enjoyed by all and included French and Maltese music, games and typical foods from the various countries. The BBQ on the beach was also highly enjoyed after the beach games. Some played the bongos, others did some tricks whilst others helped to cook the food. On another night they watched the DVD 'Supersize Me' about a man who decided to eat fast food for a month and how dangerous this was to his health. Other evenings were spent hiking, at the Zebbug village feast and at a Hip Hop dance class. This was probably the most popular evening, with the leaders also joining in.

A treasure hunt was organised in Valletta so as to make the sightseeing more interesting for these young people. They also had the opportunity to take a ride on a typical Maltese bus and spend some time in Mdina too.

This exchange was a great adventure for all. Overall this was a very successful exchange as stated by all participants. A facebook account has now been set up so that all can keep in touch. We are also in the process of sending brochures, on obesity and its prevention and treatment, to the various countries to be disseminated amongst their community. The same will be done here in Malta with MCAST students.

This experience helped not only to create awareness regarding the obesity problem in Malta and in other countries but it helped to create strong bonds among the various youths, it created better understanding and tolerance of cultures and it helped to develop leadership skills among the participants.

This exchange would not have been possible had it not been for the EU funds made available by the EUPA. A sincere thanks goes to all the staff at EUPA and everyone else that contributed to making this event such a success.

# INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SPORT FEDERATION

Between the 12 and the 15 April 2008 Sports Co-ordinator and Malta School Sport Federation Secretary attended the International School Sport Federation General Assembly held in Minorca. Such assemblies are conducted to learn more about the activities of the International School Sport Federation, how they can help the school sport federations in each country. They are very useful for making contacts.

In Malta, the Malta School Sport Federation organizes sport activities for students in secondary and post secondary educational institutions and also gives students the opportunity to participate in sport in other countries. This year we hope that our students will have the opportunity to participate in a swimming gala in Puerto Rico and in the gymnasium in Qatar.

## SPORT YOUTH EXCHANGE IN FINLAND

Five MCAST students, Pamela Borg, Stephanie Desjardins, Andre Buhagiar, Gabriel Chircop and Nikolai Dalli from the Institute of Community Services, took part in the youth exchange organized in Finland between the 31 July and the 8 August 2008. The title of the project was "Sport and Action for You and Me." This exchange was hosted by Järvenpää city Sports Department.

The duty of this Department is to take care of the sports facilities and services of the city. The operational idea of this Sports Department is to improve, through sport, the quality of citizens' life offering diverse possibilities to practice sports and influencing attitudes towards sport. The Järvenpää Sport Department organises sport and physical activities mainly for those people to whom the sports clubs have very little

to offer. In Järvenpää there are more than 80 sports clubs. They offer activities mostly for children and young adults and through that do very precious youth work. The city supports their work by giving annual subsidies to the sport clubs.

Floorball, the main sport in the exchange, came up in a feasibility visit as a sport which interests young people but is still rather new in some countries. It is also an easy sport to actualise in different countries and among young people from different backgrounds. By using the method of "Street Soccer for Tolerance", floorball contributes to all kind of tolerance between young people and can be used as a tool for non-formal education and social inclusion like the other physical activities during the youth exchange.



Gabriel trying to ice skate



Rowing in Finland

## SPORTS DEPARTMENT

The Sports Department would like to welcome all new students at MCAST. A variety of competitive and non competitive sports activities are organized on a regular basis from team sport leagues to athletic events, to sport demonstrations, to outdoor adventure sport. For more information on sports activities at MCAST please visit one of the gyms on the various campuses or contact the Sports Co-ordinator at [adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt)

# 48<sup>TH</sup>



## INTERNATIONAL SESSION FOR YOUNG PARTICIPANTS, OLYMPIA

BY ADELE MUSCAT, SPORTS CO-ORDINATOR

Between the 18 and 25 June 2008, Sports Co-ordinator Adele Muscat together with another Maltese participant Chris Cassar attended the 48th International Session for young participants at the International Olympic Academy in Ancient Olympia. There were two people from 99 different countries participating in this seminar. Here we had the opportunity to learn more about the Olympic Movement and the values of Olympism.

Chris, a Hung Gar Kung Fu instructor, and I, the Malta Olympic Committee's Sport Psychologist and MCAST Sports Co-ordinator were selected as the Maltese representatives after the Malta Olympic Committee had brought out a call for application for the said seminar.

On arrival in Athens we were taken sightseeing to the Panathenaion Stadium, to the Archeological site and Museum of the Acropolis and to the National Archeological Museum. Later on in the evening we had the opening of the 48th International Session for Young Participants on the Hill of the Pnyx. This was in a beautiful outdoor setting with marvellous views of the Acropolis.

