

# MCAST LINK

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



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

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# EDITOR'S MESSAGE



**Caroline Balzan**  
Communications  
and PR Manager

This term was an eventful one for MCAST. The most significant happening was the introduction of the MCAST vocational degree programmes launched by the Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Lawrence Gonzi on Tuesday 5 May 2009. Students now have the opportunity to read for a degree at the College in four institutes, namely, Art and Design, Information and Communication Technology, Electrical and Electronics Engineering and Business and Commerce. Students who, at any time, have successfully completed their two-year Higher National Diploma courses may now progress to obtain a degree. These vocational degree programmes, an alternative to university education, are being offered in collaboration with Fraunhofer- Gesellschaft, a world renowned German research institution. Prof Maurice Grech's article, found inside the magazine, provides further information.

Another milestone for the College was the launch of the MCAST Aviation Maintenance Training Centre as an EASA Part 147 Approved Training Organisation. The College now has the license to provide internationally recognized Part 66 Category A training and certification. Therefore students will now be able to sit for the examinations locally and obtain certification from MCAST.

This term the College also launched the new Child Care Centre, Magic Wonders. Members of staff, students as well members of the community now have the opportunity to keep on working or studying while their child is well looked after by professional carers at the state-of-the-art EU funded child care centre.

On Sunday 17 May 2009 an Open Day and the annual Hair and Beauty Marathon were organised as part of the celebrations of Malta's fifth anniversary of entry into the European Union. Several activities were organised including police dog demonstrations, Armed Forces of Malta demonstrations and several art exhibitions. The model of the new MCAST Campus was also on display for the first time. Several photos of the event can be found inside the magazine.

This issue also includes articles on several donations that the College received. These include the donation of the brand new industrial spray booth, the Mercedes C Class and other vehicles as well as the donations of books. The College is very grateful for these donations as they support the College in its mission to provide high quality education.

**I would like to take this opportunity to thank all contributors and to wish you all restful holidays!**

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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Caroline Balzan". The signature is stylized and includes a horizontal line underneath.

# INFORMATION

## Launch of EU funded project entitled 'Professional Development Programmes for MCAST Staff & Students' Top-Up Degrees' (ESF 1.36)

On Tuesday 5 May 2009, the Prime Minister, Dr Lawrence Gonzi, presided over the launching of an MCAST project funded by the European Social Fund, namely, 'Professional Development Programmes for MCAST Staff and Students' Top-Up Degrees'. The project is made up of three components: the launching of vocational degrees over a three year period in all MCAST Institutes for students who complete successfully the Higher National Diploma at MCAST; the Masters Degrees programmes for academic staff; and short courses of professional development for all staff. This four year project (ESF 1.36) falls under the EU Cohesion Policy of 2007-2013, Operational Programme II.

MCAST is undertaking this project in collaboration with Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, a world renowned German research institution that undertakes applied research of direct utility to private and public enterprise and known by many as the developers of the MP3. This mega institution has a turnover of over 1.4 billion Euro, an academy of its own, 80 research units, and 15,000 researchers many of whom are scientists, engineers and University professors. A positive aspect of Fraunhofer is therefore that it is linked with practically every University in Germany and is deeply rooted within industry. Through Fraunhofer, MCAST acquired access to practically all universities in Germany



*Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, presenting a gift to the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister*

whilst at the same time maintaining the advantage of having to deal with one institution.

MCAST shall shortly issue a call for applications for the first group of its Vocational Degree programmes in the Institutes of Art and Design, Business and Commerce, Electronics and Electrical Engineering, and Information and Communication Technology. The Vocational Degree Programmes address the contemporary demands of industry through innovative and creative approaches to vocational degrees studies, and the research methodology module leading to the final thesis project.



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013  
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life  
Project part-financed by the European Union  
European Social Fund (ESF)  
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds  
*Investing in your future*



*From left: HE Karl Andreas Bonurstenglin, Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, the Hon Dolores Cristina, Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister, Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO, and Mr Boris Groth, Managing Director, ICT-Group - Fraunhofer Gesellschaft*

# MCAST LAUNCHES THE NEW CHILD CARE CENTRE

On the 8 May 2009 the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology launched the new Child Care Centre called 'Magic Wonders'. This Child Care Centre is located on the MCAST Main Campus and is available for the children of MCAST students and members of staff.



*At the launch of the MCAST Child Care Centre*

The Child Care Centre was built and furnished using EU funds. This project was co-financed through the European Regional Development Fund 2004-2006 Programme. Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds; 25% Government of Malta. The value of this project amounted to €127,728.22 (excl VAT) - €150,719.30 (incl. VAT).

MCAST students, members of staff and also parents within the community with babies aged 0 to 3 years now have the opportunity to leave their child in the care of qualified child carers at the Centre while they are at College. This facility will enable women to participate in learning or participate in the workplace whilst their children are professionally cared for. This Centre will provide the opportunity to those parents who wish to start learning or continue working and who would not have previously been able to do so due to raising a family. It will thus enable the College to increase its capacity and to address the serious need to increase the participation of women in the labour market. MCAST will also be enhancing its equal opportunities policy. The provision of this service is in line with the Lisbon Strategy to promote equal opportunities for women and men and the promotion of a better reconciliation of work and family life.



