

ISSUE 27 | WINTER 2008

mcastlink

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





WITH **GO**

...clear for take off!

MONDAY TO SATURDAY 1530 - 1830HRS





Six MCAST students participated in the Euroskills Competition, a platform for improving the quality, results and attractiveness of vocational education and skills. MCAST is proud that the team returned to Malta with three silver medals. This competition was held in Ahoy, Rotterdam between the 16 and 21 September 2008, with the objective to help the EU member states to raise the standards of skills and to promote excellence in vocational skills throughout the EU. The College congratulates the students and the rest of the team for their success.

All MCAST students and staff celebrated the College's Foundation Day for the second time on Friday 24 October 2008. Students and members of academic and administrative staff participated in the events organised, which included several sports activities, kick boxing, AFM and fire fighting demonstrations and a car boot sale amongst others. The aim of the Foundation Day is to unite all nine Institutes, the Gozo Centre and the administration together to celebrate the foundation of the College in a relaxed, and friendly atmosphere.

Through the College's International Programmes Office, students, as well as members of administrative and academic staff, have the opportunity to participate in international exchange programmes including Mobility Studies, Mobility Placements, Teaching Assignments and Staff Training Projects. The College is proud to announce that it has received nearly € 200,000 from the EU to be spent on international exchanges. More information on the programmes can be found inside the magazine.

Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors and Policy Adviser to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports provides us with an interesting article on the Copenhagen Process within the Lisbon Agenda and MCAST's important role as the main provider of vocational education and training in Malta.

Fr John Curmi, the College Chaplain introduces the new pastoral team for MCAST. We are grateful for his efforts and hard work and wish him luck in this new endeavour.

I would like to wish you and your families a peaceful Christmas and Happy New Year. May you enjoy your well-deserved holidays!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Caroline Balzan
Communications and PR Manager

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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

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Paul A Attard is the President of the MCAST Board of Governors and Policy Adviser to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport

THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS IN MALTA

By Paul A Attard

Vocational education and training (VET) is an integral part of and an indispensable means for the implementation of the Lisbon Agenda set by the European Union Member States in the year 2000 with specific targets to be achieved by the year 2010. The Lisbon Agenda is an action and development plan with both economic and social aims so that the European Union may become "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, and respect for the environment by 2010".

It was a positive coincidence that Government established MCAST in the year 2000 and the College opened its doors in 2001 with the specific 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."*

This mission statement is perfectly in sync with the Copenhagen Process within the Lisbon agenda.

During a meeting in Copenhagen in 2002, European ministers, the European Commission and European social partners from 32 countries agreed on a major policy agenda for VET in what continued to be known as the Copenhagen Process. Reviews of the process every two years since 2002 (Maastricht 2004, Helsinki 2006, and Bordeaux 2008) have underlined the focus on VET's quality, attractiveness, good governance and efforts to meet target dates to implement common European principles and tools. EU Member States have collaborated on these areas emphasizing equity and relevance to the labour market.

Common European vision, principles, tools and guidelines, based on learning outcomes as a central objective, are central to the Copenhagen process. The

shift to emphasizing the outcomes of learning is influencing the content and organization of education and training in Member States. In order to achieve these objectives there have been an ongoing consultation process between stakeholders, peer learning activities, networking initiatives, including the open method of coordination from which education has benefited so much over the years.

MCAST has, in fact, contributed in a tangible and visible way to promote the visibility and status of vocational and professional education and training, opening new routes for young people at higher secondary, further and tertiary education and training. Until only a few years ago, students hardly had an alternative to higher education at a university. Now they can pass from one level to another and reach the highest obtainable level in VET. Nobody has the right to cap and limit the attainment of the potential of promising and ambitious VET students.

MCAST succeeded in substantially increasing the number of students who continue with their studies beyond compulsory education age and going to further and higher education, following one of a very wide range of courses on offer, obtaining qualifications not only for well established careers but also for emerging careers, and receiving a National Diploma and Higher National Diploma. MCAST is a very inclusive institution receiving students with varying qualifications and offering various entry and exit points to established courses.

MCAST's curricula are vocational by nature and have been developed according to industry requirements and expectations. In fact, the College is working with industry in developing curricula to satisfy particular industry needs. This positive approach and inbuilt flexibility are facilitating the attraction of new industrial investment to our islands and contributing to economic growth.

The College is making a major solid contribution to the promotion and development of a knowledge-based society and economy. In the process the College is preparing its students for more and better jobs. The opportunities are available for all students who want to exploit them to the full in their own interest and in the best interest also of the country's growing economy in a highly competitive world.

This paper refers mainly to MCAST's achievements. However, one needs to record the ongoing success of the Institute for Tourism Studies that has been working closely and effectively with the hospitality industry for so many years and providing an excellent education and training service to our young people and adults and thereby promoting the quality of our tourism product and ensuring that tourism remains a main pillar of Malta's growing economy.

COMMON EUROPEAN TOOLS

As part of the Copenhagen process, a number of instruments have been developed in order to facilitate the development of VET across the EU Member States adopting common instruments that are transparent and support quality, mobility, permeability and transferability of qualifications.

The principles of the **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** are broadly accepted. The EQF is considered as building bridges between all types of learning, whether vocational, professional or academic. Nearly all countries are developing National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) to link to the European model. Malta has been among the first to produce its National Qualifications Framework. The EQF, moreover, is intended to validate not only formal learning in established educational institutions, but also non-formal and informal education and training and recognizing prior learning. The EQF is being considered as a solid reference point even outside the EU.

The **validation of non-formal and informal learning** is gradually becoming a priority in most EU

countries. That is, the recognition of what an individual learns and experiences outside the formal education and training of an institution. Learning is a lifelong process and workers of whatever category are learning during their working time. Hence, the need to recognize the knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside the formal learning structures. In some states, individuals can already have their learning experiences identified, assessed and validated. Others are still discussing and planning their way forward in this sensitive and delicate area.

Europass is a new way of helping people to make their skills and qualifications clearly and easily understood in Europe (European Union, EFTA/EEA and candidate countries) and move to study and work anywhere in the European Union. Europass consists of five documents: while two documents – the Europass curriculum vitae (CV), and the Europass Language Passport – one can fill in him /herself, three other documents – Europass Certificate Supplement, Europass Diploma Supplement, and Europass Mobility - are filled in and issued by competent institutions who are authorised to do so. Europass is used in 32 countries and can be easily accessed through the <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu> site even in the Maltese language.

Credit systems for VET (ECVET) (in parallel with European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for higher education) are still being developed in most European VET systems and a lot of work still needs to be done in this area. MCAST is working on this project so that within a few years, even MCAST students can benefit from this credit system in their qualifications.

Quality assurance in VET is the key to success. Confidence in the quality of learning outcomes is indispensable for EU tools to succeed. It is understood that work on the National Qualifications Framework, the establishment of standards, the development of curricula and syllabi to implement them, and the involvement of social partners, including

employers, professional organizations and trade unions contribute to quality in VET. There is a trend towards monitoring and evaluation in line with the common quality assurance framework. Teachers are considered as the key to successful change and improvement and strategies need to be developed to equip them for their emerging roles through continuous professional development.

The Bordeaux Communiqué (2008) indicating the achievements acquired since the Helsinki Communiqué as well as the way forward in vocational education and training will stress the importance of VET in the personal, social and economic development of every Member State in the European Union. During the informal meeting of Ministers of Education under the French Presidency at Bordeaux Malta was represented by the Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, the Hon. Dolores Cristina, who is focusing on the development of VET through MCAST and ITS as well as other VET institutions in Malta. The Government's investment of about €116,000,000 in the MCAST master plan is a clear indication of Government's determination in investing in the development of human capital, particularly of young people but also of adult workers in order to face the growing challenges of the changing economic and industrial scenarios.

The financial world may be in very serious turmoil and big trouble. Heavy financial losses may be suffered by individuals, companies and states. Billions of euros and dollars may disappear into thin air. But investment in human resources can never suffer any loss, whatever the threatening situation in the surrounding world.

EUROSKILLS COMPETITION 2008 ROTTERDAM

From left: Mark Camilleri, Luke Farrugia,
Darren Duncan and Daniel Micallef



Euroskills is a competition which offers organizations within the European member states, such as governments, industry organisations, educational institutions and subsidy providers, a platform for jointly improving the quality, the results and the attractiveness of vocational education and vocational skills. Between the 16th and the 21st of September 2008 a team representing Malta competed in the Euroskills Competition held in Ahoy, Rotterdam.

The preparation for this competition started in 2007 and has been based on the popularity of the World Skills Competition which is held regularly every two years. More than 400 competitors from 28 European countries (20 are WorldSkills International Members) showcased their skills in 49 different skill categories at the Euroskills Competition.



Backrow from left: Team Leader Adele Muscat with the team. Darren Duncan, David Micallef, Luke Farrugia, Shawn Scibberas.
In front: Stephen Zahra and Mark Camilleri



GOALS OF EUROSILLS COMPETITION

- ◆ To use skills competitions to help the EU and its member states to raise skills standards and to promote excellence in vocational skills throughout the EU.
- ◆ To increase awareness of the importance of skills and vocational education/training for the EU economies and societies.
- ◆ To develop a range of European vocational skills competitions for EU member states.
- ◆ To ensure that vocational skills competitions organised by EuroSkills reflect the varied and changing skills requirements of the EU's member states and of the EU as a whole.
- ◆ To encourage each EU member country to participate in EuroSkills and so expand and develop the range and structure of its own vocational skills competitions.

OUR TEAM

The Maltese team, consisting of the team leader Adele Muscat, experts Vince Maione, Mario Aquilina and Conrad Vassallo, John Sciberras as Technical Delegate, and the participants in their respective area of competition:

- ◆ Automotive Technology Light Vehicle - Daniel Micallef
- ◆ Cross Media Publishing – Mark Philip Camilleri (Web Design), Darren Duncan (Graphic Design) and Luke Farrugia (Printing)
- ◆ Electronics Workshop – Shawn Roderick Sciberras, Stephen Zahra.

This was the first time a Maltese team participated in a EuroSkills or a WorldSkills Competition and the team returned to Malta with good results, with Mark Camilleri, Shawn Roderick Sciberras and Stephen Zahra winning silver medals in their respective categories.

THE EVENT

Participants started arriving on Tuesday 16th September 2008. A tour for all the teams was organized at the Port of Rotterdam, showing the loading and unloading process of containers. This was followed by a sightseeing tour of Rotterdam.

Wednesday 17th September 2008 was the first day of the event. The participants were taken to the competition venue, where an opening ceremony rehearsal was conducted. Teams also met with the Chief expert of their respective skill area and the competition experts were introduced. The competition rules were discussed, and teams had the opportunity to start getting accustomed to the tools and tasks to be carried out during the competition. Later on, the Official Opening Ceremony was held for the first EuroSkills Competition at Ahoy. ▶

In the closing ceremony together with the mascot



Team Malta celebrating their success!



Mark Camilleri designing the web page



Shawn Sciberras and Stephen Zahra working at their project

On Thursday 18th September 2008 at 9am all the competitions commenced. Each EuroSkills competition had its own daily tasks which competitors had to complete in a very tight timeframe. In general most of the competitions were assigned a total of 18 hours over three days, finishing on Saturday 20th September 2008 at 1pm. Considering the amount of work to be carried out by each participant, the schedule itself was very demanding and tiring, keeping all competitors very busy throughout the day till 5pm. Shawn Roderick and Stephen Zahra, the electronics workshop team, were busy trying to find faults, Daniel Micallef, who was participating in the Automotive Technology Light Vehicle section, was trying to start a car which couldn't work; and the Cross Media Publishing team, made up of web designer Mark Camilleri, graphic designer Darren Duncan and printer Luke Farrugia, were trying to come up with the graphics, web site and poster for DJ Jean's promotion. However, all competitors were enjoying the new experience and worked hard to obtain good results. The Electronics Workshop competitors namely Shawn Roderick Sciberras and Stephen Zahra, following an excellent performance on Friday, were awarded the Day Prize on Saturday morning. This encouraged the team a lot.

Each day after lunch, the participants were expected to remain at the venue to carry demonstrations for persons who visited the competition. There were a lot of visitors, a good number of students who flocked the massive halls throughout the three days of the competition.

Saturday at around 7.15pm the closing and awards ceremony was held and the Maltese team won 3 silver medals in web design as well as in electronics. This augurs well especially since preparation for this competition

was meagre when compared to other countries. In the UK alone there are 40 full time employees working in UK Skills promoting EuroSkills and WorldSkills in schools and helping to prepare the participants for competition.

The next day the participants were asked to return to the venue to clear up, pack tools and take their belongings. The team then made their way to the airport satisfied with the results obtained.

This was a tremendous experience for everyone especially the competitors. It is important to expose competitors and explore skills practised in other countries. This offers job opportunities and meets expertise within the field. This opens up the participants' vision and improves professionalism in various skills areas. Now that one knows what EuroSkills is about, it is possible to participate in other skills areas such as hairdressing, manufacturing technologies, office IT and more.

It is a fact that all members forming part of the team that represented Malta so successfully have prepared well and worked hard to ensure a good performance. Even the cooperation between competitors, team leader and experts was perfect.