The next day we set off to Olympia via Delphi where we stopped for a guided tour of the archeological site and the Museum of Delphi. We arrived in Ancient Olympia at about 19.00hrs and immediately I was in awe of the grounds at the Olympic Academy. It was truly a marvellous place to spend the next 10 days. We were placed in our rooms and I got to know my Indian roommate who I was to share so much with. Chris on the other hand was sharing with another four people from Barbados, Bulgaria, South Africa and Israel.

The next day we had one of the highlights of this session, the guided visit to the archeological site where the first Olympics used to be held. To this day the lighting of the torch for the Olympics always starts off on its voyage from here.

We enjoyed tremendously running down the stadium like the Olympians used to do at that time.

Later on that day we had another official opening by the President of the International Olympic Academy. Then we laid wreaths at the steel of Pierre de Coubertin, renovator of the Modern Olympic Games. In 1927 Pierre de Coubertin visited Olympia, on the invitation of the Greek government, to attend the ceremony for the unveiling of a commemorative steel in his honour "for his contribution to the revival of the Olympic Games." During his stay he discussed with Ioannis Chrysafis, Director of the Physical Education Department of the University of Athens, about the need for a Cultural Centre which would investigate, study and predict the trends of the Olympic Movement. Chrysafis, who was also a member of the Hellenic Olympic Committee, wanted to create an Academic Centre that would provide scientific corroboration of the educational value of sport by means of scientific papers and the staging of classical contests. However their early death prevented them from seeing the realisation of their dream.

One year after Coubertin's death his heart was brought to Olympia and placed in the commemorative steel. Some time later John Ketseas and Carl Diem who had worked together for the organization of the first Olympic Torch Relay during the Berlin Games of 1936, decided to create a Centre of Olympic Studies. Several years later the inauguration date was set for the summer of 1961 to coincide with the ceremony of the presentation of the ancient stadium of Olympia.

During the first ten years, the IOA's activities were restricted to the organization of an annual session for young participants, just like we participated in. However since 1970, there has been a steady increase in its activities and today approximately 40 events are staged in the Academy's facilities in Ancient Olympia.



The academy's aim is to create an international cultural centre in Ancient Olympia devoted to the safeguard and dissemination of the Olympic Spirit, the study and implementation of the educational and social principles of the games and the scientific consolidation of the Olympic Idea.

In Olympia we had plenty of opportunities to learn about Olympism and Humanism, Olympic Education Programmes in various countries, the Humanitarian ideas of Pierre de Coubertin, the role of the media in the Olympic Games and much more. Lecturers from all over the world shared with us their knowledge and it was very motivating to learn from such people.

Apart from the daily lectures we also had discussion groups once or twice a day. Here we met up in groups of 15 people or so and discussed various topics such as whether the Paralympic Games and Olympic games can be combined, doping, Olympic education, Olympic values and much more. This was also a great way to get to know each other better. In my group I had some very interesting people including an American rowing World Champion, an Israeli professional basketball player and a Serbian Olympic Museum Manager to name a few.

Other activities we had daily included art, poetry and dance workshops which turned out to be great fun and ended up with a performance at the end of our stay there. There were three cultural nights, film projections and various sport activities including football, basketball, volleyball, tennis and table-tennis. A final sports contest – track and field events as well as a swimming gala were great fun especially the blind man's race and the male synchronized swimming team. Since we had all missed the Olympic Day Run in our various countries we held an Olympic Day run there with all the different nations. Every morning we also conducted various games between 7.00 -7.30am including extreme Frisbee, power yoga etc.

Other socializing activities we did included a trip to the beach, watching the European football championships together and plenty of nights were also spent at Zorbas, the local disco. As can be imagined being woken up in the morning to classical music being played over a loudspeaker for ten minutes at 7am was not enjoyed by all!

The session finished off with a closing ceremony where we were all given participation diplomas. As can be expected we were sad to leave the new friends we had shared so much with over the two weeks. However we promised each other to keep in touch and help each other develop better Olympic education opportunities in our respective countries.

## YOUTH EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIP 'VIOLENCE IN SPORT'

Between the 13 and the 20 July 2008, a group of four young French youths and two leaders visited Malta as guests of the MCAST Sports Department to disseminate the results of a youth exchange held in France in July 2007 on 'Violence in Sport' between French, Maltese, Czech and Turkish youths. The French youths met up with the Maltese MCAST students who had participated in the exchange the previous year and distributed T-shirts, leaflets and DVDs on violence in sport to students participating in the FISEC Games. The young people also enjoyed a number of activities together including a day in Gozo and a visit to MCAST.