## Senior Management visit former President, His Excellency Edward Fenech Adami

The former President of the Republic, His Excellency Dr Edward Fenech Adami, received a courtesy call from the MCAST Senior Management: Mr. Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, Prof. Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, Mr Emanuel Attard, Project Director New MCAST Project and Mr. Anthony Saliba, Deputy Principal. The MCAST President said that, a few days before the end of the President's term of office, in the name of the MCAST Board of Governors, management, staff and students he wished to show his deep appreciation of the lifetime of public service and complete commitment of several decades of Dr Fenech Adami as a politician, Leader of the Opposition, Prime Minister and President of the Republic, during which he distinguished himself as a leader of principles and Christian values and has a record of achievement for the country that is difficult to beat.

The Principal spoke of the progress being registered by MCAST and MCAST's vision for the future. The President of the Republic congratulated all concerned on the successes of MCAST in the best interest of our youth and

our country. MCAST was set up in 2000 when Dr Edward Fenech Adami was Prime Minister and Dr Louis Galea was Minister responsible for Education. The MCAST President then offered the President of the Republic a cheque as a contribution to the Community Chest Fund.



*From left: Mr Emanuel Attard, Project Director, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, HE Dr Fenech Adami, Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors and Mr Anthony Saliba, Deputy Principal*

# Visit to MCAST by EU Commissioner Mr Jan Figel

EU Commissioner responsible for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Mr Jan Figel visited the MCAST Main Campus on Thursday 26 February 2009. During his very short stay he visited three projects funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), namely the Library and Learning Resource Centre, equipment at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and the Hairdressing Salon and the Beauty Therapy Unit at the Institute of Community Services.



*At the Library and Learning Resource Centre*

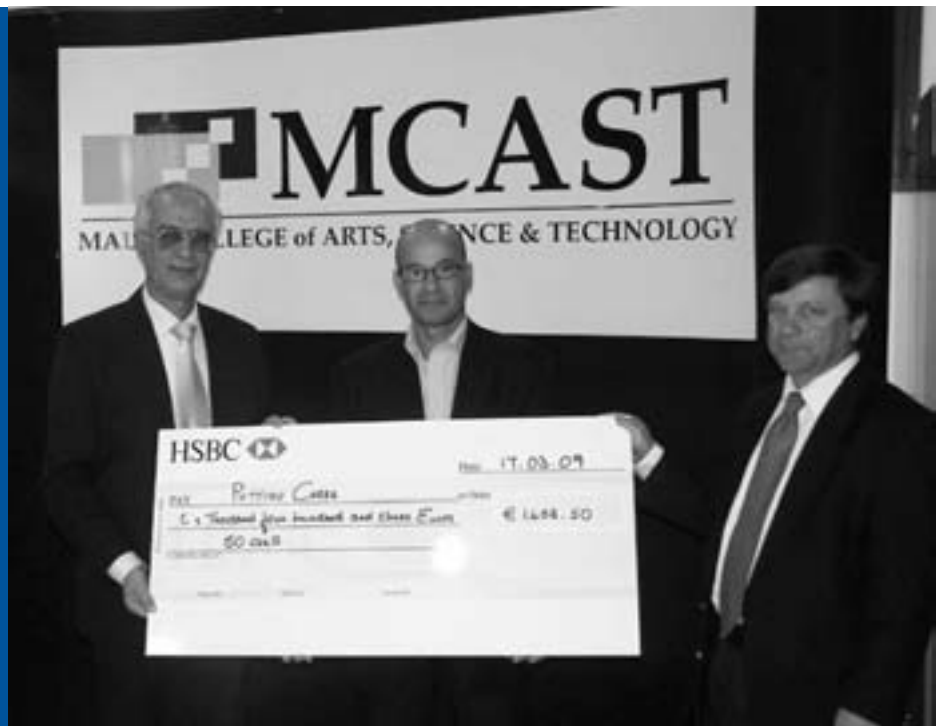
## DONATION TO PUTTINU CARES

On Tuesday 17 March 2009 Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors, presented € 1403 to Dr Victor Calvagna, Chariman of Puttinu Cares. The money was collected during the MCAST Foundation Day and the Christmas Staff Party.

Dr Calvagna thanked the MCAST staff and stated that such donations and contributions will make a big difference in

the lives of the children and their parents. Mr Paul A Attard stated that children who are fighting to overcome such a serious illness and their families deserve every help and, through this initiative, MCAST supports the most valid initiatives undertaken by Puttinu Cares.

*From left: Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, Dr Victor Calvagna, Chairman Puttinu Cares and Mr Laurence Zerafa, Librarian*





*Mr Jan Figel together with the MCAST Senior Management Team and the Directors of the Institute of Mechanical Engineering at the Aircraft Maintenance Workshop*

## The Hon Dr Joseph Muscat visits MCAST

The Hon Dr Joseph Muscat visited MCAST on the 20 May 2009. Accompanied by the Hon Clyde Puli he visited the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, the Institute of Mechanical Engineering, the Institute of Community Services and the Library and Learning Resource Centre.