Finally, we would also like to thank Intercomp Ltd. who provided the participants of the Electronics workshop with appropriate laptops throughout all the preparation time and the duration of the competition. ◆



MCAST PARTICIPATES IN THE MCST RESEARCH EXPO

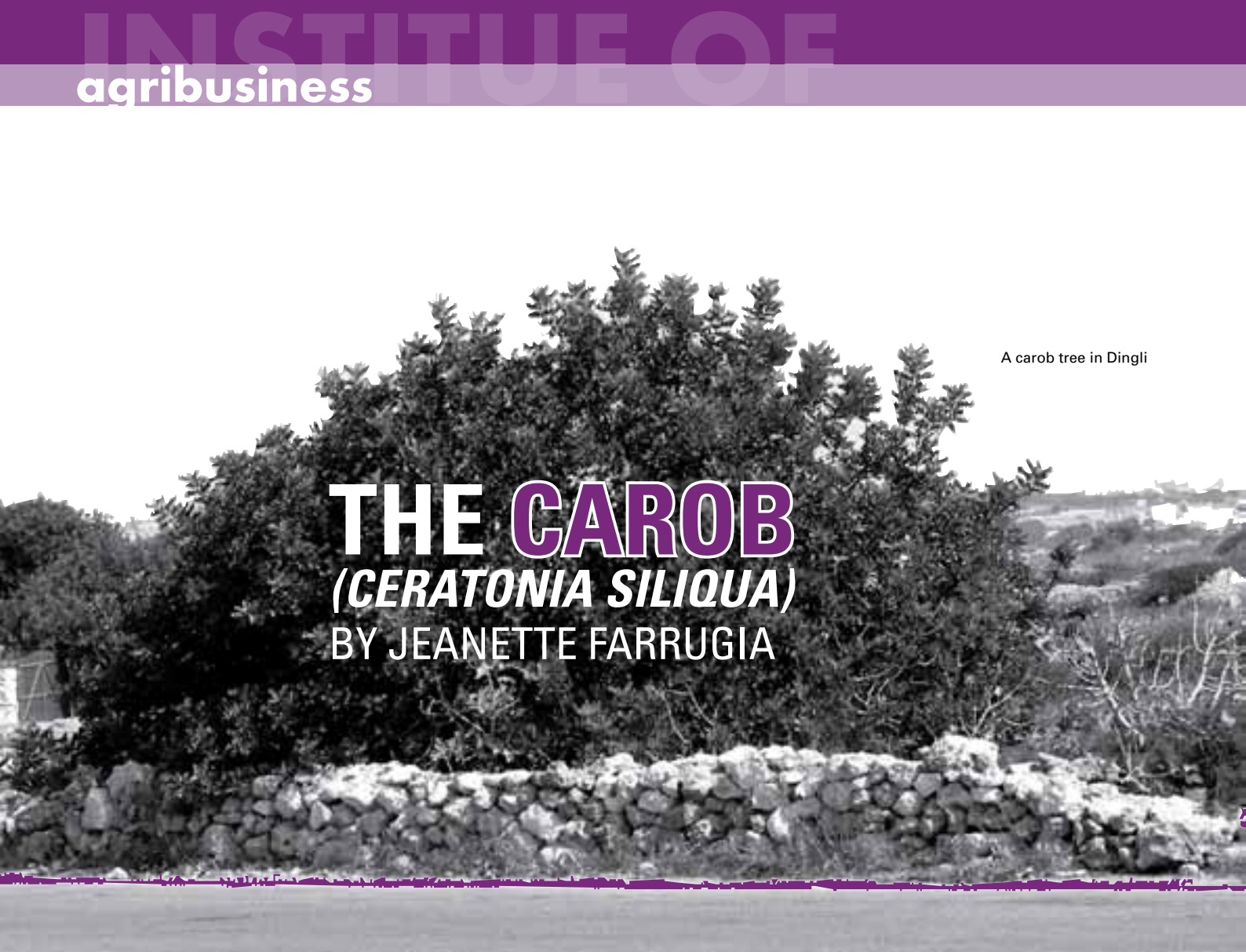


Between the 3 to the 4 of November 2008 MCAST participated in its first ever Research Expo. This high profile exhibition of research was organised by the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and showcased forty exhibitors from academia, industry and the public sector.

MCAST promoted four research studies undertaken within the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering. The Institute of Mechanical Engineering showed the Data Glove Research Study and an Electronic Spark Ignition Engine Control Unit whilst the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering presented a Current and Voltage Slew-Rate Tester and a Water Leaks Detector.

The College received several positive comments from visitors to the stand at the Research Expo. This augurs well for the College.

Data Glove Research Study



A carob tree in Dingli

THE CAROB

(CERATONIA SILIQUA)
BY JEANETTE FARRUGIA

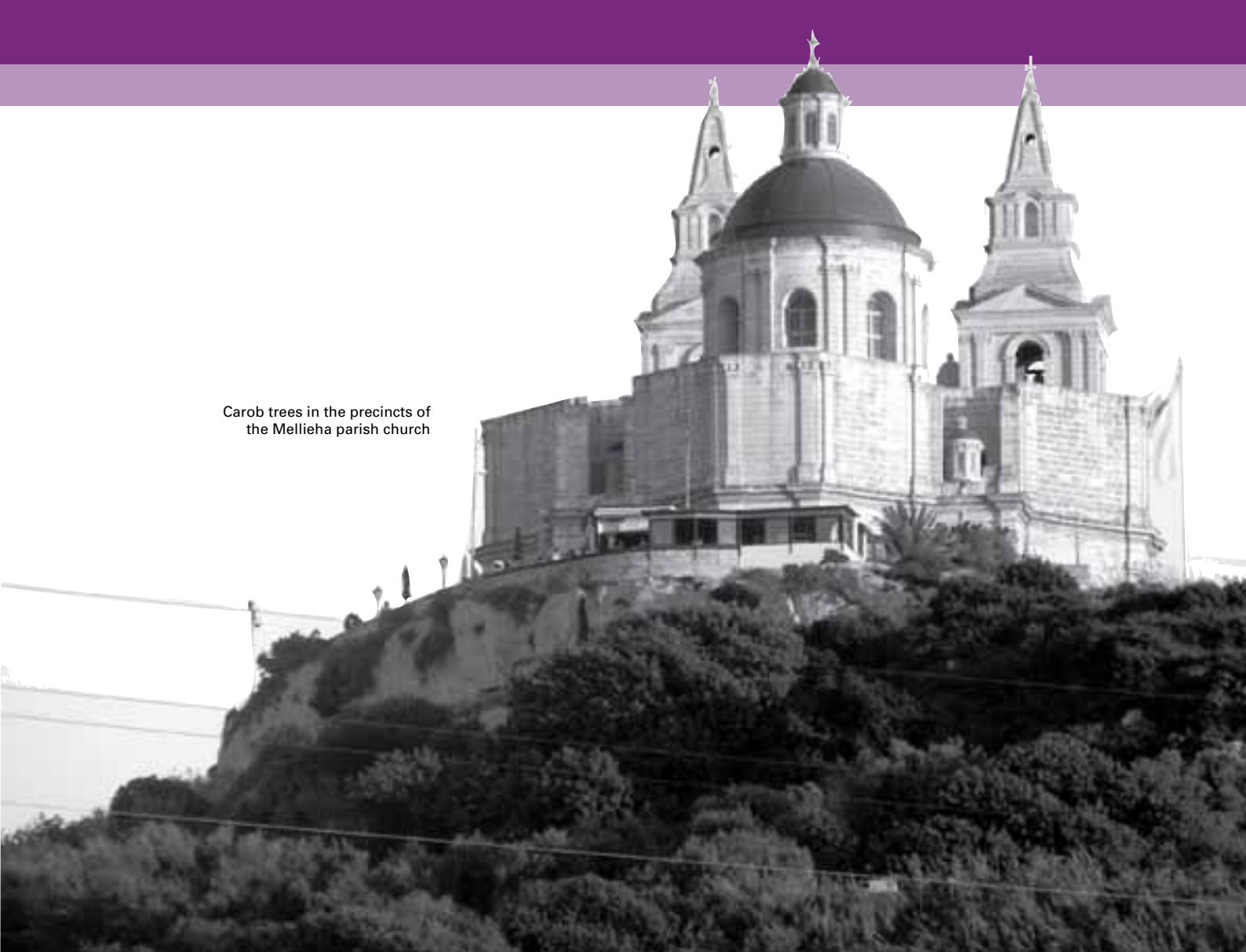


The Carob is a long-lived evergreen tree that has been cultivated since ancient times in most of the countries around the Mediterranean. Pollen and archaeological analysis have shown that it has been present in the Middle East since post-glacial times. Countries having a Mediterranean like climate also grow the Carob. It is an important element in Mediterranean vegetation and landscape and also is essential both environmentally, as well as economically. Very often the tree is cultivated with an array of other tree species, mainly almonds and olives, especially in traditional farming systems. The main interest, for which the Carob tree is cultivated, lies in the Carob pods. Rich in chemical properties, the Carob pods are commercially traded for their sugary pulp.

It is also known as St. John's bread and according to Christian tradition, St. John the Baptist thrived on them in the wilderness. The latin name of the Carob tree derives from the Greek word kerátin, "fruit of the carob" (from keras meaning "horn"), and Latin siliqua referring to the "pod". The term "carat", derives from the unit used by jewelers because of its uniform seeds as a unit of weight (200 mg).



Caron pods



Carob trees in the precincts of the Mellieha parish church

Environmental properties for which the Carob is appreciated include drought resistance and reduced orchard management. It also supports a number of flora and fauna species. The maquis habitat, which is common in Malta, is dominated by a variety of small trees and large shrubs including the Olive, the Carob, the Lentisk and several others. Most of the trees in the maquis habitat were introduced in antiquity because of their usefulness.

The economic aspects are also significant. As a food source, Carob pods can be stored and transported for long distances. The Carob pods, bearing a sugary pulp, formed part of both farm animals' and people's diet in times of famine. Currently, one of the main interests in the Carob tree is seed production for gum extraction. Pods are exported from one country to another according to the various needs. The Carob has not been given much importance with respect to cultural practices, research and development. Nevertheless, the Carob is utilised frequently for ornamental and landscaping purposes, windbreaks and afforestation projects.

Many other countries around the Mediterranean have recognised Carob trees as part of their assets and are producing a number of products and services. This can all be achieved in Malta through sustainable utilisation of the Carob tree. The following are amongst the several activities that can be implemented locally to diversify the agro-food industry in Malta;

- ECO AND AGRO TOURISM
- EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS
- PROCESSING AND MARKETING
- PROMOTION OF ORGANIC FARMING
- RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
- URBAN LANDSCAPING

Last but not least, it is interesting to mention the traditional Carob sweet known as 'karamelli tal-Harrub'. These are available in Malta mainly during the Holy Week because they are considered as a substitute to traditional sweets. They can easily be packed and can serve as souvenirs for tourists to take back home. Giving proper attention to product packaging and labelling, farmers can create a traditional home-made product, which can then be distributed to tourist shops. The same applies to carob syrup and carob bars which are available in local supermarkets and are very often made from imported carob.

Having said all this, the Carob is not simply a tree or shrub found in the Maltese countryside but it serves a multifunctional role in our rural areas!

RECIPE: MELLIEHA SAVOURY PUMPKIN PIE

MELLIEHA SAVOURY PUMPKIN PIE

BY SAMMY VELLA

Method:

Cut pumpkin into small cubes. Put in a colander, sprinkle with sea salt and let stand for about 30 minutes. This will get rid of the excess liquid in the pumpkin.

In the meantime, chop the leeks, the herbs, the olives and the drained anchovies. Put these in a large bowl.

Add the rice (uncooked), the tuna (including the oil), the sultanas, and the cauliflower florets.

Finally add the pumpkin. Add some pepper. Mix well.

Brush the dish well with olive oil. Line with the pastry. Before putting the

mixture in the pastry case, brush the pastry with olive oil. (This prevents liquid from the mixture seeping into the pastry.) Put mixture in the dish and cover with pastry. Seal the edges well and cut a slit in the middle. Brush with egg and bake in the oven for about an hour at 180°C.

To check if the pie is ready, insert a fork in the slit and sample some of the filling. If the rice is cooked, the pie is ready. Take out of oven and let stand for about 15 minutes before serving.

You can also prepare this recipe in the form of small pies ideal for single servings or for lunch packs.

This pie is even more delicious when eaten cold. **BON APPÉTIT!**



INGREDIENTS

1 ½ kilos pumpkin (peeled)

1 cup long grain rice (uncooked)

1 large tin and 1 small tin tuna
in olive oil

2 tins anchovies (or 150g salted tuna)

100g sultanas (optional)

4 large leeks

2 handfuls of very small cauliflower
florets (optional)

150g olives

fresh marjoram and mint and basil

olive oil

2 tsp sea salt

ground pepper

One brown egg

short crust pastry
made with 700g flour

large deep dish (22cmsX 25cms app)





TWO NEW COURSES OFFERED AT THE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN

THE BTCC HIGHER NATIONAL
DIPLOMA IN INTERACTIVE MEDIA
DIPLOMA

THE BTCC HIGHER NATIONAL
DIPLOMA IN FINE ARTS
DIPLOMA



ART AND DESIGN STUDENTS' WORK FEATURES ON A FASHION & BEAUTY PUBLICATION

As the new academic year had barely kicked into full swing, persons from industry with a passion for creativity and artistic talent were knocking at our doors to give our talented students an opportunity to work on live projects.

Pierre Camille, a well known figure in the hairdressing and photography sector, together with Carina, a fashion stylist, and their well-trained crew were in the midst of creating a fashion and beauty publication, entitled SHELL, when our students were invited to have their work featured alongside works of professional local hair stylists, make-up artists and fashion stylists.

For this publication, one-off fashion apparel, jewellery pieces, crockery, and digitally constructed artworks were selected and photographed

during a private photo shoot. The students whose works were selected had the opportunity to follow the photo shoot through, and get a behind the scenes experience of this work environment.

SHELL was launched on the 29 November 2008, during the opening of an exhibition entitled 'HOW DO YOU LOOK', at the St. James Cavalier Centre for Art and Creativity, Valletta. An array of artistic talent will be showcased during this event, with each artist portraying their distinctive styles.





ART AT THE OFFICE

ANOTHER COMMUNITY ART PROJECT FROM THE ART AND DESIGN INSTITUTE

BY ALFRED CAMILLERI
(TUTOR IN CHARGE OF PROJECT)

Students from the National Diploma Course at the Institute of Art and Design are presently working on a Community Art Project for the Administration Building at MCAST in Paola. It is the fourth project of its kind. The main objective is to create site-specific artworks. Similar past projects included artworks for the Mater Dei Hospital Art Project, the theatre at Attard Primary School and the new Student House at MCAST which was officially inaugurated last year. For the third consecutive year, the project is set within the BTEC course of studies of unit fourteen, namely Community Arts.

'Art at the office'

Preparations started during the first week of September, when the students were asked to survey specific areas assigned to them within the building. During the first week of September, thirty-two students, grouped in pairs, equipped with their cameras, measuring tapes and sketchbooks were spread throughout corridors and offices on the three floors of the building. Enthusiastically they spent a number of hours, sketching the main spaces, recording measurements and taking photos of the place. This site survey gave the students the opportunity to experience the actual environment



Carrying out the artworks

and be directly involved in a real life project right from its initial phase. From there, each student submitted his/her own project proposal, namely a brief expressing his/her individual commitment in the project together with such details as the earmarked area, his or her main sources of inspiration, the material and media proposed together with a reasonable and approximate costing.

Students have been sifting through researched imagery within the main thematic sources from the vast and wonderful world of art, science and technology. With such visual sources at hand, work is now in progress on the exploration and development of design ideas in preparation for the actual final compositions. This is a rich learning experience for the students where their own creativity may also provide a most valid service to others. When the works are completed and evaluations and assessments are made, these works should proudly transform and enhance the environment within the Administration Block by the end of January 2009, for the enjoyment of staff and visitors alike.