## ISF TABLE-TENNIS TOURNAMENT

Between the 28 March and the 4 April 2008, MCAST students participated as volunteers in the International School Sport Federation Table-Tennis Tournament. There were 19 countries including China, Taipei and Puerto Rico taking part in this tournament for 15-17 year old students. The job of the MCAST volunteers was to look after the various teams, to help the organising committee and the technical committee with any help they might need, and to lead the athletes in the various activities that were organized including the social evening, the party, the opening and closing ceremony and the cultural day. This proved to be a great learning experience for our students.



## LECTURING IN PORTUGAL

BY MARK A CARUANA, LECTURER LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT

Between the 19 and 22 May 2008, Mr. Charles Agius and I, Mark A. Caruana (Learning Support Unit lecturer) had the opportunity to participate in an Erasmus programme. During these four days, we delivered lectures in a newly established university in Portugal, IPCA - Instituto Politecnico do Cavado e do Ave (IPCA). IPCA is situated in a small city called Barcelos and offers courses in Graphic Design, ICT, Electronics and Management.

Our visit at IPCA coincided with an intercultural week, during which the IPCA management organised various lectures, seminars and talks organized by foreign lecturers. During my stay in Barcelos, I had the opportunity to deliver various lectures related to Linear Programming and the applications of Geometry in graphic design and computer animations.

The attendance of students for all these activities was very good and the students showed their interest by participating actively in all my lectures. We were told that IPCA, like MCAST, was building its new campus not far away from its current location. In fact we had the opportunity to visit the new campus, which will be completed later on this year. The new building will be equipped with facilities that can accommodate around two thousand students.

We were very satisfied with the attitude of the Portuguese people towards us. They made us feel at home and tried to help us in every way they could. The IPCA management, the lecturers and last but not least the students, all made us feel at home. Their hospitality made these four days in Portugal an experience that we will cherish for years to come.

LSU Lecturer Mark A Caruana lecturing at the Instituto Politecnico do Cavado e do Ave



Mark A Caruana during one of the socio-cultural events





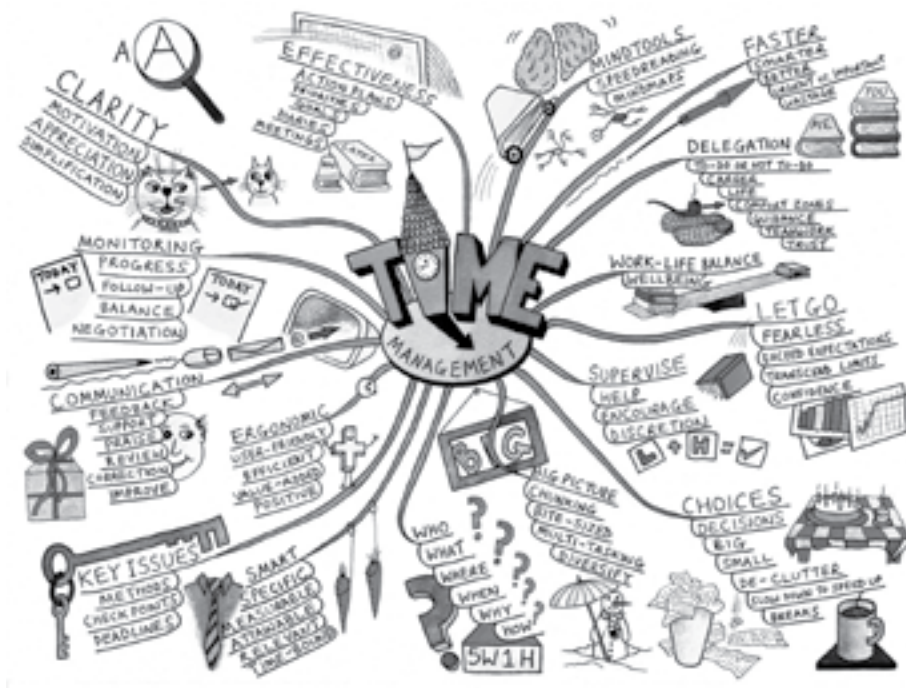


## ORGANISING INFORMATION VISUALLY

BY NINETTE PACE BALZAN,  
LECTURER LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT

Traditional teaching methods favour mainly auditory-sequential learners. Other types of learners, especially visual-spatial learners, often under-achieve and do not reach their potential. Lecturers at the Learning Support Unit use an eclectic approach to teaching, making use of ICT and many other tools.