*From left: The Hon Clyde Puli, Parliamentary Secretary for Youth and Sports, the Hon Dr Joseph Muscat, Leader of the Opposition, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, and Mr John Sciberras, Director of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering*



# PROFESSIONALI

## PAUL A ATTARD



Paul A Attard  
President tal-Bord  
tal-Gvernaturi, MCAST

Fl-Unjoni Ewropea qed tingħata importanza partikulari lit-taħriġ professjonali tal-għalliema fil-livell post-sekondarju u terzjarju. Daqskemm l-għalliema għandhom bżonn ikunu jafu s-suġġett tagħhom tajjeb, daqstant ieħor jeħtieġu jkunu jafu kif jgħadduh b'mod effettiv lill-istudenti tagħhom. Il-kors professjonali offrut mill-Vocational Teachers Training Unit tal-MCAST jitqies essenzjali għaliex hemm metodologija u pedagogija partikulari għall-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ taż-żgħażaġh u l-adulti. Min jgħalliem fil-livell post-sekondarju u terzjarju jeħtieġ psikologija u soċjologija assoċjati ma' din l-età li huma differenti hafna mill-psikologija u s-soċjologija ta' etajiet iżgħar.

Il-lekċerers tal-MCAST, kif ukoll oħrajn, jipparteċipaw b'mod dirett u attiv fil-kors. Għax il-kors joffri opportunitajiet lil-lekċerers biex jiddiskutu l-esperjenzi tagħhom bejniethom u mal-esperti matul is-snin li aktarx ikunu ilhom jgħallmu. Jaqsmu bejniethom l-isfidi, il-problemi, l-issues, il-metodologiji u l-approwċ fit-tagħlim tas-suġġett li jispeċjalizzaw fih u, b'mod partikulari, l-istudenti żgħażaġh, tfajliet u guvintur li jkollhom quddiemhom.

### M'GHADUX IS-SORS TAL-GHERF KOLLU

F'kull livell edukattiv l-għalliema qed jibdel il-mod kif jgħalliem. M'għadux l-għaref li jaf kollox u qed jgħaddi dan l-għerf lil min għandu moħħ li fadallu hafna x'jitgħalliem jew vojti. Illum l-għalliema aktar qed jiffaċilita l-mod kif l-istudent jgħalliem u s-suġġett li qed ikun mgħalliem. L-għalliema mistenni jwassal lill-istudent biex jgħalliem b'mod indipendenti u awtonomu u jfassal hu stess il-mod u l-kif jgħalliem. Biex isir dan l-iżvilupp, l-għalliema innifsu jrid jgħalliem u jiżviluppa teknika biex dak li hu komplikat u diffiċli biex tifhemu jtwassal b'mod l-aktar sempliċi possibbli. Din il-kapaċità tkompli tiżviluppa bl-esperjenza matul is-snin jekk l-għalliema ikun kapaci janalizza t-tagħlim tiegħu u kif qed jasal għand l-istudent anke permezz

ta' dak li jissejjaħ *action research* waqt li qed tgħalliem tanalizza dak li jkun qed jiġri. Fil-fatt, aktar ma jgħaddi ż-żmien aktar l-għalliema isib li qed ifiehem u jgħalliem tajjeb b'anqas sforz, tbatija u heła ta' hin u enerġija.

### KULL STUDENT INDIVIDWU UNIKU U IRREPETIBBLI

Il-lekċerers jiffaċċja kuljum grupp ta' studenti quddiemu iżda japprezza wkoll li kull student hu individwu uniku u irrepetibbli. Mhux kulhadd jgħalliem bl-istess mod, mhux kulhadd jifhem malajr, mhux kulhadd għandu l-istess hin ta' koncentrazzjoni. U l-lekċerers irid ikun konxju tal-mod kif il-messaġġ tiegħu qed jasal u jiftiehem jew le minn kull student individwalment. Minħabba li fl-MCAST ġeneralment l-għadd ta' studenti f'kull grupp hu relattivament żgħir, allura din l-attenzjoni individwali aktar tista' tingħata u tħalli rizultati tajbin. Din is-sitwazzjoni twassal ukoll biex tinħoloq relazzjoni partikulari bejn l-istudent u l-lekċerers li tmur 'il hemm minn relazzjoni bejn bniedem u ieħor komuni. Dan jikkonfermawh il-lekċerers ta' esperjenza meta jiltaqgħu ma' ex-studenti li juru apprezzament ġenwin għal dak kollu li jkun tahom il-lekċerers meta kienu qed jistudjaw u jitharrġu fl-MCAST.