Students sketching the main spaces of the Administration Block



Institute of Community Services
Building

HAIR DEPARTMENT

Hair – Scalp treatment € 5.82

Shampoo & Blow-dry

Short hair € 5.24

Medium Length hair € 6.41

Long Hair € 6.99

Finger Twisting € 8.15

Non-Permanent Colour € 4.08

€ 6.41

Cut € 2.91

Up-style € 5.24

Perm & S/B € 11.06

€ 16.89

Colour re-touch & S/B € 11.06

Colour full head & S/B € 13.98

Highlights

Cap & S/B € 8.15 / € 11.06

Foil & S/B € 13.98

€ 16.31

Bleach

Re-touch & S/B € 11.06

€ 13.98

Full Head & S/B € 12.81

€ 16.31

Straightening & S/B € 11.65

€ 13.98

BEAUTY TREATMENTS

Hands & Feet Treatments:

Manicure & Hand Massage (M/M) € 5.24

Manicure / Massage / Buffing (M/HM/B) € 5.82

Manicure / Massage / French M (M/HM/FV) € 5.82

Reshaping / French V (RS/FV) € 4.07

Pedicure & Foot Massage / NV (P/FM/NV) € 5.24

Facial Treatments:

Eyebrow shaping (E.B.S) € 1.16

Eyebrow / Lash Tint & Cleanse (E.L.B.T) € 5.24

Eyebrow & Lash Tint (E.L.B.T) € 4.66

Eyelash Tinting (E.L.T) € 2.91

Deep Cleanse & Mask (D.C.) € 5.82

Deep Cleanse, Massage & Mask (D.C/M) € 6.99

Cleanse & Make-Up (C/M-Up) € 6.99

Waxing:

Upper Lip Waxing (U.L/W) € 1.16

Chin Waxing (CW) € 1.16

Under Arm Waxing (U.A/W) € 2.91

Bikini Line Waxing (B.L / W) € 3.49

Full Leg Waxing (F.L. /W) € 8.15

Half Leg Waxing (H.L/W) € 4.66

Facial Hair Waxing (F.H. / W) € 2.33

Abdomen Waxing (A. W) € 2.33

Back Wax (B/W) € 4.08

Lower Arm Waxing (L.A/W) € 3.49

Full Arm Waxing (F.A/W) € 4.66

Special Treatments:

Manicure / Hand Massage /

Paraffin Treatments (M/HMP. Wax) € 6.40

Deep Cleanse / Massage /

Paraffin Treatment (D/C M/P. Wax) € 6.98

Deep Cleanse / Massage /

Galvanic Treatment (D/C M/GT) € 9.32

Deep Cleanse / Massage /

High Frequency (D/C M/HF) € 9.32

Deep Cleanse / Massage /

Vacuum Suction (D/C M/VS) € 9.32

Deep Cleanse / Exfoliation (D/C/EXF) € 6.40

Back Massage (B.K/M) € 8.15

Body Massage (BM) € 15.14

(ANY SPECIAL TREATMENT

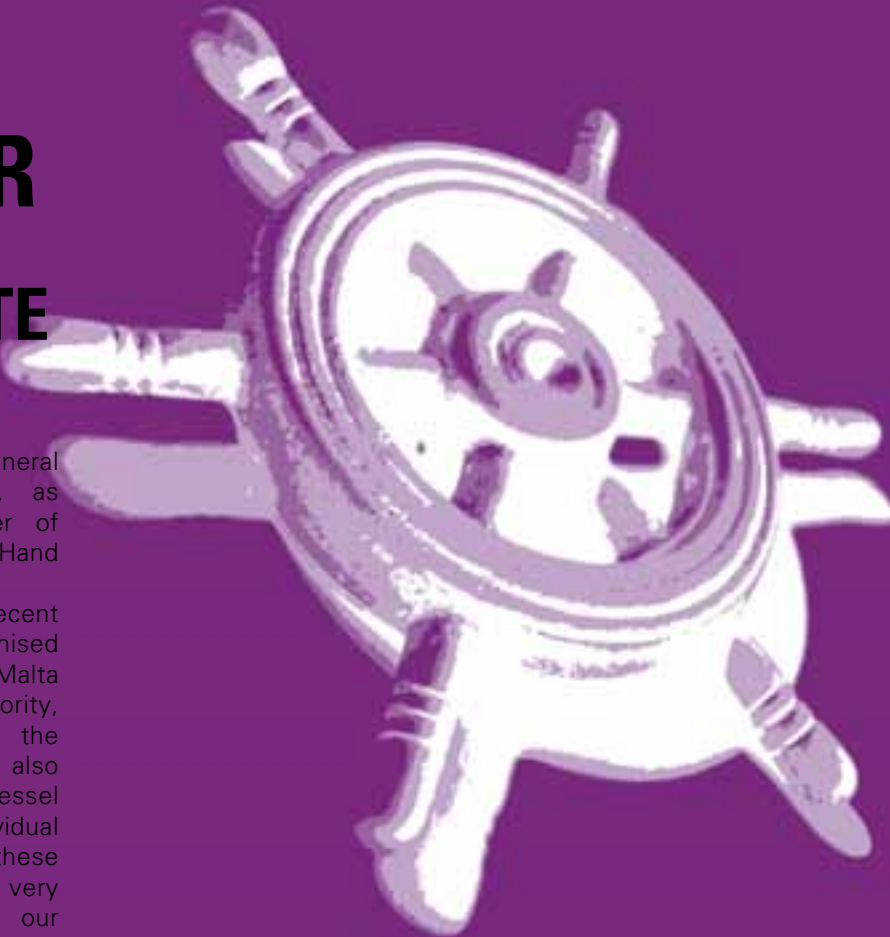
WITH 2 ELECTRICAL UNITS INCLUDED) € 10.48

AMPULES & COLLAGEN € 2.91 EXTRA

EYE TREATMENTS (EXTRA) € 3.49

ACNE TREATMENTS (EXTRA) € 3.49

BUSY SUMMER FOR THE MARITIME INSTITUTE



Whilst one would expect the summer months to provide an opportunity for some rest and recreation, as most of the Institute's full-time students would be embarked on merchant vessels, this was not the case at the Maritime Institute, where staff had to cope with the multitude of part-time and ancillary courses which were held, including most of the courses on the recently upgraded Navigational Bridge and Communications Simulator.

The Institute was running a weekly programme for the Basic Seamanship and Safe Boathandling Course where hundreds of persons attended this two-week long course to qualify for a boat skipper licence. Apart from the popular "boat licence" course, as it is commonly known, the Institute ran a number of other ancillary courses such as Elementary First Aid, Medical First Aid, Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting, Advanced Fire Fighting, Personal Survival Techniques, Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities, Crowd Management, Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats, Efficient Deck Hand, Global Maritime Distress & Safety Systems

(GMDSS) General Operators Course, as well as a number of General Purpose Hand Courses. Through a recent initiative organised together with the Malta Maritime Authority, Ports Directorate, the Maritime Institute also runs Commercial Vessel Courses on an individual tuition basis, and these too have become very popular amongst our clients.

A new course which the Maritime Institute has launched on behalf of the Malta Maritime Authority is the Foreman of Port Workers Course. After the success of the Port Work Induction Course which has been running non-stop, since September 2007, the Maritime Institute organized a course for persons who may be interested in advancing in their career in port related work. This course proved to be very popular and was attended by a large number of persons.

Another popular course was the Yachtmaster (Offshore) Course which is a three-month, part-time course run for those persons who want to improve their boating skills and who are willing to venture beyond the Territorial Seas.

NEW INTAKE OF OFFICER CADETS

September saw the intake of another large number of Officer Cadets on the Officer-in-Charge of a Navigational Watch Course as well as a similar number of entrants on the Probationary Officer Cadet Course. After presenting the talks for prospective students in July, the Maritime Institute started receiving a number of enquiries from potential students regarding a career at sea. The response during the MCAST student full-time course application week was quite strong and the students, of which five are female Officer Cadets, have already integrated fully in the training programme and are now already nearing the end of their first term at the Institute.

The Maritime Institute also intends commencing a course for Chief Mates early next year where we are expecting to have a healthy number of participants, most of whom were Officer Cadets at the Maritime Institute in the past.



TALK ON ST. JOHN RESCUE CORPS TO MARITIME INSTITUTE OFFICER CADETS

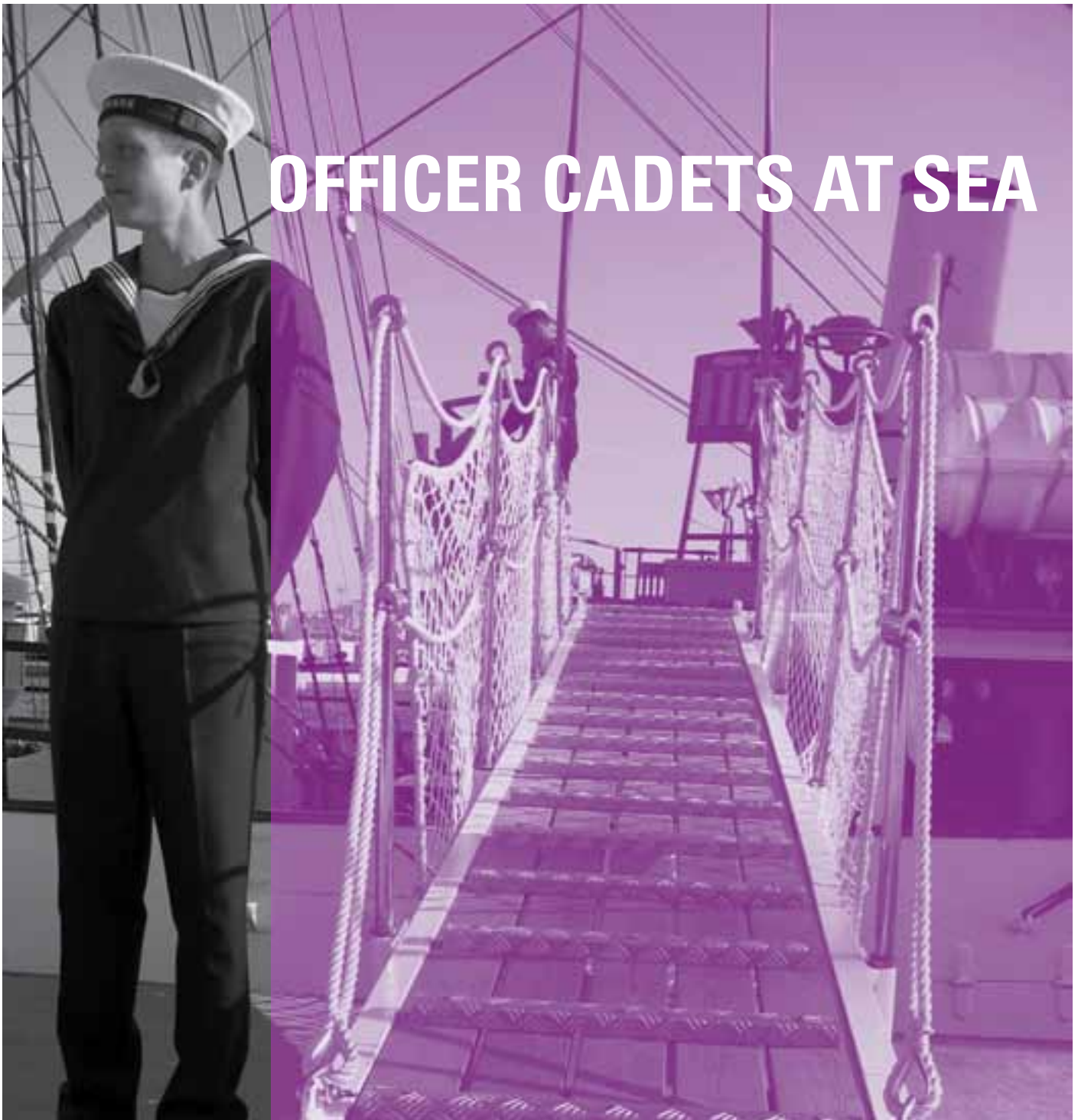
Through MCAST's Memorandum of Agreement with the St. John Rescue Corps, Officer Cadets at the Maritime Institute were given a presentation by Mr. James Cilia on the role and function of this voluntary organization at Villa Portelli on the 4 November 2008. Mr. Cilia gave the Officer Cadets a very interesting presentation and also informed those present that they may join as members in the St. John Rescue Corps if they would like to actively participate in most of the activities organized. Mr. Cilia also distributed St. John Rescue Corps promotional material to those present during the talk.

In fact the Probationary Officer Cadet class, in line with their leadership and management training course, have already been given the opportunity to participate in a national exercise organized by the St. John Rescue Corps, which was held on the 16 October at the ex-White Rocks Holiday Complex where most of them played the part of casualties during a simulation of a terrorist bombing of the complex. Also participating in the exercise were other organizations including the Armed Forces of Malta, the Civil Protection Department, the Government Health Services, St. John Ambulance, the Malta Red Cross, the British Residents Association, and the Urban Search & Rescue Team of the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service in the UK, which were in Malta on a week's training camp with the St. John Rescue Corps.

More information on the St. John Rescue Corps as well as photographs of the exercise may be viewed on www.stjohnrescuecorps.org



The simulation of a rescue, after a 'terrorist' bombing of the complex



OFFICER CADETS AT SEA

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

Vessel	Cadet	Date Embarked
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
MV Grande Ellade	Andre Agius	15/08/08
MV Grande Portogallo	Dorian Grech	22/08/08
MV Eurocargo Valencia	Vivienne Chircop	27/10/08
CMA CGM Sambhar	Jesmar Vassallo	09/07/08
MSC Boston	Luke Saliba	31/07/08
CMA CGM America	Ben Vassallo	03/09/08

RYAN BUGEJA

SILVER

MEDALIST IN THE COMMONWEALTH YOUTH GAMES



Ryan Bugeja proudly showing his silver medal

Malta won its first medal at the Commonwealth Youth Games on 14 October 2008 when Ryan Bugeja, a student following a course at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering, won a silver medal in the Trap competition which took place in Pune, India.

Ryan Bugeja showed an interest in shooting at an early age. In fact, at age eleven, he had his first experience at Clay Pigeon Shooting. He never looked back, and since the age of 12, Ryan has been participating in lots of clay shooting competitions. He managed to work his way up from class 'C' to class 'A' both locally and internationally.

There are three disciplines in clay shooting sports. Ryan Bugeja practices in one of them - the Trap Class. Competitions are organised every weekend on the basis of five rounds with 25 clays each round. The first 6 shooters who obtain the best results of the first round will then qualify for a final 'barrage' of another 25 clays.

Ryan is a member of the three Shooting Clubs that are found in Malta including the Malta Shooting Federation which prepares athletes for international clay shooting competitions such as the Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games, the Mediterranean Games, the European Clay Shooting Championship and the Small Nations Games.

Ryan's track record so far has been excellent for his age, bearing in mind that locally most of the time he ends up competing with other participants who are more seasoned and senior than him. He is resolute to pursue this sport and in fact he trains between three to four times a week, apart from his regular participation in clay shooting competitions.