One such tool is Graphic organisation of information, especially mind mapping.



### WHY DO MIND-MAPS WORK?

Various researchers show that the brain remembers images more than we would think possible. A group of people shown 10,000 vivid images over a period of 7 hours remembered them and could pick them out from similar images a week later with 98.8% accuracy. The use of mind-maps is also supported by various learning theories and a strong body of research about association, hierarchy and organization.

### WHO USES THEM?

The mind-map is useful for all learners, but especially for the visual-spatial learner. It is also useful for all lecturers both to organize a lecture and to explain concepts in less time.

### HOW ARE THEY USED?

Unlike spider webs used for brainstorming, mind-maps rely on the use of key-words arranged in a non-linear fashion using association and hierarchy to show relationships between ideas and concepts. They make use of images, dimension and spatial information as well as colour, using both sides of the brain together and reducing cognitive load to allow for more input in a shorter time.

### HOW IS IT DRAWN UP?

A central image or title starts off the mind-map. This focuses the mind to access what it knows on the topic. The most important main ideas of the topic, the Basic Ordering Ideas, branch out. Each of these is developed hierarchically and by association making it easier both to generate new ideas as well as to remember study material.

While drawing up a mind-map the learner learns the concept and puts it in keywords. He is accessing prior knowledge and placing the new information within what he or she already knows. Once the student has drawn up a mind-map he has an overview of what he was studying and a powerful tool for remembering what he studied in its entirety.

### HOW CAN THEY BE USED?

For example, in English lessons mind-maps help the student generate ideas in an organized fashion for creative writing, with each branch focused on a main idea, to be written as a paragraph. In reverse, once a comprehension is mind-mapped, it is easily understood and questions answered. Difficult grammatical concepts, once organised in a mind-map, are not only easier to understand but more easily remembered.

Below are just a few sites where more information can be found. However entering 'mind-maps' and the name of the institute will bring up a multitude of web sites with examples and application.

## NSTF'S EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

The National Student Travel Foundation (NSTF) is launching another year of Educational Projects for students. MCAST students will find both the Malta Students' Science Forum and the Mini European Assembly a great opportunity to learn and develop skills which are essential in today's competitive world.

The Mini European Assembly is a simulation of the European Parliament where students discuss and debate topics of European relevance. Teams are formed to represent countries from the European Union and debate issues of importance to young people. Ideally each MCAST Institute should have a team participate in this unique opportunity. Participants are evaluated throughout the year by an adjudication panel and the winners participate in a Prize Tour to the major European Institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg organized by NSTF. The most commendable students are nominated "Ambassadors of the NSTF Mini European Assembly" and are given the opportunity, by the Foundation, to participate in similar events overseas, namely the European Youth Parliament and the Model European Parliament.

The Malta Student Science Forum, another NSTF project for students aged 16-22, encourages students to discuss current science topics from a scientific and ethical perspective, whilst the Contest for Young Scientists promotes creativity in the development of a scientific or technological project or in the explanation of a scientific phenomena. The National Contest for Young Scientists serves as a means to choose participants to represent Malta at the annual EU Contest for Young Scientists and Expo Science International. Participants at the Malta Student Science Forum are evaluated throughout the year by an adjudicating panel and the winners participate in the London International Youth Science Forum as well as an International Wildlife Research Week held in Switzerland. Last year the first three places were awarded to MCAST students.

If you are interested in participating, visit the NSTF website at [www.nsts.org](http://www.nsts.org) or contact Mariella-Pia Tabone on **2558 8241** or at [mtabo@nsts.org](mailto:mtabo@nsts.org).



MCAST delegation

**CHILD CARE  
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# OPENING SOON

**MCAST announces the new Child Care Centre located on the MCAST Main Campus. This state-of-the-art Child Care Centre is primarily targeted at full-time MCAST students yet space permitting it could also be utilised by MCAST full-time members of staff.**

**Now you can be studying or working at MCAST while your child is being well looked after by professionally trained and qualified child carers at the MCAST Child Care Centre.**

For further details on enlisting your child at the Child Care Centre kindly contact the Administration Manager on 2398 7161 or email on [information@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:information@mcast.edu.mt).

*Certain criteria apply.*

MCAST Child Care Centre  
MCAST Main Campus, Triq Kordin, Paola PLA 9032  
Tel: 2398 7161  
E-mail: [information@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:information@mcast.edu.mt)  
Website: [www.mcast.edu.mt](http://www.mcast.edu.mt)

 **MCAST**  
MALTA COLLEGE of ARTS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



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