### MINN TAGHLIM GHAL EDUKAZZJONI U FORMAZZJONI

L-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ vokazzjonali mistennija jmorru lil hemm minn sempliċi tagħlim ta' suġġett. Għandhom iwasslu biex l-istudent, kull student jgħaddi minn esperjenza twila li matulha jgħalliem jifhem, janalizza, jispejga, ifittex soluzzjoni għal problema, ifiehem lil haddieħor, jaqsm ma' haddieħor, jaħdem f'tim, jitmexxa u jmexxi, juri sens ta' kreattività u imprenditorija, jagħder u jiżviluppa relazzjonijiet ma' sħabu, anke bejn tfajla u guvni, guvni u tfajla. Għaliex fl-MCAST, bhal f'kull istituzzjoni edukattiva tiżviluppa flimkien komunità li trid titgħalliem, li trid tikber u timmatura minn tifel jew tifla għal żagħżuġh jew żagħżuġha. Komunità li tissapportja lil xulxin, fi żmien sabiħ u fi żmien diffiċli. Mhux l-istudenti biss jikbru u jimaturaw, iżda anke l-lekċerers jgħaddu minn dal-proċess interattiv u dinamiku. Huma wkoll iridu jikbru u jimaturaw!

### INTERATTIVA U DINAMIKA

L-edukazzjoni hi interattività dinamika bejn persuna u oħra. Il-lekċerers ma jhaddimx magna. L-istudent ma jahdimx fuq magna. Għalkemm dan jagħmlu ukoll. It-tagħlim hu rizultat ta' komunikazzjoni u messaġġi li jgħaddu mil-lekċerers għall-istudent, kif ukoll mill-istudent lil-lekċerers, hafna drabi bil-kwint u b'mod sottili. B'hekk l-għalliema jista' jintebaħ jekk il-messaġġ hux qed jasal tajjeb u l-istudent juri jekk ikunx qed jifhem il-messaġġ mibgħut lil-lekċerers tiegħu. L-interessanti hu li t-tagħlim hu azzjoni li tinbidel kontinwament, bi ftit li xejn repetizzjoni. L-għalliema flimkien mal-istudent jibni ġebbla ġebbla t-tagħlim u t-taħriġ biex dak li meħtieġ jiġi mgħalliem u jitgħalliem jgħaddi mingħajr diffikultà.



## ESPERJENZA KONTINWATA

Hawnhekk wieħed jiddistingwi bejn sillabu ta' fatti u ideat li għandhom jgħaddu mill-għalliem lill-istudenti u l-kurrikulu li mhux biss jikkompreni s-sillabu ta' suġġett jew grupp ta' suġġetti partikulari, iżda l-esperjenza totali tal-istudent matul is-snin li jgħaddi fl-MCAST. L-ambjent uman u fiżiku, il-facilitajiet, is-servizzi u l-ispażji, l-esperjenzi u l-attivitatiet kollha flimkien jikkontribwixxu biex joffru lill-istudent esperjenza li għandha tnejn tajejeb mhux biss għad-dinja tax-xogħol u karriera iżda wkoll għall-ħajja. Is-snin tal-istudent fl-MCAST huma snin ta' formazzjoni. Formazzjoni mhux indottrinazzjoni, jiġifieri l-istudent irid jiżviluppa u jikber fil-karattru, fil-personalità kif ukoll fl-għerf (*knowledge*), fil-ħiliet u fil-kompetenzi tiegħu biex ikun persuna sħiħa fil-potenzjal kollu tagħha mingħajr impożizzjoni.

## LEKĊERER MUDELL

Għalhekk il-lekċerer għandu rwol uniku kemm fil-klassi u anke barra mill-klassi. Ix-xogħol u l-karriera tiegħu u tagħha għandhom responsabbiltajiet uniċi u onerużi. Il-lekċerer għandu rwol mudell. Għalkemm dan nafuh, mhux dejjem napprezzaw l-impatt qawwi u deġġiem tiegħu. Il-lekċerer ikun qed jeduka ( u hawnhekk m'iniex ngħid sempliciment "jgħallem") b'dak kollu li jgħid jew ma jgħidx, u jagħmel jew ma jagħmilx fil-klassi, fil-werkxop, fil-laboratorju, fil-gravnds, fl-istaff room. Kull raġel miżzewweġ jew mara miżzewga jinfluwenzaw b'mod qawwi lil uliedhom. Hekk ukoll il-lekċerer jinfluwenza lill-istudenti tiegħu. Irid jew ma jridx. Konxju jew mhux konxju ta' dak li qed jgħid u jagħmel. Fil-klassi jinjetta lill-istudenti kontinwament bl-entuzjażmu lejn is-suġġett jekk hu mhux biss jaf is-suġġett tiegħu tajejeb iżda wkoll jgħaddih b'mod entuzjażmanti. Din kwalità essenzjali għal-lekċerer. Lezzjoni, preżentazzjoni u dimostrarazzjoni nofs kedda jwasslu għal reazzjoni passiva jew anke negattiva. Is-sens ta' dover u impenn għall-istudju u t-taħriġ li jiżviluppaw l-istudenti ħafna drabi hu relatat direttament mas-sens ta' dover u impenn li juri l-lekċerer. Lekċerer li jhejji lezzjoni tajba u jagħtiha bil-qalb aktarx isib rispons tajejeb mill-istudenti. Dawn huma elementi kruċjali biex jixxettlu u jtkattru relazzjonijiet tajbin bejn lekċerer u student, relazzjonijiet li jwittu t-triq għal dixxiplina bla interruzzjonijiet, bla kastigi, mingħajr telf ta' żmien minħabba waqfien biex isikket, biex jikkoreġi.