Hereunder are some details of some of the results achieved by Ryan Bugeja over the last three years. These results, which have been quite consistent, are only some of the main Grand Prix held in three main different ranges:

Year	Event/Competition/Grand Prix	Placement
2004	Southern Shooting Club	3rd
2005	Southern Shooting Club	2nd
2006	Southern Shooting Club	1st
2003	Malta Shooting Federation Bidnija	3rd
2004	Malta Shooting Federation Bidnija	Runner Up
2005	Malta Shooting Federation Bidnija	2nd
2006	Malta Shooting Federation Bidnija	1st
2005	Qormi Shooting Club	3rd
2006	Qormi Shooting Club	1st
2006	Qormi Shooting Club	Best Shooter of the Day
2003	1st Grand Prix, Venice	Trofeo Banco di Roma
2006	3rd Grand Prix, Venice	6th
2007	4th Grand Prix, Venice	Best Foreign Shooter
2007	4th Grand Prix, Venice	Part of the Malta National Team that placed 3rd

This year has been another good year for Ryan regarding competitions. Throughout the year he participated in a number of competitions that were organised at three different shooting ranges around Malta, namely:

- Southern Shooting Club
- Qormi Shooting Club
- Malta Shooting Federation, Bidnija.

Ryan was proposed by Malta Sports Shooting Federation to represent Malta in the **2008 Commonwealth Youth Games** which were held in Pune, India between the 12 and the 18 October 2008.

On the first day of the competition Ryan had been leading the table and leading home star Kyanan d Chenai by one target ahead. On the second day of the competition the table turned, leaving Malta (Ryan) with just one target behind and Ryan ended up **Second Place – Silver medallist** with a score of 127, just one clay difference from the Indian competitor with 128, who took the Gold.

Ryan has also been asked by the MOC to attend FDL tests at their clinic as part of an on-going requirement for athletes aspiring to participate in international sport competitions.

Hereunder are details of some of the results achieved by Ryan Bugeja from December 2007 – September 2008.

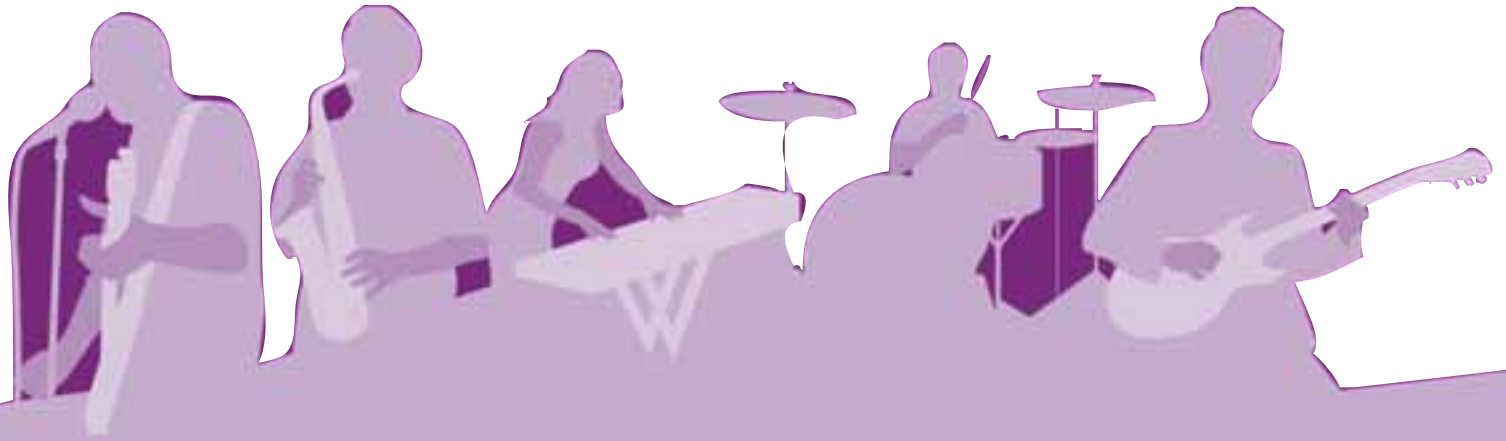
Year	Event/Competition/Grand Prix	Placement
02/12/07	Federation Cup / Class A	3rd
30/12/07	Christmas Cup All Malta / Class A	1st
13/01/08	Vasson Trophy Selection / Class A (scores 111+17 total 128)	1st
08/02/08	100th Anniversary Celebrations / Class A	3rd
24/02/08	R.C. Trophy (First Maltese Trap Shooter)	2nd
09/03/08	Tony Caruana Trophy Selection (International competition where Ryan was part of the Maltese team)	2nd
19/03/08	NCR Trophy Cup	1st
23-25/05/08	International Grand Prix Junior Event	1st
07-08/06/08	Qormi Grand Prix 2008 / Class A Best shooter of the day	3rd
07-08/09/08	Southern Grand Prix 2008 Best shooter of the day Scored 114 where he achieved ISSF MQS	2nd

Ryan is aiming to participate in the following international events:

- **European Youths Olympics**
Tampera , Finland 2009
- **Mediterranean Games**
Pescara, Italy July 2009
- **Games of the small States of Europe**
Cyprus, June 2009

The future for Ryan is a bright one indeed. He is still keen to train more in order to advance further in the sports he prefers most. He is very adamant in his pursuit to become the premier trap shooter of Malta.

WELL DONE RYAN!



LECTURER PARTICIPATES IN LUNCHTIME CONCERT



Angelo Borg, Assistant Lecturer at the Mechanical Engineering Institute, participated in a lunchtime concert organised by the Malta Council for Arts and Culture. The concert was held at Isouard Hall, Manoel Theatre, Valletta where Angelo played the Alto Saxophone accompanied on the pianoforte by Roberto Debono. He played a wide variety of musical styles including Classical, Impressionist, Blues and Jazz which are very synonymous with the saxophone. The pieces performed were composed by Henri Tomasi, Andre Chaulleaux and Bernard Heiden who composed lots of interesting pieces for the saxophone repertoire.

Angelo started his musical education ten years ago under the supervision of Mro. Joseph Tonna, who gave him both theory and piano lessons. Later on, he attended saxophone lessons in a local band club. He furthered his musical abilities on the saxophone under the guidance of Mr Ivan Borg and Mr Joseph Vella. The latter delivers lessons at Johan Strauss School of Music, Valletta. Angelo has just graduated in the Associate Diploma of the London College of Music in Saxophone Performance. He also sat for the Licentiate Diploma of the London College of Music last October.



BY ING. JEREMY SCERRI, EEEI LECTURER
jeremyscerri@gmail.com

IS IT WORTH RUNNING IN THE RAIN?

Is it worth running in the rain? I'm sure you have been intrigued by the walk vs. run argument. The most interesting thing about this problem is that if you pose it to your friends, they will stare surprisingly at you because in everybody's mind the answer is 'obviously' to run. However, when you proceed to point out the subtleties of the problem, they very quickly get a confused look on their faces. A quick show of hands in class showed that the majority intuitively thought that running will keep you drier.

Anyhow, let's use math to help us organize our thoughts. The model will be kept as simple as possible by using geometry whilst however ensuring that the result would remain valid.

Here is a list of initial assumptions that will be made in this analysis:

1. For our purposes the human figure can be thought of as a cuboid, this may be true for the torso and not so true to model the legs due to their movement.
2. The rain only falls on two faces of the cuboid; the top face and the side facing the direction of motion. In the diagrams, these two faces are shown in green and red respectively (Figure 1).
3. The cuboid remains upright both while walking and running.
4. The drops of rain fall at their terminal constant velocity (typically at around 10m/s). In diagrams this velocity is depicted by blue arrows.
5. The drops of rain fall vertically.

It is often useful in problems involving relative motion of two moving bodies (Figure 1) to transfer it into one that has a single moving body. In this case we can imagine that the rain drops are uniformly distributed and fixed in space (Figure 2). We need to make up for the 'fixed raindrop' model by moving the cuboid upwards at the terminal velocity of the drops. Hence the cuboid is moving both forwards (running for shelter) and upwards. In this way only the cuboid is in motion and the math will be easier.

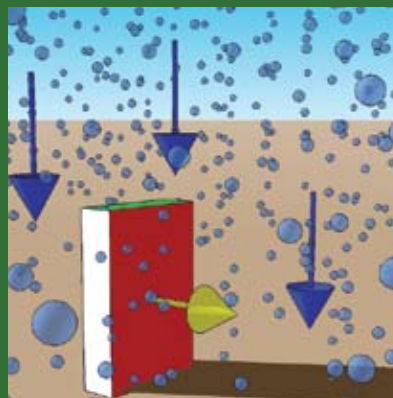


Figure 1: Rain falling at V_t and Cuboid moving at V_f

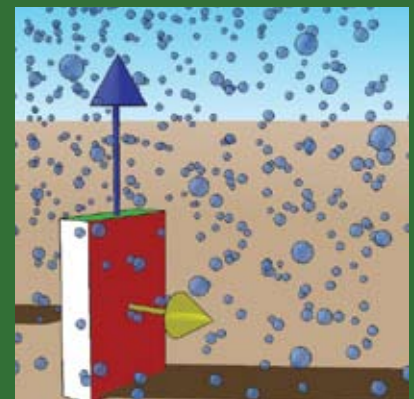


Figure 2: Rain drops fixed in space and Cuboid moving forward at V_f and upward at V_t

Let us begin by defining the following parameters.

- l The distance to the nearest shelter
- V_f The forward velocity of the cuboid
- V_t The terminal velocity of a rain drop
- A_f The area of the front face – the red face
- A_t The area of the top face – the green face
- C The volume swept by a cuboid face which is proportional to the wetness of the face

Let's say that the cuboid is at a distance l m from the nearest shelter and is moving forward at a constant velocity V_f ms^{-1} . At this rate it will take a total time $t = \frac{l}{V_f}$ seconds to arrive at this shelter.

As already mentioned, we are assuming that only two faces will get wet. Let's say that the front face (red) has an area of A_f m^2 and the top face (green) an area of A_t m^2

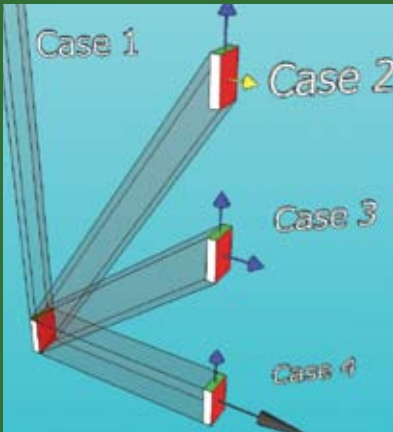


Figure 3

Now that all the variables are defined we can see what happens when V_f is increased from 0 to V_t to $\infty \text{ ms}^{-1}$. Figure 3 shows the trajectory the cuboid takes when its forward speed is increased from 0 to ∞ .

Considering the first case, when $V_f=0$, the cuboid will remain at the initial position for eternity. In this case the volume of space it will encounter when moving upwards at terminal velocity V_t would be infinite. Hence, the top face will receive an infinite volume of drops while the front face will stay dry.

Considering the second case when $V_f < V_t$, both faces will get wet. The volume of space that will be swept by each face is in the form of a prism having a rectangular base (Figure 4). This is a specific case of a parallelepiped and hence the volume can be calculated by multiplying the base area by the perpendicular height. From the following figure the volumes swept by both faces can be calculated.

For case 3, the cuboid forward velocity is equal to the drop terminal velocity (we leave this test for the Jamaican Usain Bolt and his elite peers...) and the volume equations remain similar to the previous case. Since we can replace V_f by V_t the ratio of water dropping on both faces will be equal to the ratio of the face areas.

In case 4, if the cuboid manages to break Bolt's land speed record, the sound barrier and even the light barrier (limiting the discussion to classical mechanic) and get to the point where $V_f = \infty$, the cuboid will reach shelter in no time at all. Hence, no drops fall on the top face, but the front face manages to sweep all the drops in the path in front of it.

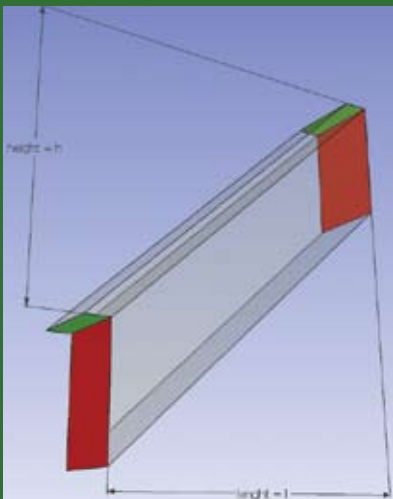


Figure 4

	Top face Swept Volume	Front Face Swept Volume
Case 1	Infinite	Zero
Case 2	$A_t h = A_t V_t t$	$A_f l = A_f V_f t$
Case 3	$A_t h = A_t V_t t = A_t V_t t$	$A_f l = A_f V_t t = A_f V_t t$
Case 4	Zero	$A_f l$

In the above table, Case 2 represents the general case where $V_f \neq V_t$, while Case 1, 3 & 4 are particular instances of the general Case 2.

Hence in general the total Volume (C_T) falling on the cuboid is the sum of the top face and the front face volumes.
 $C_T = A_t V_t t + A_f V_f t$ ----- (1)

The equation for C_T in this form is not very useful. We need to obtain an equation relating C_T to V_f without having the variable t present in the equation. In this manner we would study the effect

on the total volume if we only change the forward velocity.

Now, V_f , t and l are related by
 $t = \frac{l}{V_f}$

Hence we can substitute $\frac{l}{V_f}$

instead of t in equation 1 and get:
 $C_T = l \left(\frac{A_t V_t}{V_f} + A_f \right)$ ----- (2)

In this form the equation has all parameters fixed except for V_f . Figure 5 below is a plot of equation 2 and shows how V_f affects C_T .

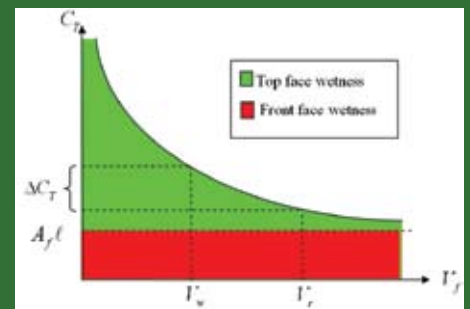


Figure 5

To summarize, we get least wet, ($A_f l$), if we manage to run at infinite velocity, meaning that running keeps you drier. Another interesting observation from the graph is that running faster will only reduce the wetness on the top face i.e. reaching shelter at a snail's pace or at our top speed will not change the front face wetness.