## MESSAĠĠI KONTINWI

Il-lekċerer jgħaddi u jibgħat messaġġi lill-istudent il-hin kollu. Bil-mod kif jtkellem, b'dak li ma jgħidx, bil-lingwaġġ li juża, bil-mod kif jilbes, bil-mod kif jimxi, bil-mod kif jispjega, bil-mod kif iwieġeb għad-diffikultajiet, bl-interess li jieħu f'kull student individwali, partikularment f'mument diffiċli, fi żmenijiet ta' diffikultajiet jew problemi serji li mhix l-ewwel darba li ż-żgħażaġħ jiltaqgħu magħhom.

Il-lekċerer mhux osservat biss matul is-sigħat li jgħaddi fil-kulleġġ. Hu aktarx jiltaqa' mal-istudenti żgħażaġħ f'postijiet ta' divertiment. Għaliex ħafna lekċerers huma żgħażaġħ ukoll u jħobbu jiddevertu. Iżda, kif kulħadd jaf, hemm divertiment u divertiment. X'impatt iħalli fuq l-istudent tiegħu lekċerer li jidher u jgħib ruħu ta' xurban f'post ta' divertiment, li jgħib ruħu b'mod vulgari jew anke irresponsabbli meta jkun 'il

bogħod mill-kulleġġ? Aċċettabbli li lekċerer ma jiddejjaxq isir "patata" fi tmiem il-ġimgħa? Aċċettabbli li lekċerer jtkellem ħażin jew jidgħi fejn jinstema' (u anke fejn ma jinstemax, naturalment)? Aċċettabbli li lekċerer ikun jew tkun liebsa b'mod sfaċċat f'post ta' divertiment?

## IDEAT TAL-IMGHODDI

Forsi hawn min jaħseb li dawn huma osservazzjonijiet tal-imagħoddi. Ma naħsibx. Li wieħed u waħda jgħibu ruħhom b'mod li jgħbdu sudizzjoni hu ta' importanza u ta' ġid għal-lekċerer innifsu. Jekk tistenna rispett trid tkun rispettabbli. Jekk ma tkunx rispettabbli kif tista' tistenna rispett? Mill-banda l-oħra, jekk ma tirrispettax lil ħaddieħor, anke jekk żagħżuġħ jew żagħżuġha, kif tista' tistenna li ħaddieħor jirrispettak?

Fortunament, għalkemm eluf ta' studenti jgħixu, jitgħallmu u jistrieħu fil-kampus għal sigħat twal kuljum, ftit li xejn ikollna inċidenti bejn studenti u għalliema u rari jkollna xi inċident serju. Din is-sitwazzjoni ma gietx weħidha jew b'kumbinazzjoni. U rridu nkomplu nibzgu għaliha ħafna, il-koll flimkien – studenti, lekċerers, amministrazzjoni. Għax anke numru żgħir ta' lekċerers irresponsabbli jista' jħalli impatt negattiv mhux biss fuqhom infushom iżda wkoll fuq il-kollegi tagħhom. Tafu x'ifisser tidħol biex tagħti lezzjoni wara lekċerer li m'għandux dixxiplina. Tafu x'ifisser taħdem ma' kollegi li m'għandhomx interess la fis-suġġett u lanqas fl-istudenti. Tafu x'ifisser taħdem f'istituzzjoni mingħajr dixxiplina u rispett reċiproku bejn studenti u għalliema. Teħtieġ attitudni pożittiva lejn l-istudenti, kull student, hu x'inhu l-livell ta' intelliġenza tiegħu, ta' sfond familjari u soċjali – bi problemi, bi bżonnijiet speċjali, hi x'inhu x-xorta tagħhom. Iridu ngħinu lil kull student jisfrutta l-potenzjal tiegħu.

## L-AĦĦAR MESSAĠĠI

- Il-lekċerer professjonali għandu l-valuri – valuri umani li ma għandhomx żmien. Valuri li jipprattikahom u jgħaddihom liż-żgħażaġħ li hu responsabbli biex jeduka.
- Il-lekċerer professjonali jaġġorna ruħu fil-kontenut tas-suġġett kif ukoll fil-metodoloġija u fl-uzu ta' apparat u makkinarju.
- Il-lekċerer professjonali jaġġorna ruħu fl-iżvilupp tal-psikoloġija u s-soċjoloġija taż-żgħażaġħ f'dinja li qed tinbidel u ssir aktar diffiċli.
- Il-lekċerer professjonali hu student ta' dejjem, jitgħallem matul il-ħajja u jgħaddi liż-żgħażaġħ u jinjetta fihom il-kultura ta' tagħlim matul il-ħajja.
- Illum għandna għalliema aktar kwalifikati u aktar professjonali minn qatt qabel. Għalliema li jkomplu jikbru matul il-karriera għaliex, kif kien jgħid Dewey – "*education is growth*". Permezz tal-edukazzjoni kontinwata qed nikbru, hi x'inhu l-età tagħna. Għalhekk hemm bżonn li nxettlu u nkabbru l-kultura ta' tagħlim u edukazzjoni matul il-ħajja. U l-edukaturi jridu jkun minn quddiem ta' eżempju għaż-żgħażaġħ.
- It-tagħlim flimkien ma' l-edukazzjoni hu professjoni missjoni u vokazzjoni.

# MCAST AWARDED LICENCE TO ACT AS TRAINING ORGANISATION FOR AVIATION MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

## PROF MAURICE GRECH



**Prof Maurice Grech**  
MCAST Principal  
and CEO

The set up of Air Malta in 1973, Medavia, a company forming part of the L.A.F.I. group, in 1978, and the founding of Lufthansa Technik Malta in 2002, gave rise to the requirement for highly skilled aviation maintenance personnel.

The situation became more pressing some three years ago when Lufthansa Technik revealed its plan to make a huge investment in order to set up new maintenance and overhaul capabilities for Airbus A330/A340 C and D Checks, with the latter being the more comprehensive and involving engine overhaul and stripping of the entire plane interior. These developments were anticipated to generate over 500 jobs, 400 of which were expected to be for technical persons. Growth within the sector was in line with Malta's strategy to minimize the dependence of its economy on the two key sectors, tourism and electronics, and their vulnerability to the global business cycle and shock events, whilst at the same time diversifying to services in high value-added sectors such as financial services, ICT, aviation maintenance and repair, the pharmaceutical industry and others.

One major problem with these developments was that Malta did not have the tradition for the provision of persons with skills in this specialized engineering sector and 400 persons was too large a number to even contemplate engaging expatriates.

Discussions between MCAST and Lufthansa Technik Malta started early in 2005. The College was quick on the mark and committed itself soon after to provide the trained personnel required by the sector. This was not a pledge MCAST took lightly; the reputation of the College, the growth and success of the aviation maintenance and repair sector, and consequently many jobs, were at stake.

Only few months later, in fact in September 2005, MCAST offered the BTEC National Diploma in Aerospace Engineering for which 40 students enrolled. As one can appreciate aviation maintenance is a strictly regulated field of engineering. Workshops and trainers need to be approved and industry-specific training can only be offered under licence. MCAST set out and invested heavily in aviation maintenance workshops designed to international standards. It started offering courses under the Lufthansa Technik licence utilizing even expertise provided by the international partner whilst at the same time MCAST staff was being trained and job shadowing. The course for Aircraft Maintenance Mechanics is based on the First Diploma in Mechanical Engineering, which MCAST has been offering for some years, and to which are added 3 units namely Digital Techniques Electronic Instrument Systems, Materials & Hardware and Maintenance Practices.

Successful students are not eligible to apply for Category A licence but can work as Aircraft Maintenance Mechanics through internal qualification procedures of part 145 organisations, that is, institutions like Medavia, Air Malta and Lufthansa Technik.

This route provides students with flexibility as they may choose to work within the aviation industry or work / further their study within the mechanical engineering sector.

By 2006 MCAST started offering industry-specific courses, namely- European Aviation Safety Authority (EASA) Part 66 Category A Licence and Aircraft Structures. Both these courses were offered under a Lufthansa Technik licence and are block release courses during which students spend some time at the College acquiring their theoretical background and one year on the job training within a 145 organisation.

During November 2007, two evening courses for sheet metal and aircraft mechanic certification were offered to persons working within the aviation maintenance sector. It gave these persons the opportunity to up-skill and to prepare themselves for the new job opportunities that were becoming available within the industry.

The College realized from the outset that it needed to reinforce its training provision by itself becoming an approved European Aviation Safety Authority (EASA) Part 147 aviation maintenance training organisation offering courses under its own steam. This process takes one through several milestones, from building the physical capacity and resources, enrolment and training of staff, to the formalisation of all training, examination and quality assurance procedures. This is a painstaking, but necessary, exercise during which

the Malta Department of Civil Aviation (MDCA) performs several audits to ensure that all the prerequisites are in place. This process has taken MCAST only one year to conclude, which is considered an outstanding achievement by those in the sector.

MCAST now has the required management structure, a cohort of qualified lecturers and examiners, state-of-the-art aviation maintenance training workshops, and all the training, examination and quality assurance procedures in place to start training on its own steam. The College can now provide internationally recognized Part 66 Category A training and certification.

MCAST students will now be able to follow these courses and sit for the examinations locally without the need to travel to other European countries in order to obtain certification.

There are three levels of Licences namely Category A, Category B and Category C. MCAST has been awarded the licence to train people at Category A but it has already initiated the process for extending this to Category B.

To facilitate matters MCAST applied for and was shortly afterwards awarded EU funding meant to help the College extend its workshop facilities including the purchase of a second hand airplane on which the students can practise, train lecturers and examiners at a higher level, and set up all the training, examination and quality assurance procedures.