Although running keeps you drier, the question is by how much? Since walking speed, V_w , and running speed, V_r , are very much the same when compared to the ideal (infinite) velocity required to get to the least wetness possible, how much do you gain, (AC_T), in dryness if you run.

We need to put some real numbers in the equations to get to some real value of AC_T . Let's take the following values for the parameters:

- $V_t = 10 \text{ ms}^{-1}$ for a typical raindrop size.
- $V_w = 2 \text{ ms}^{-1}$ brisk walking pace.
- $V_r = 10 \text{ ms}^{-1}$ an Olympic sprinter
- $A_t = 0.15 \text{ m}^2$ & $A_f = 0.65 \text{ m}^2$ for a mid-size frame person

If we plug these numbers in the equation for C_T we get

	Walking Pace $V_f = V_w = 2\text{ms}^{-1}$	Running Pace $V_f = V_r = 10\text{ms}^{-1}$
Front face C_f	$C_d = 0.65t$	$C_d = 0.65t$
Top face C_t	$t \left(\frac{A_t}{A_f} \right) = 0.75t$	$t \left(\frac{A_t}{A_f} \right) = 0.15t$
Total C_T	$t \left(\frac{A_t}{A_f} + C_d \right) = 1.4t$	$t \left(\frac{A_t}{A_f} + C_d \right) = 0.8t$

	ΔC_T (2ms^{-1} to 10ms^{-1})	% reduction in wetness (2ms^{-1} to 10ms^{-1})
Front face	0	0%
Top face	0.6t	80%
Total	0.6t	43%

Hence although the optimum (infinite) velocity for least wetness is very much out of everybody's reach, running still gives you a substantial gain in dryness! This result is in agreement with the graph since it shows a steep gradient for slow velocities, meaning that the gain in dryness, ΔC_T , would be larger for changes in velocities on the lower scales.

Let's take this argument a step further. Although the above result is interesting, what really matters is that neither face is soaked to saturation such that water penetrates the clothing and reaches the skin. Hence it is not only the total wetness which matters but also the distribution amongst both faces i.e. we need to determine which face gets wet faster and why. It is useless pondering on this if the shelter is very far away or the clothing is thin such that it reaches saturation very fast.

Figure 5 sheds some light on this issue as well. Since the top face wetness changes only when we change our forward velocity, at lower speeds, the top face will reach saturation first, while at faster speeds, the front face will reach saturation before the top face. (See Figure 6)

If we are after a skin dryness solution we need to find the speed which would guarantee the longest distance without water penetrating to the skin. As already mentioned we do not have control on the front face wetness since this does not depend on our speed. Hence, we must take into consideration only the wetness level of the top face. We need to determine the speed such that the top face wetness level keeps us dry for at least the same duration of the front face. In fact we need the speed such that the wetness level stays equal on both faces.

For this part of the analysis we need to make two further assumptions:

1. When droplets are absorbed by the clothing, they diffuse equally in all directions by capillarity. Hence we are neglecting the possible effects of gravity.
2. Top and front faces are covered with the same clothing material.

To satisfy the equal wetness on both faces we require that $A_t h = A_f l$ and either one must stay below C_{sat} for 'skin' dryness.

If we replace h and l by $V_t t$ and $V_f t$ respectively in $A_t h = A_f l$ we get;

$$V_f = \frac{A_t V_t}{A_f}$$

This equation says it all. For the longest 'skin' dryness, the best forward velocity depends on your top to front area ratio since V_t is the same for everybody. Plugging in the same numbers we used earlier we get V_f for longest 'skin' dryness is 2.3ms^{-1} which is a fast walking or jogging pace! Let's call this V_s

Earlier we have seen that fast running will reduce the overall wetness by half. However, here we see that to get equal distribution on both faces to guarantee 'skin' dryness, we just need a fast, walking to jogging pace! How do we consolidate the two results together?

From the graphs above it is clear that reducing the front face wetness increases the distance we can travel without getting wet to the skin. To reduce the front face wetness we need to increase the velocity, but there is no need to go at speeds greater than $V_s = 2.3\text{ms}^{-1}$. Going faster than this does not increase the distance without getting wet to the skin as this only reduces the top face clothing wetness. So when the rainy season comes, you either carry your umbrella with you or run to the nearest shelter at 2.3ms^{-1} !

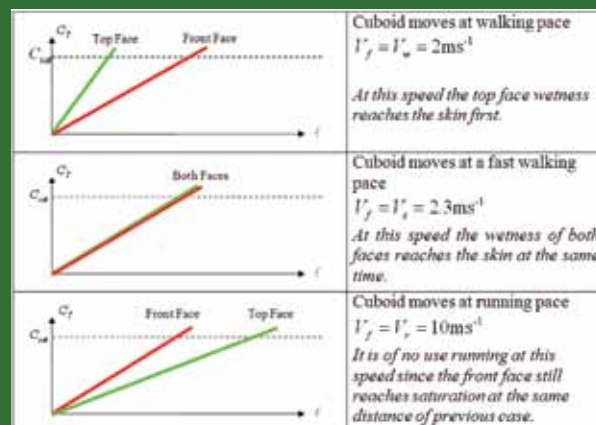


Figure 6



Fire Fighting



Tug of War Tournament



Rock Climbing Wall



FOUNDATION DAY

Friday 24 October



MCAST CELEBRATES ITS FOUNDATION DAY ∞



The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology celebrated its Foundation Day on Friday 24 October 2008. This event was held at the MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola, from 9am till 1pm. The aim of the event was to unite all MCAST students, lecturers and staff to celebrate the set up of the College.

Students and members of staff at the College had the opportunity to share moments of relaxation and celebration whilst emphasizing the significance of having nine Institutes networked in one College championing advanced vocational education and training.

The day kicked off at 9am with a celebration of Holy Mass by the College Chaplain, Father John Curmi. Soon afterwards at 10.30am several activities started.. These included sports activities, health and safety demonstrations, police dogs demonstration, nail art and a live band.

The sports activities were held at the grounds of Corradino main campus. A football tournament ran in parallel to other sports activities which included wall climbing, kick boxing and a tug of war tournament. Other sports activities and fun games took place continuously.

The Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) and the Fire Fighting Division were present to deliver Health and Safety demonstrations. Meanwhile, students from the Institute of Community Services performed nail art. The mobile blood

unit was also present at the MCAST campus. For all those interested in some bargain shopping, a car boot sale was held opposite the Institute of Community Services block and food stalls around the campus kept everyone's hunger satisfied. All these activities took place with live music featuring local talent, in the background. Besides these activities there was also an exhibition on climate change based outside the Library and Learning Resource Centre. The MCAST Student Council also set up a number of stands of general interest to students including information on travel opportunities and participation in EU exchange programmes.

The event came to an end at 1pm, following which all students and lecturers returned to their respective institutes as lectures resume.

This event enhanced a sense of belonging to a strong, fast developing College. 'This is indeed an opportune time for students and staff to study and work at MCAST as there has never been such a vast range of vocational courses leading to prospect of employment and opportunities for staff professional development leading to career progression. It is imperative however that during such periods the College acts as one united institution. Activities like the one we have today, serve to create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere that promote group activities and encourage good rapport between staff and students' Prof. Grech, Principal and CEO of MCAST, said.

FOUNDATION DAY



Kick Boxing Demonstration



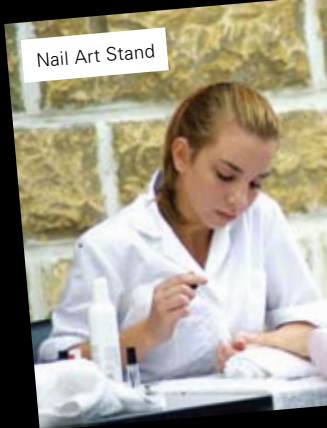
Fire Fighting Demonstration



Car Boot Sale



AFM Demonstration



Nail Art Stand



AFM Demonstration



Police Dogs Demonstration



Kick Boxing



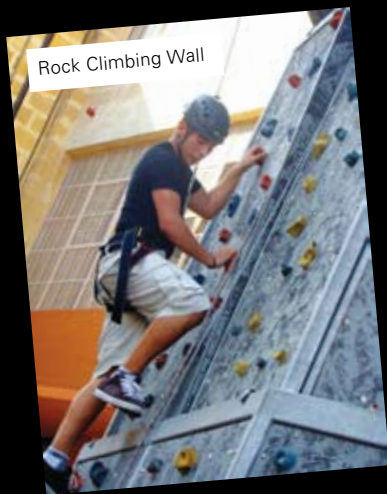
Students participating in the Fire Fighting Demonstration



AFM Demonstration



Police Dogs Demonstration



Rock Climbing Wall

WINTER ADVENTURE UP NORTH

NSTS has always been on the forefront of student and youth travel and although much has changed in the travel sector in recent years, NSTS is still a very valid partner for young people seeking thrills and adventures. This year NSTS is offering an array of interesting destinations with a good dose of adventure and fun for the winter season.

If you are planning to travel for Christmas you may want to consider spending it in Wales. Imagine waking up on Christmas day in an authentic Welsh farmhouse deep in the countryside with views of snow-covered landscapes taken directly from the dreamiest Christmas postcard you have ever seen. In many ways, Wales is just what you picture it to be: rolling moorlands, glaciated mountain areas, tongue-twisting place names, romantic castles, cheese on toast and old mining towns. But Wales is more than this. Apart from the fantastic walking and cycling that's available in the country, there's also a wealth of water and adventure sports, horse riding and fishing. Add to this some fine festivals and Cardiff's nightlife, and you have a great destination awaiting you.

Or how about spending the holidays in a Highland Castle and then singing Auld Lang Syne in Edinburgh on New Year's Eve (or Hogmany as it is called in Scotland). Their countryside is a wild, beautiful tumble of raw mountain peaks and deep glassy lakes and the Scottish are feisty, opinionated and fiercely loyal. Although there are many beaten tracks across this land, even in tourist hubs like Edinburgh, Glasgow and the Isle of Skye it's easy to veer off into one-of-a-kind adventures. In all this the climate adds an edge to the whole experience.

If you have some extra time at hand you might consider visiting Ireland for a tour of the whole island in a 8-day Irish Adventure. Traditional music, stunning scenery and all the best that Ireland has to offer may well turn out to be the best days of your life! Get the 'gift of the gab' by kissing the Blarney Stone; Experience the dramatic Cliffs of Moher; Meet the locals at a traditional music session in the pub; Explore the Gaelic Isle of Ins Mor; Trek to the Giant's Causeway and brave the amazing Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge; Take a walking tour of Derry City's medieval walls and discover how times have really changed; Enjoy pints of the

black stuff and traditional music in Galway, Ireland's cultural capital.

These are but three of a myriad of options that are on offer through NSTS. In the coming weeks NSTS will be launching its skiing packages once again off the beaten track and with excellent value for money... so stay tuned!

The destinations and tours that NSTS offers differ from those that are on offer at other travel agencies in that they are aimed at those with a yearning to explore. NSTS caters especially for travellers who want to experience a country, its people and its traditions for themselves and its mission is to ensure that you maximise your travel experiences, have a great time with the least hassle possible and with a good dose of culture and learning, and they strive to do all this whilst stretching your budget as far as possible – giving you more value for money.



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www.nsts.org

LONELINESS



Loneliness can be a common experience however it can also be a very personal and individual feeling. It can be as much about being cut off from our own inner resources, as about being isolated from others. Whatever the circumstances, these feelings of loneliness can damage our self-esteem and confidence and cause us great unhappiness and even despair.

Loneliness is a normal part of human experience. If it doesn't last for too long it can even have positive effects since it can lead to the discovery and development of personal resources and therefore towards a greater sense of independence. It can also encourage sociability. However if it becomes long-lasting it can cause great distress and hurt. So the following are some clues not to let it stay too long:

- It may be your situation that you might need to change not your personality or appearance. And you can do something about that.
- Accept your own preferences – if you prefer one-to-one friendships to group contact you may prefer quieter places to pubs or clubs.

- Be realistic in your assessment of the friendships of others – are they really as warm and stable as you imagine?
- Remember that friendships take time to develop.
- Choose activities you are genuinely interested in – you will meet people who share something in common with you.
- If you can be in touch with your own feelings and experience, and talk about these to another person, you may make it easier for them to do the same in return; this process can lead to mutual understanding and trust.
- STOP and look around you – you may well find others sitting on their own who would welcome a smile from you.
- When we are feeling lonely, we can sink into ourselves and stop seeing the reality of the world around us.
- And if you still feel lonely, accept your loneliness and remember that you are allowed to feel lonely at times – then try to move on.

The MCAST Counsellors can be contacted on
2398 7133/4
 or by email on:
counsellors@mcast.edu.mt
marthese.vassallo@mcast.edu.mt
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"WE ARE WHAT WE REPEATEDLY DO. EXCELLENCE, THEN, IS A HABIT." SOCRATES BY ROBERT CASSAR



If you have a careful look at MCAST administration building, you will notice a sundial with the words 'Carpe Diem' inscribed. The wording can be translated as "seize the day". This is indeed the best philosophy or rather frame of mind you need to adopt whilst studying at MCAST, especially now, that the initial enthusiasm has faded.

You might be finding it hard to get motivated and start off your homework or studies. Well, worrying won't help. Here's a small guide to getting your classroom worries sorted.

PREPARATION

Make sure you go to each class with everything you need. If you're supposed to bring certain books, be sure that you do. To some, this might seem obvious, but if you're heading to a lecture without all the stuff you need, it can stress you out. If you do forget something, talk to the lecturer at the very beginning of the lecture and see what can be done; don't wait until halfway through.

And remember the best way of being prepared for your assessment is to actually go to your lectures. Skipping lectures will just make you fall behind and decrease your attendance records.

Rest is not a waste of time. Getting some sleep (6-8 hours) will leave you feeling refreshed and ready for the next day. If you're falling asleep in lessons, you need to get more rest or you are really bored. Both of them are not good signs.

DO SOME RESEARCH

If you know what's coming up in a particular lecture, do a bit of research beforehand. This doesn't mean you need to read the entire book, it just means that you'll know what the lecturer is talking about. A good idea would be to go online for half an hour (at the library) or so the night before. You'll be able to take in new information better if you've already read up on it.

SET UP A STUDY GROUP

If you find it hard to study or to focus why not get a group of friends together to do homework or an assignment? In a group, you can discuss the subject you're studying and get ideas from each other. If a lecturer tells you to work on something alone, though, make sure you do. Remember, copying is not option.

IF IN NEED, ASK FOR HELP

Don't be afraid to go and speak to your lecturers about any problems you're having. It's better to let them know that you're having difficulties rather than let things carry on, as then your marks will suffer.

Don't stress yourself out unnecessarily; no one will think less of you for admitting you're having difficulties.

Your lecturer should be understanding, and will be happy to go over anything you're not sure of.