These developments enabled MCAST to launch the Aircraft Maintenance Technical Course (Cat. B). Once MCAST acquires licence at Category B the College will then be in a position to conduct examinations and offer certification under the same rules mentioned above. The course is at level 4 of the Malta Qualifications Council framework and is based on three years apprenticeship on block release.



*The Hon. Dr. Austin Gatt, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications presenting the Certificate to Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO*

These activities placed MCAST on the international map for the field of Aviation Maintenance Training (AMT). Having a local College providing the market with adequately trained personnel in an area which is so closely regulated is a signpost of quality that is likely to attract further foreign direct investment to the country, thus creating more and better jobs for Malta.



*MCAST students on-the-job training at Lufthansa*



*MCAST students on-the-job training in Manila, Philippines*

# MCAST LAUNCHES ITS VOCATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES

PROF MAURICE GRECH



**Prof Maurice Grech**  
MCAST Principal  
and CEO

Tuesday 5 May 2009 marked the official launch, by the Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi, of MCAST's Vocational Degree Programmes. This was another important milestone in the relatively short, but eventful, history of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology.

The new students' vocational degrees initiative, important as it is, constitutes only one component of MCAST's multifaceted European Social Fund project, which is of a four-year duration and which runs into more than six million Euro. MCAST's successful bid for EU funding also includes specialisation schemes for lecturing staff through Masters scholarships which will be custom designed and delivered on the College's own campus.

In this regard and as an employer, MCAST is thus offering a unique opportunity to its lecturing staff to develop their personal and professional skills. This will in turn encourage them to assume positions of responsibility within their institute. It is good to note that both the vocational degrees for students and the Masters degree programmes for lecturers will be carefully matched in order to maximize on the benefits for all parties concerned.

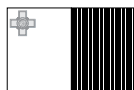
Last but not least, is the third and final component of the ESF project, which will involve MCAST's academic and non-academic staff. The College is planning to carry out a full Training Needs Analysis (TNA), based on its specific operations, strategic objectives and culture. The assessment will determine the skill and knowledge requirements for individual current and future work functions vis-à-vis the skill and knowledge level of the people carrying out these key functions. Focused training will be offered according to formulated recommendations with an aim to meeting both organisational and individual targets.

MCAST managed to successfully conclude an agreement with a well-renowned institution in Europe, namely Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft of Germany, for the design and delivery of both Vocational Degrees and Masters Programmes in various areas of specialisation. Fraunhofer, with its 60 institutes and 15,000 employees, most of whom are engineers, scientists and university professors, is the leading organization in Europe of combined industry and university expertise. It is thus perfectly poised to understand MCAST's needs as a vocational college.

Fraunhofer was favourably impressed by MCAST's determination to move forward and to offer Maltese students opportunities where none existed before. Through Fraunhofer, MCAST has secured access to virtually all universities and colleges across Germany. The overall aim of the entire Fraunhofer organization, in fact, is to bridge the gap between universities and industry. This it does through its engagement in hundreds of areas of technology, the results of which are made available in the form of patents, licences and training courses. It must be said that this partnership benefited in no small way from the assistance of His Excellency Mr John Paul Grech, Maltese Ambassador for Germany, who took particular interest in this project.

Fraunhofer's achievements are unparalleled. The main challenges that occupy everyone's attention today (and Malta is no exception), such as energy, communication, security, the environment, etc., constitute the thematic fields on which Fraunhofer focuses its interest and its research capacities. R&D services for trade and industry are provided in various business areas, such as E-Business, Culture and Entertainment, Communication systems and interdisciplinary applications, Digital Media and many others. Their renowned MP3, whereby the best sound quality is achieved out of the lowest file size, revolutionised audio digital technology worldwide. Fraunhofer, a driving force in innovation, estimates that it has enabled more than one billion commercial products worldwide using its MP3, Advanced Audio Coding, and other media technologies. Fraunhofer prides itself that, where others give up, they come up with ideas and solutions to problems which may seem elusive at first, but which they know they are able to make them work.

The MCAST project involves eight institutes together with their various subject specialisations. The first four institutes to offer degree studies in September 2009 are the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, the Institute of Information and Communication Technology, the Institute of Art and Design and the Institute of Business and Commerce. Masters courses for lecturers will run contemporarily in the remaining institutes which, for the time being, will not be offering top up degrees.



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013  
*Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life*  
 Project part-financed by the European Union  
 European Social Fund (ESF)  
 Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Fund  
***Investing in your future***



MCAST has already identified, in conjunction with Fraunhofer's experts, the study modules which a team of German lecturers will be delivering in Malta on a regular basis starting with the new scholastic year. Groups of qualified MCAST lecturers will be involved in job shadowing and will also be responsible for coordinating the programmes and for consolidating the learning that goes on. As from September 2010, degrees will be offered in four more institutes, namely, Mechanical Engineering, Building and Construction, Community Services and Agribusiness.

MCAST's collaborative relationship with Fraunhofer means obtaining access to a massive pool of competences and expertise resulting from the best of both worlds: the integration of Fraunhofer's research institutes, which are spread across Germany, with virtually all German universities with which the organization has close ties.