GET A STUDY PLAN

If you need to catch up, then you should be looking at when you can fit in your study sessions. Don't plan anything for times when you know you're not going to want to study, like Saturday evenings or late at night just before you go to bed. The best way is to commit yourself to a few hours of study a week and you should soon be making up lost time.

HIT THE LIBRARY

Be realistic about choosing somewhere to study. Surely you're not going to get much done at the canteen or in front of a gaming console. The MCAST libraries are perfect: there are no distractions and you can find any books you may need. All MCAST libraries will let you have a bit of peace and quiet. Keep in mind that you can also ask the librarian about what study facilities are available.

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TRAINING OFFERED TO THE CHILD CARE ASSISTANTS



As part of the process of offering Child Care Services at the College, MCAST recruited three Child Care Assistants. The Counsellors were asked to conduct a number of training sessions for the Child Carers with the aim of helping them to get to know each other and facilitating team building.

'We are really looking forward to starting a brand new Child Care Centre at MCAST to welcome children aged zero to three years.'

'We started to get to know each other and appreciate one another, all with the aim of building a new strong team. Being offered such a service made us feel more welcomed.'

The training included a number of practical activities and role plays followed by the processing of what happened during the exercise and discussions. Through some of these sessions, the Carers became aware of certain personal characteristics of the team members.

'One of the most important sessions for me was the team building one. This is because first we did not know each other and with the Counsellors help, we built a strong team. We got to know each others' character and now we can find ways how to work together.'

'I really enjoyed a particular session which was about a nursery rhyme. We had to choose a nursery rhyme, translate it from English to Maltese and animate it as if we had to do it in front of the children. During the processing I realized how we agreed to work together and come up with the presentation in a very short span of time.

The unassuming and non-judgmental approach is considered an asset in everyday life and even more so for those who are trusted with the care of minors.

'In one of our sessions we were asked to think of three statements about us. Two of them had to be true and the other one had to be a lie. Though we all thought it was an easy task, it was very difficult for us to select the statement which was not true. From this session I have learned that one cannot jump to conclusions, judge a person and form assumptions because people can be very different from the way they appear to be.'

The three participants were made aware of their duties and responsibilities when taking care of young children. This was done mainly through role plays followed by discussions. The experience of one of these role plays according to a Child Carer is the following:

'The mother was eager to get her child from the MCAST Child Care Centre when, according to our records, by law only the father had the custody of the child. Although I listened to her and empathized, it was very tough for me to convince her that I had to abide by the instructions given to us by the father who happened to have full custody of the child. I explained to the mother in a calm way that in such cases we cannot breach our policies because we would be heading for big trouble.'

Being self aware and in touch with our feelings is an important element particularly for persons working in caring professions. Moreover, expressing our feelings in a positive way is a skill that we have to learn and practise in our everyday life.

'We were asked to identify our present feelings at that moment with a particular chocolate, white being light/happy and dark being heavy/down. At first I thought it was babyish but when I started to think about it, it really helped me to express myself about what I was feeling. Being a person that doesn't like to talk about herself, it was a smooth and easy

way to express and share my feelings with others.'

Exploring our boundaries and learning when, who and how much to trust is a necessity to protect ourselves and act in a professional way when dealing with difficult situations.

'The session was based on self awareness. It was really interesting especially during the last part of the exercise when the Counsellor asked us to stand opposite each other. Person A had to stand still while person B had to walk slowly towards person A, following the directions given by person A on when to stop and when to walk. At one point she was getting so close that I had to stop her. It is all about boundaries and how comfortable I felt when she was moving towards me. It was a very emotional exercise especially when exploring how much you are accepted and trusted by colleagues. As a result of this exercise we became very close and caring towards each other.'

Through these training sessions the Counsellors also tried to sensitize the Child Care Assistants about certain delicate issues such as home challenges, parental needs, child's custody, child safety and abuse. Through the personal development journey they went through, the Carers enhanced their skills and awareness of their job responsibilities when trusted with the care of our young loved ones.

'We would like to show our appreciation to the College Counsellors as from experience we know that they are very helpful, approachable and kind. We would suggest you to make use of their service and approach them if you need their support or guidance.'

THE ARMED FORCES OF MALTA AT MCAST

On 7 October 2008, the Guidance and Counselling Team of the College organized and coordinated an activity held for students by the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) at the Student House during the mid-day break. Personnel from the different sections of the Armed Forces of Malta addressed the students and gave informative presentations on a variety of careers with AFM.

The first presentation was about the 4th Regiment. This consists of five distinctive areas which are: Revenue Security Corps, Band, C31 Company, Training Wing and the Catering Company.

The Training Wing offers the Officer Commissioning Course with particular training on Leadership and Structure while the Recruits Basic Training focuses on Basic Military Skills and Course Structure. The Officer emphasized the requirements to join the Armed Forces which are Education, Police Conduct, Physical and Medical Fitness and Age.

The Marine Squadron is responsible for:

- Maintaining Territorial Integrity.
- Maintaining Integrity of Maltese waters through surveillance of Malta's territory against illegal drugs, illegal immigrants trafficking, prevent illegal fishing and other law breaking at sea.
- Providing Search and Rescue Services.
- Providing Physical Security and Protection of Sensitive Locations.
- VIP Escorts and security related duties.
- Burials at sea and recovery of bodies.
- Supporting Civil Protection Operations including Marine Pollution, floods, sea/air disasters.
- Other duties including military aid to civil community, State Ceremonials and other public duties.

The Marine Engineering Shore Support Command includes Mechanical, Electrical Electronics, Carpentry, Welders and Composite Workshops.

The Air Wing is a highly specialized and versatile aviation unit. It operates and maintains both fixed and rotary wing aircraft types. The crew is proficient in many different missions. The country's total area of Search and Rescue region is 250,782 sq. km. Since 1992 the personnel of the Air Wing have successfully saved over 500 people.

The technical section comprises of the rotary and fixed wing sections. Personnel from these sections work on both engines and airframes by performing routine and advanced maintenance. Technical personnel assume important roles during flights such as in Winch and Flier Operations. Moreover they are also responsible for Aircraft Documentation, Technical stores and Motor transport.

Air Wing future operations include:

- Changes to both fixed wing and helicopter aircraft fleets with more modern types in service within the next 3 to 5 years.
- Number of personnel stationed at Air Wing expected to increase with emphasis placed on training personnel for Maintenance Division.
- Increase in participation on FRONTEX sponsored courses by all personnel.
- Rescue section personnel number to increase to 16 and all be fully qualified combat medics.

The activity was very well attended and students present showed great interest in AFM. Contact details were given out particularly those of the Recruitment Office. The AFM Officers exhibited equipment, weapons and other material used in their day to day duties during Foundation Day.



MCAST LIBRARIES NOW HOUSE THE STUDENTS' PROJECTS COLLECTION

Following the approval of some changes to the MCAST Library regulations, the MCAST Learning and Library Resource Centres are now in a position to start collecting and presenting for research purposes all students' projects that are at least at MCAST Level 4 and higher. Such original projects, written by students as part of their qualification process, will be housed within the library of the respective Institute where they were generated. For example projects prepared and submitted by the Institute of Agribusiness students will be found within the Library of the Institute of Agribusiness. The Main Library in Paola will house the biggest number of these projects since it will be collecting projects from five Institutes. At present the collection consists of only about 500 titles all inherited from Technical Institutes that existed prior to the establishment of MCAST. By January 2009, these titles should start becoming available for use and by the end of this academic year we should also start seeing MCAST student projects.

Because of copyright restrictions it will not be possible to borrow these projects for home use. They can only be used on

library premises, in the area where they are housed. At the Main Library in Paola, this area is Hall C on the first floor. These project titles can all be searched for using the library catalogue found at <http://195.158.110.84/search.asp>

Within the 'Subject Heading' field key in 'Long assignment' and the choose your subject area/number from the classes list. The search will be limited to just these projects and will exclude ordinary published books. A request needs to be made to the Assistant Librarian on duty at the time. Photocopying will be restricted to just a few pages only. Please refer to the Library Photocopying Guidelines at http://www.mcast.edu.mt/lrc_aboutus_photocopying_guidlines.asp.

Finally remember that these student projects are all original and unique student works. Investing your time in researching your topic properly, through previous students' projects (this collection) and in reading from books and periodicals in your study area will pay off in ensuring that your project will get good marks. Moreover it will be seen as very good work by other students who will refer to it in the future.



BOV PRESENTS BOOK DONATION TO MCAST

Bank of Valletta presented a book donation to the MCAST Institute of Art and Design Library which welcomes numerous students who follow a range of creative, technical and management careers in art, craft and design.

The book donation was presented by Karl Spiteri, Manager Corporate Branding and Quality at Bank of Valletta, who was greeted by Mr. Victor Vella, Assistant Librarian at the MCAST library of the Institute of Art and Design in Mosta.

Students will be able to utilize the BOV sponsored books for their research and projects which cover numerous topics such as video and photo editing. The new books will further enhance the repertoire of publications at the Institute in line with the vision of MCAST to provide students with greater accessibility to information.

“Through the Education Pillar of the Community Programme, Bank of Valletta has donated numerous books to various academic institutions. It is part of our Corporate Social Responsibility to ensure that our future generations are given the necessary attention especially when considering the importance and achievements of MCAST in providing vocational training to so many students,”

explained Mr Spiteri as he toured the library with Mr Victor Vella and Mr. Stephen Vella, Director of the Institute.

The MCAST Institute of Art and Design provides students with an internationally recognised training programme in a number of art and design areas at various levels from Foundation Courses to BTEC Higher National Diplomas. The number of students at the Institute has grown significantly over the past years.



Bank of Valletta



MCAST GOZO CENTRE LIBRARY IN XAGHRA COLLECTIONS NOW AVAILABLE FOR LENDING PURPOSES

As reported last year, on the 3 March 2007, the Local Council Public Library in Xaghra, "Librerija Pubblika Patri Gigi Camilleri S.J." was opened for general public use. This library, besides being open to the general public, also houses the MCAST Gozo Centre Library collections which collections by now amount to over 1,000 volumes of printed books and some printed books with CD-ROMs.

All these titles in this collection can now be viewed as catalogued entries by accessing the MCAST Library On-line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) at www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/. Use the 'Search our Catalogue' page. One can restrict the search to just the MCAST Gozo Centre library or widen the search to any or all of the other 5 MCAST Libraries. Another useful way to search for what is useful in the library is to use the 'Your Course and the Library'. In this case one can choose the Institute or Centre and course that one is registered at, then choosing the subjects in each study units, one can pick up directly from OPAC all library contents that support the particular subject.

The MCAST Library Management Software (MLMS) is now installed and it is possible to borrow any item from our collection. To be able to borrow these books according to current Library

regulations one needs to first register with the Library, by downloading, printing and filling in the form found at www.mcast.edu.mt/. Follow the instructions on the form. Once registered any library member can make use of (and borrow from) any of the other 5 libraries in Malta. At present one has to turn up in person to borrow and return such books. However in case of difficulties please get in touch at llrc@mcast.edu.mt.

Besides books MCAST has also provided PCs both for off-line and on-line Internet use. There are also some spaces for studying inside the Library. At present, the MCAST Gozo Centre Library is opening as follows:

- Monday morning
from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm
- Wednesday afternoon
from 12.00 pm to 4.00 pm
- Friday morning
from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm

The person in charge, from the Xaghra Local Council end, is Ms. Josephine Sultana and the Library telephone number is 2155 6275. In case of any difficulties or for any other comments e-mail us at llrc@mcast.edu.mt.



INSTALLATION ARTIST NORBERT ATTARD DONATES HIS BOOK TO LIBRARY

MR. NORBERT FRANCIS ATTARD once again has donated his very last book that he has published entitled 'Norbert Francis Attard Between Earth and Sky' This is the fifth book that Mr. Norbert Francis Attard has donated to MCAST Art and Design Institute library.

Norbert Francis Attard, an installation artist with an international reputation, has made a name for himself with his poetic and original approach to a multifarious series of artistic projects. His work combines social, cultural and political aspects together with overlays of scientific and religious themes. Always using unorthodox materials his creations manifest an architect's disciplined eye for detail.

Born in Malta in 1951, Attard now works from his Gozo-based studio. The unique pre-history of Malta and

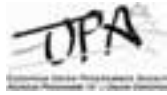
Gozo and the characteristics of the overall Mediterranean spirit have provided inspiration for many of his works. Trained as an architect, he practised the profession for twenty years until 1996, during which period he also worked as an artist creating prints, posters, postage stamps and other works. In 1998 he turned to installation art and has since worked in several disciplines merging expressions of architecture, sculpture, video and photography in different and various media. The relationship of his work to place and memory of site is fundamental, as is also his attempt to create balance and harmony through inter-relatedness of contradictory themes.

He has created many context-specific installations in several countries and has participated in many collective international exhibitions in Scotland, England,

Cuba, Austria, Italy, Spain, Germany, Liechtenstein, Turkey, Israel, Greece, South Korea, Australia, U.S.A., Japan and Taiwan. His work has been shown extensively, namely at the Edinburgh Arts Festival in Scotland, Echigo-Tsumari Triennale in Japan, including the Liverpool and Havana Biennials amongst others. In 1999, he represented Malta in the 48th Venice Biennale.

Norbert Francis Attard is also Director of Gozo Contemporary, an institution which hosts artists in residence for workshops at his studio.

For more info we recommend that you visit the artist web site on www.norbertattard.com



NEARLY €200,000 APPROVED FOR MCAST STUDENTS AND STAFF

Throughout the Summer months, MCAST received a number of good news as most of its applications submitted between February and June were approved for funding.

A total sum of over €46,437 was approved under the Erasmus Programme for a total number of 28 beneficiaries. Ten will be for Student Mobility Studies, seven for Student Mobility Placements, six for Teaching Assignments and five for Staff Training. According to the current estimates, the MCAST International Office will be sending more teachers and staff than requested.

Furthermore, a CEDEFOP application has also been approved for funding which amounts to around €1,620. This makes it possible for Mr Jason Muscat from the Sports Department to attend a seminar regarding sports facilities in keeping with the Master Plan Designs in Vierumaki, Finland in February 2009. This seminar is of utmost importance as MCAST has also embarked on its master plan design for the new campus.

Another Comenius School Partnership project has also been approved for a two year duration amounting to a lump sum of €25,000. The project is called Prima-Klima Box and it has originated through Mr Martin Borg, coordinator of the Roofs of Europe project and lecturer at the Institute of Building and Construction (IBCE). The minimum number of mobilities required amounts to not less than 26 mobilities, for which IBCE students will be a priority.

The Grundtvig In Service Training Programme has also been a priority for the MCAST International Office, but with less luck this time. One application of the three submitted has been approved for funding while the other two applications coming from the library staff were put on the reserve list. The approved project originated from Ms Joanne Carabott, Assistant Librarian. This Grundtvig seminar took place in Austria in October 2008 and it dealt with Multimedia Based Presentations. The sum approved amounts to €2,538.

As regards the Grundtvig Learning Partnership, the MCAST Learning Support Centre has received further good news with the funding of a two year Learning Partnership Project called MODEVAL 2. This project is coordinated by the French partner Agora. This project is aimed to create initial assessment tools for the basic skills students. Moreover, it would serve to train lecturers to build their own assessment tools. The partners involved in this project hail from France, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Germany, Poland and Malta. The budget allocated for MCAST is of €16,842.

The MCAST International Office will also be participating in the Leonardo Transfer of Innovation Project in which the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering is a partner. This involves the preparation of a trade description based on the EuroSkills regulation. The development and implementation of the task will be done in cooperation with educational institutions and industry both at national and international level. Students, teachers and industrial experts from different European

countries will take part in the work. The total sum approved is €14,958.

MCAST is also investing in establishing new bilateral relations with new foreign institutions where MCAST can send both its students and staff for training. The International Office has submitted 4 Preparatory Visits applications of which 3 were approved for funding. The Director of the Institute of Agribusiness will be following a preparatory visit in an Agribusiness college in Finland, while Mechanical Engineering Deputy Director Mr David Bonello will be following a preparatory visit in Stockholm, Sweden where among other things he will be visiting the Volvo company and the public bus garage in Sweden, both possible placements for our students in the years to come. The approved amounts are of €1376 and €1610 respectively.

This academic year is going to be a hectic one for the MCAST International Office. Apart from the MOBILE and CB VET Leonardo projects which are given account of on separate articles, the above mentioned projects total nearly €200,000 approved funding for this academic year to be utilized by both students and staff. All projects are financed through the European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA) and the European Commission.

WATCH OUT FOR THE UPCOMING CALLS FOR APPLICATIONS!

55

STUDENTS READY TO GO...

The MCAST International Office is promoting the Leonardo da Vinci mobility project entitled M.O.B.I.L.E. to reach a fundamental aim governing our work in the vocational sector. We aim at giving 55 students an international dimension to their vocational education programmes. Together with their local work experience this project will give these students an unforgettable and unequalled international experience that will boost their working knowledge, their employability and their overall understanding of their field of studies.

Selection was really tough due to the high number of applications received, nearly 200 for 55 places. The selection criteria were based on 10 different criteria consisting of: Attendance, Behaviour, Assessments / Results, Participation, Personality, Teamwork, Concern for Others, English Language Fluency and Participation in social voluntary groups. These selection criteria proved to choose the best 55 all rounder students who will be representing MCAST abroad in this scholastic year.

The main aims of this project are:

- To gather evidence through training and work experience to enhance their learning experience and contribute to their qualification
- To aid students in discovering the international dimension of their field of studies
- To enhance the skills learnt at the College and transfer them to the workplace
- To experience new working methods not available locally
- To promote and enhance the use of English as a working language.

The non-formal benefits of this project will include enhanced team-working skills and decision-making skills. Being away from home and from Malta for 3 weeks will allow the students to enhance their individuality, their independence and by living with others, they will learn to be more tolerant, more accepting and be able to experience a different culture.

The placements will take place according to the students' field of studies in six different EU countries; Belgium, Austria, Ireland, Finland, Italy and the UK. They will be placed in organisations that can provide them with an alternative experience than the one they have in Malta. The country of choice will be one that, while cradling the incomer, will offer the student a challenge, a new experience and something to explore.

Preparation is necessary to be given locally and the students will be assisted in preparing themselves both logistically and psychologically for this placement. In fact the MCAST International Office is organizing intensive First Aid courses organized by the Malta Red Cross Society for all the 55 participants, divided in three groups. The first group of 20 students have undergone this course with success earlier in September 2008 at the MCAST Student House.

Language preparation is also necessary. In fact, the students who are following their experience in Austria and Italy will be following a basic language course at the German Maltese Circle and at the Istituto Dante Alighieri Malta respectively. These activities are all being financed through the project's EU funding.

Ultimately, a unique experience, both professionally and personally, this project will be a landmark in the students' life.

MCAST IN L'APPRENTISSAGE POUR L'EUROPE



A group of 15 students and 3 members of staff recently participated in a conference in Paris, France entitled L'Apprentissage Pour L'Europe. The main idea behind the meeting was to encourage students from around the European Union to increase Mobility.

Mobility is a newly developing concept, lately being introduced in Europe. This consists of students taking apprenticeships which will allow them to work in various companies in order to obtain work experience and knowledge in different countries, regarding their respective fields of studies.

The students were invited to a gathering in Palais Omnisports de Paris, Bercy. It was entitled the first European Meeting of Young Apprentices, where over 10,000 students gathered to discuss the different opportunities of apprenticeships in Europe. Apart from the spectacular show which was organized, highlights



The Group



At the college



Daniel outside the Louvre



The Group at Euro Disney

included various experiences of former students who took mobility as a decision and managed to gain social positions in life. Amongst them there was French racing driver Alain Prost, who talked about his success in his driving career. He concluded by stating that everyone should always follow their personal dreams.

Another interesting visit took place in the Faculté des Métiers in Evry where the students met with the college's highest personnel and were treated to a dinner in the college's recreational area. They later visited the workshops, in which various machines were displayed and operated, showing how these worked and gaining an insight into the means of education for the students of this faculty.

The participants were split up into multi-cultural groups and taken on a tour around the French capital. They visited the Eiffel tower, Notre Dame, Le Louvre, Champs Elysée, Arc de Triomphe, Sacré-Cœur, Seine river boat trip, and also Eurodisney. These experiences helped to increase cultural awareness and understanding, together with promoting the importance of intercultural diversity.


It was an experience which helped these students to grow, both professionally and personally. Moreover this visit has broadened MCAST horizons internationally.

Finally, thanks go to the French government and the Faculté des Métiers in Evry who offered this unforgettable experience for both MCAST students and staff. This visit was co-ordinated by Bjorn Azzopardi of the MCAST International Office.

MERCI BEAUCOUP!



DEVELOPING A PROFESSIONAL AND EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE



The Strategic Plan launched by the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology highlights a new era for the College. It rigorously pursues vocational education and training that supports a changing economy. By 'putting students at the heart of all we do', the College ensures that individual needs, potential and aspirations of learners will be met in the most effective and efficient way possible. One of the strategic aims outlined for the two years ahead is to continuously develop a professional and effective workforce while ensuring that their qualifications, training and development are tailored to contribute to effective provision of VET. Among other initiatives, MCAST is committed to ensure that all staff members are involved in a programme of continuous professional development.

In this regard, the College is promoting this Leonardo da Vinci project, entitled 'Capacity Building in Vocational Education and Training', with the aim of supporting improvements and innovation in VET practices leading to an improvement in the VET provision. Through increasing the intensity and the volume of international cooperation with other European VET institutions and enterprises, this initiative aims at the overall emergence of Malta as a hub for quality VET. As the main VET provider in Malta, the College is a leader in the field of continuous professional training for both academic and non academic staff members.

The activities envisaged within this project are aligned and designed to compliment other local initiatives aimed at capacity building of staff members. These include courses delivered through the Vocational Teacher Training Unit (MCAST), specialised training delivered through private industries, supporting mechanisms for achievement of professional qualifications and technical training through private enterprises.

In the light of the outlined scenario, this project will support three different kinds of working programmes:

VET INSTITUTION BASED WORKING PROGRAMME – This type of programme will target those academic staff members who intend to build on their current expertise in the delivery of study programmes.

ENTERPRISE BASED WORKING PROGRAMME – This is directed at technical academic and non academic staff members who wish to pursue an on-the-job period of training with the aim of updating their skills in relation to innovative working methods within leading industries.

JOB SHADOWING – this working programme will give the opportunity to non academic staff members to spend time with persons performing similar tasks with the intention to disseminating best practices.

Ten MCAST staff members will be trained in 5 vocational and administrative colleges in Denmark, Germany, Austria, the UK and Finland between the end of October 2008 and April 2009.



MCAST STUDENT PARTICIPATES IN BEIJING PARALYMPICS GAMES

BY ANTONIO FLORES

Antonio Flores from Cospicua participated in the Beijing Paralympics. Below is a write up about his experience.



'One thing that anyone who knows me can tell you is that I love sports. I am a second year sports student and I also train athletics (100m). I train six days a week under the guidance of my coach Jivko Jetchev with the Club Athleta Pembroke A.C. I started training by coincidence as I was browsing through a Maltese search engine and I came across a couple of personal sites regarding athletes. I emailed all of them and asked them to give me some contact information so that I could phone up the club and request permission to start training with them. Luckily a certain middle to long distance runner named Mark Herrera replied with the club's president's number and the rest is history.

I have a certain problem in my right ankle due to a lack of ROM in it and this allowed me to take part in this year's Beijing Paralympics games. I first had to go to Manchester in June to be classified into a race category depending on my disability.

Later I was classified as t44 which meant I was going to be running against the likes of Marlon Shirley and Oscar Pistorius. The last and hardest bit was trying to start an official Malta Paralympics committee seeing that there wasn't one yet. For this part I owe everything to Philippa Roberts as she managed to do it single handedly. In September I left for Beijing along with Ms Roberts. It was just the two of us. When the race day came I felt a bit scared since I was the only representative for Malta (and one of the youngest at those games), but then I calmed down a bit and tried to enjoy it. I stopped the clock at 12.71 sec which was 0.10 away from my personal best. Personally I felt I could have done better but considering I didn't even have a coach to train me and give me a pep talk there I think I did quite well. Now that I came back to Malta and settled down and am at College, I can begin preparing for London 2012 Paralympics'.



The Malta Team with some pom pom girls!

SPORTS YOUTH EXCHANGE IN GERMANY

Francesca Psaila Savona, Clint Buttigieg, Henri Despott, Mario Cremona and Dalton Wingfield from the Institute of Community Services participated in a sport related youth exchange project entitled "Street Soccer for Tolerance". This project was funded by the European Union. This youth exchange project was held between the 21 and the 28 of September 2008.

On the 22 September 2008, the groups gathered for the introduction of the project. After lunch the groups met in the sports hall for an explanation of the rules and methods of the game of street soccer for tolerance. All the youths teamed up to build a street soccer pitch and then all the groups were divided into teams with one person from each country in these teams to play a short tournament. The teams that were waiting for their turn to play took part in communication games. At 8pm all the groups gathered for the cultural night.

The Maltese group was well prepared for this event with plenty of Maltese food, drinks, leaflets, maps etc. This event was a great success as apart from the fact that the youths had the opportunity to taste food coming from other countries they could also socialize and talk about the way of living in the different countries.

On the 23 September 2008, the youths had some time in the morning for sports activities and to socialize again before departing for Berlin.

On the way to Berlin there was a small sight seeing tour by bus and then on arrival to Berlin all the groups went for a short city sight seeing tour on foot. They walked from "Alexanderplatz" along "Unter den Linden" towards "Brandenburger Tor" (Gate). On arrival to the "Brandenburger Tor", they had some free time and after that visited the "Reichstag" (Parliament). Inside the Parliament they had a very interesting tour guided by one of the Parliament Members. The youths also had the opportunity to go up on the dome of the Parliament which offers a spectacular panoramic view of Berlin. After this visit the youths had some free time in "Potsdamer" and after dinner there was time for sports activities.

On the 24 September 2008, the groups again had some free time for sports activities before departing to Templin. On arrival the groups had a short speech from the Mayor and then they had a sight seeing tour of the village. After some time to eat they all set off to a local youth club where once again the youths teamed up to build a street soccer pitch in which they played a tournament. In this tournament everyone was impressed by the talent of the Maltese team. They only lost one game and this put them in second position.

On the 25 September 2008, the groups were invited to Ludwigsfelde's youth club. On arrival, they were welcomed by the Mayor and the volunteers of the youth club.



After some refreshments the youths had the opportunity of visiting the Mercedes Benz Factory. This visit was very interesting and it was impressive to see how the cars were assembled by the use of robots. From there they visited another youth club, assembled the street soccer pitch and played another tournament. This time the Maltese won the first place. The day ended late but on return to the accommodation the youths had the option to go for a swim in the swimming hall. The last activity of the day was to gather around the fireplace and have a chat and share impressions.



The 26 September 2008 was the most awaited day. This was the day of the Street Soccer finals. In the morning the team was given some information and instructions for the finals. At noon everyone boarded the bus to the Venue of the Finals, the Tropical Islands. This is the only tropical island in the heart of Europe, with unique tropical scenery which lures you into a fascinating jungle world. Impressive authentic buildings from the tropics tell stories about distant lands. One could also watch entertaining shows on one of the stages. A pool with a grotto and waterfall and a huge South seas area with a unique sandy beach. The rainforest wellness landscape with its breathtaking scenery is simply delightful! Inspired by buildings and landscapes which belong to our world heritage like the Elephanta Temple in India or the geysers and lakes in Waiotapu.



On arrival to the tropical island all teamed up to set up the Street Soccer pitches and at 5pm there was the kick off of the first game. Unfortunately the Maltese had suffered injuries from the previous tournaments and they did not do so well in this last tournament. However the youths had the possibility to use the facilities in the tropical island till 1am. This gave them time to relax after a hard day of work and competitions.



All the youths who took part in this exchange appreciated the concepts of fair play, tolerance and keeping the game fun and not too competitive. The youths had opportunities to visit places of interest and other places of sports and leisure which are probably a once in a lifetime opportunity. They also had a taste of the German lifestyle and how the youth clubs in Germany work. They will all treasure the moments they spent with youths from other countries and will never forget the good time they had together.

FOUNDATION DAY Activities



On the occasion of Foundation Day the sports department organized an 11-a-side football tournament, a Tug of War competition and also held a boxing/kickboxing demonstration thanks to the Dione Boxing Club. A climbing wall was also erected for the occasion and was enjoyed by all who had a go. The football tournament was won by the Institute of Community Services, ICT were runners up. The tug of war tournament was won by the Gozo Centre.



TREKKING AND CANOEING

Any students or staff members interested in taking up canoeing or trekking as a weekend activity is to contact the Sports Co-ordinator at adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt.

NAXXAR GYM



The Naxxar Gym is once again open to all MCAST students. Here one can play basketball, volleyball and handball. There is also a games area where one can play table-tennis as well as a weight training room for those who are interested in taking up weightlifting as a sport.

SPORTS LEAGUES

The sports leagues are now underway with students from various institutes competing in football 5-a-side, basketball, volleyball, badminton, table-tennis and chess.



SCHOOL SPORT TOURNAMENTS



Several school sport tournaments are planned for the coming months with MCAST male and female students having the opportunity to participate in football, basketball, volleyball, snooker, table-tennis, athletics and rugby competitions against Higher Secondary, Junior College, St. Aloysius Sixth Form and Gozo Sixth Form. So far there are tournaments planned on the 21 January 2009 and an athletics meeting on the 27 February 2009. Those students who would like to form part of the MCAST team are to contact the Sports Co-ordinator at adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt.

MCAST KENDO CLUB



Anyone interested in early morning Kendo sessions before school starts is welcome to attend sessions every Friday morning at 7am at the Corradino Gym. Please confirm with the Sports Co-ordinator if you would like to attend.



Phyllis Sammut Smith



Sr Alexandra Chircop



Fr Marco Portelli



Mrs Connie Tanti

MEET OUR PASTORAL TEAM BY FATHER JOHN CURMI

Dear friends,

In this issue of MCASTlink, I have thought of introducing our new pastoral team. God has blessed MCAST with the loving presence of seven generous people. They have gladly accepted my invitation to give a helping hand in my pastoral work on campus. They all come to MCAST with a rich baggage of different experiences ready to meet you all, wherever you are and whoever you are. They are here for you with an open heart.

Phyllis Sammut Smith is just retired from the post of Subject Coordinator (Religion) in a Government Secondary School. For many years she has worked with youths, organising various activities ranging from drama to live-ins. Joining the MCAST Pastoral Team gives her the opportunity to continue being of service to students.

Sr Alexandra Chircop FCJ, M.A. (Rel. & Educ.) (Dublin) is a religious member of the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus. She has spent her life with youth with the continuous task of creating a dialogue between youth and culture in today's milieu particularly within the Diocesan Secretariat for Catechesis responsible for Adolescent Catechesis. Sr Alexandra is also a visiting lecturer at the University of Malta, at the INSERM and at the Institute of Pastoral Formation. Her hobbies are reading, music, art, swimming and walking.

Fr Marco Portelli is a diocesan priest. He has spent most of his twelve years of priesthood with youth. He was vice parish priest at Msida and Naxxar and parish priest at Paola (Lourdes). The Archbishop has appointed him as his Assistant Delegate within the Diocesan Youth Commission (KDZ) and lately as an Assistant Chaplain at MCAST. Fully involved in pastoral work with youth, Fr Marco gives seminars, talks, retreats and spiritual direction to young people. His hobbies are football, fishing and music.

Mrs Connie Tanti is married to John and has two children, now in their full adolescence. She has a baggage load of work experiences in industry. She now works as a dental assistant. She is involved in a local cultural club organising re-enactments and other cultural activities. Notwithstanding her task of a mother and her other hard work she is keen to share her life experiences with youth. Her hobbies are cooking, reading and music.

Joseph Sammut SDC is a member of the Society of Christian Doctrine (MUSEUM). Joseph is a tradesman and has worked for more than 32 years at the Malta Drydocks. For many years he has been working energetically with children and young people at many of the MUSEUM centres, gaining a lot of knowledge and experience in the field. Joseph is also an expert photographer, exhibiting his fine collection both locally and abroad.



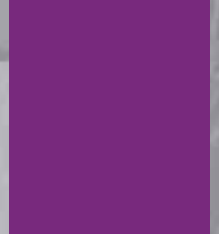
Joseph Sammut



Sr Valerie Farrugia



Fr Raymond Gatt



Sr Valerie Farrugia has been a teacher for the past 30 years. It has been a remarkable journey, during which she has gained invaluable experience with children and youth. She looks forward to share this experience with the young people at MCAST within the Chaplaincy Team.

Fr Raymond Gatt OP, is a Dominican priest residing presently at St. Domenic's Priory at Rabat. He is a spiritual counsellor at St. Albert the Great College and at Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School at Naxxar. For these last years Fr Raymond is also giving his pastoral service at the Institute of Art and Design. He is also responsible for various youth groups. His email address is raygattop@yahoo.com.

At the moment, we are meeting regularly with personal formation as the number one on our agenda. We are being assisted by professional people to help us as individuals and as a group, and to help us prepare ourselves for our pastoral work. We are discussing our mission statement and our raison d'être at MCAST. It is a long way but God will help us through. We share many common things amongst us: a joyful enthusiasm, a deep concern for people, an eagerness to meet you and be there for you, and a profound desire to learn from you all!

We are also in contact with other people to join us. Anyone who wishes to do so please let us know. May God take us all into his embrace and bless us and bless all our work.

**God bless you,
Fr John.**

SPIRITUAL FORMATION:

For teachers and administrative staff:
MCAST Chapel every Monday from 12.40 to 1.15pm.

MASS:

Every Friday at 12.40pm.

CONFESSIONS:

Anytime.
Just contact Chaplain on
7924 0956 for appointment.



CHANGE PROCESSES WITHIN MCAST

This article is based on the dissertation 'The Role of the LLRC in the Change Processes at MCAST: A Study' submitted by Josephine V. Saliba B.A., PGCE as part fulfilment of her MSc in Educational Leadership from the University of Leicester.

The MCAST Strategic Plan 2007-2009 and Master Development Brief commits the College to the development of vocational education and training related to current and emergent national competences and skills, competitiveness and knowledge-based economic scenarios. Therefore, as part of its ongoing development, MCAST seeks to continuously transform various organisational aspects.

A study conducted by Ms Josephine Saliba as part of her MSc dissertation in Educational Leadership (Leicester), deals with the management of this envisioned organisational change; the importance of identifying College priorities and the climate, structure and processes which allow or inhibit collegiality; and partnerships which ultimately need to be established in order to bring plans to successful fruition. It takes an in-depth look at how the dynamics between the three major organisational stakeholders, senior management, lecturing and library staff and students, are in actual fact contributing towards the realisation of the College vision within a specific body of the organisation, the Library and Learning Resource Centre (LLRC).

Based on an extensive literature review, the investigation analyses how the LLRC environment and facilities potentially contribute to envisioned micro-changes to the learning/teaching experiences and environments supporting the MCAST macro-vision of change. The study examines how the LLRC facilities and services are supporting the promulgation of independent and life-long learning as well as information literacy skills (IL) and whether this is happening through collaboration with lecturing staff. It also explores how new skills and teaching resources are being implemented within existent traditional and hierarchical management set-ups and procedures and consequently whether the envisioned change is essentially materialising.

The research analysis departs from the importance of effective strategic planning. Whilst more forward and

lateral thinking from senior management is necessary, change within the current hierarchical structure must be sensitively approached. Traditionally tried and tested management styles should not be entirely discarded but should certainly allow more managed collegial methods incorporating more dialogue leading to increased ownership and a shared vision and culture. This requires strong leadership and long-term goal-specific planning carried out through strategic partnerships operating at various levels including at curriculum design, policy development and staff development.

The setting up of a Curriculum Department would be central to such a collegial system and should ideally place library services at the heart of syllabi in the role of active collaborators. Lecturing and library staff must be allowed to evolve into reflective practitioners, allowed to harness the principles of practicality, collegiality and reflection as well as be allowed to feel free to question basic assumptions about the organisation and their teaching. Staff development that provides motivation and encouragement is a crucial part of the transformation process. The re-organisation of human resources along more modern organigraphs rather than hierarchical models would allow more open-ended communication where all staff would have graded responsibilities to allocate, control, co-ordinate, link and energise various collaborations with each other and with other lecturing staff. One avenue to explore could be identifying key change agents to engage others in partnerships based on jurisdiction, relevance and expertise.

In managing change, senior management should encourage collegial working practices, outline practical short term goals and co-ordinate and control the pace of change allowing time to develop and evaluate progress. Resistance occurs when change is seen as removed from the classroom so staff need to maintain a degree of control to keep motivated. Perceived physical rewards or enhanced prestige or reputation should not be underestimated.



Josephine V. Saliba in the Learning Support Unit

Transforming perceived roles affects learning/teaching cultures as more reflective practitioners bring about incremental changes to prevalent traditional pedagogies, encouraging independent learning through purposeful socialisation. However, transforming the College into a learner-centred organisation requires the re-design and establishment of appropriate organisational structures that can perpetuate new initiatives and continue to develop them from strength to strength. Such transformative schemes should take into account a number of variables such as sources of expertise, funding and available technology. The College could adopt a quality management system creating common policies and procedures, applying them to the LLRC facilities thus saving human resources, time and money.

The LLRC plays a crucial role within curriculum initiatives, such as the introduction of IL programmes, in transforming the College into a learning and collaborative organisation. The way forward for the LLRC is its development into a fully fledged hybrid library and resource centre. As MCAST and the LLRC continue to be developed, redesigning the physical space should continue along current ideas whilst allowing more space for collaborative research and studying through purposeful socialisation. Investing in new technology should not be an end in itself but a way of providing stimulating, interesting and relevant learning environments. This in conjunction with staff development opportunities for lecturers and librarians could potentially transform the teaching and learning processes in which collaborative initiatives and pedagogies suitably address learner needs.

Expanding the concept of a better-designed LLRC which incorporates a more prominent and effective Learning Support Unit (LSU) would make better use of existing space as well as facilitate collaboration and strengthen positive dynamics between librarians, support and other lecturing staff. Increasing and developing as well as securing enough funding to ascertain that current state of the art LLRC and LSU resources are maintained and

regularly updated could positively contribute towards better learning/teaching performance and results. Literature indicates that information professionals and learning support staff are usually more alert to pedagogical development, therefore initiating organisational change through the LLRC and LSU along the suggestions within this study seems to be a feasible way forward for change to occur at grassroot level.

In conclusion, as true as institutional change is an inevitable reality, the transformation of the College into a learning organisation must come about through the development of staff, student and physical resources. Consequently, the evolution of the role of the LLRC and its library, learning support and technological facilities, the use of new technologies such as e-learning, sound information literacy instruction, and supporting organisational transformation through the implementation of collaborative systems at all levels could be the key towards unlocking the potential for more independent and life-long learning of students thus bringing the Strategic Plan to fruition and transforming the College into a true learning community.





From left to right:
 L: Martin Bezzina Wettinger
 C: Self Portrait as a Mathematics Teacher
 influenced by Arcimboldo
 R: Arcimboldo Giuseppe (1527-93)

SELF PORTRAIT AS A MATHEMATICS TEACHER INFLUENCED BY ARCIMBOLDO

BY MARTIN BEZZINA WETTINGER, LSU LECTURER

Martin Bezzina Wettinger is a mathematics lecturer forming part of the Learning Support Unit. This section will review LSU lecturers' who use an original eclectic approach to teaching. Mr. Bezzina Wettinger shows us his inspiration to Arcimboldo's creative art of producing anti-naturalist abstractions, and his own self-portrait as a mathematics teacher.

ARCIMBOLDO GIUSEPPE

Arcimboldo Giuseppe (1527-93) was a Milanese artist who spent most of his life as a court painter in Prague, for the Hapsburg royal family. He is best known for the unique genre of art he created, which comprised the fusion of portraiture and still life, and thus the creation of composite heads of fruit and vegetables, or armour and machinery.

The most striking landmark of Arcimboldo's masterpiece was that he went beyond the simple imitation of nature:- he allowed fantasy to take over and hence produced the famous anti-naturalist abstractions we know today. By combining the psyche and emotions, he established new ideas over and above the objective perception of the subject.

In sum, the exceptional works of Giuseppe Arcimboldo, prominently demonstrate that "the whole is more than just parts". "Man becomes an addition of objects, that he is, as it were, what he eats, and that he represents the sum of all that exists or that he produces." The "mosaics" of Arcimboldo's portraits provide the perfect backdrop, illustrating the diversity and cohesive needs of the Hapsburg Empire.

THE PAINTING

The first encounter with the fascinating works of Arcimboldo, was when given an assignment on 'Fanciful Portraits' by Mr. Sciberras, who was his tutor at the school of art. After a lengthy research, he was inspired to attempt a portrait of himself as a mathematics teacher.

Initially the first objects that popped up in his mind were related to the teaching of mathematics, including a geometry set, calculator, and obviously a textbook. Eventually, more items were added to the list, such as a computer, diskettes, a duster,

and other office items. It was quite challenging to fit these objects to form the impression of a face.

The painting originated by drawing the frontal view of the compass, one of the most basic mathematical instruments... However, the name and logo of the maker printed on the front was interfering with the potential that this instrument had. It was only when putting the compass back in its box that Mr. Bezzina Wettinger noticed that there were two tiny screws at the back. On making this discovery, everything began to fit into place: the original drawing was modified by removing the logo and inserting these two screws. The screws weren't depicted as they appeared but turned round to an almost horizontal line in a way that they really looked like eyes.

Following that, he then searched for other inspirations in his office and came across a stapler. He was stunned to realise that it had the exact profile of a nose. He then drew a side elevation of the stapler. According to the artist, this profile resembled too closely that of a nose, so he decided to try to find another stapler that did not have such a perfect profile. He drew this stapler too, but reverted back to the first profile eventually as it had more character.

Significant changes had to be made in the relative size of the stapler and the compass as the former was in fact larger than the latter. Therefore, the next step was that of drawing a sketch to see how to combine the two objects together. He began by drawing a blown up view of the head of the compass, so as to leave the size of the stapler as it was. Afterwards, two protractors were drawn to symbolise the ears.

In the final painting, the knob from the head of the compass was removed and instead a large number of pencils were painted, symbolizing spiky hair. In order to give the portrait more character, he also drew the number 3 to frame the eyes, and used the circles formed by two pins in the mechanism of the compass, to draw two famous circle theorems.

WEBSITES

arcimboldo-award.com/arcimboldo_uh.html 'Prix Arcimboldo – Giuseppe Arcimboldo' Dr D.F.D. Giezendanner
guardian.co.uk/arts/portrait/story/0,11109,740341,00.html 'Guardian Unlimited, Arts Features, Allegory of Summer, Arcimboldo (1573)'
arscomica.org/Arcimboldo.html 'Inverted illusions' in Ars Comica in Art History
 'Bryn Mawr Classical Review', Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, 'The Mastery of Nature: Aspects of Art, Science, and Humanism in the Renaissance.' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. Reviewed by Christiane Hertel, Bryn Mawr

For more information about Martin Bezzina Wettinger's works, visit www.freewebs.com/ibbottegitasanmartin

SPORTS DAY



For all MCAST students, academic and administrative staff
THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 2008

Venue: Marsa Sports Grounds

Time: 9am onwards

Non-competitive, participation for all

- Rugby (in collaboration with the Malta Rugby Union)
- Baseball/Softball (in collaboration with the Malta Baseball/Softball Association)
- Cricket (in collaboration with the Malta Cricket Federation)

**Competitive:
(for both males and females)**

- Football 5 a side
- Basketball
- Athletics
- Fun Games

Trophies/medals will be given to the winning team

The Snack Bar will be open

MCAST Main Campus, Triq Kordin, Paola PLA 9032

Tel: 2398 7100

E-mail: information@mcast.edu.mt

Website: www.mcast.edu.mt

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