Suffice it so say, for example, that Fraunhofer's ICT contingent alone is made up of 15 institutes working closely together and with various universities to cover the entire value chain of nearly all business fields including media, medicine and manufacturing industries, as well as the financial world, making the alliance the largest IT organization in Europe.

MCAST's mission statement reflects the fundamental purpose of the college's responsibilities toward students, staff and society. Change, innovation, dynamic growth and reform are today's key issues. As one of the main pillars of education in Malta, MCAST must be continually creative in a world in which fresh problems unfold and must be solved quickly and locally. Through a continuous process of knowledge creation and application, MCAST is shaping the education system of the future.

# NEW MEMBER OF STAFF



**Mr Oscar Borg,**  
New Member of Staff  
Administrative Director

Oscar Borg was born in Cospicua in 1957, the fifth of eight children born to the late John and Mary, nee Falzon. He received his primary education in Cospicua and in 1968 won a scholarship for his secondary education at De La Salle College in Cottonera. In 1976 he entered the University of Malta from where he graduated in 1978 as a Bachelor of Arts in Economics (Hons).

Following graduation in 1978, Oscar worked for a number of years with a number of foreign and local clothing manufacturing firms, initially, as a production engineer moving to production manager and, ultimately, General Manager.

In 1988 he joined MIMCOL (Malta Investment Management Company Ltd) as Senior Manager (Operations). In this position he was responsible for monitoring the performance of a diversified portfolio of companies operating in various sectors including manufacturing, tourism and ship repair. During this period, he successfully managed the turnaround of one of the main companies in the group, MP Clothing in Gozo. He also served as a director in a number of companies including Mediterranean Film Studios, MP Clothing, and Interprint.

In 1990, Oscar received his Masters in Business Administration degree following a one-year residential course in Lancaster University.

In 1993, he joined Malta Maritime Authority as Chief Executive Officer. During this period he oversaw the expansion of the Maltese shipping register, the development of yacht marinas and the expansion of port infrastructural facilities especially those at Cirkewwa and Mgarr, Gozo. During this period he was also a member of the Steering Group of AMRIE (Alliance for Maritime Regional Interests in Europe), based in Brussels.

Oscar's professional interests are mainly in change management and strategy. He also has an avid interest in economic development especially through the promotion and development of economic clusters. In 1989 he formed part of a Board, set up by the Government, on Industrial Policy. In 1993, he submitted a presentation to the Albanian Government on the development of an Industrial Free Trade Zone in Vlora.

Whilst working at MIMCOL he worked on a pilot project aimed at attracting direct foreign investment in manufacturing using a focused, targeted approach. More recently he was involved in the setting up of a yachting cluster whereby various firms from different sectors, educational institutions, private sector organizations and Government collaborate together in order to expand cluster activities and enhance economic value. He is a firm believer in a holistic, 'business architecture' approach to economic development through the integration of strategic marketing, education, infrastructural development, a sound legislative framework and financial incentives.

Oscar is married to Marvic Attard and has one daughter, Francesca. His interests include cycling, windsurfing and reading.

## MCAST Art and Design students finalists at the Democracy Video Challenge

Two MCAST Art and Design students are finalists in the Democracy Video Challenge organised by the US Department of State. The Challenge invited people from all over the world, aged 18 and older, to create and submit a short video on YouTube that completes the phrase “Democracy is...” to engage in a worldwide online dialogue about democracy. 580 people from 90 countries participated in this worldwide competition. Thirty of them were from Malta.

The two finalists’ videos included the animated “Democracy is (not)...” by MCAST student Mark Scicluna, and the live action/animation “Democracy Video Challenge” by MCAST student Kane O’Flaherty. The following are the links to the finalists’ submissions: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxP2yGTYmbA> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bX43CZjjCA>

Mark Scicluna’s video is inspired by classic cartoons and video games and features the cartoon of a governor who refuses to allow an upcoming election. A hero comes to the rescue and beats up the governor knocking justice, voting rights and rule of law into him. When the governor is defeated, lying on the ground he asks the hero: Is violence democracy? “My message is that by taking the law into your hands you won’t get anywhere... Democracy is about discussion,” Mark Scicluna explained.

As seen through Kane O’Flaherty’s lens, democracy is all around us... all you have to do is listen. His video airs the views of various people about democracy. “I wanted to portray the views of different people and not only mine,” Kane O’Flaherty explained.

A gala screening of the 30 video entries submitted by young people in Malta for the Democracy Video Challenge competition was held at Fusion Four restaurant in Valletta. At the conclusion of the screening, the U.S. Embassy’s Public Affairs Officer Cynthia Ehrlich announced the three finalists for Malta, chosen by a panel composed of four judges based on four criteria: creativity, technical ability, originality, and effectiveness of message.

The panel of four judges comprised the Rev. Prof. Saviour Chircop, Director of the University of Malta’s Centre for Communication Technology; Stephen Vella, Director of the Institute of Art and Design; U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer, Cynthia Ehrlich; and the Embassy’s Press, Protocol & Exchanges Assistant, Joanna Zingariello.

The panel presented certificates to all the participants in recognition of their having done their part to make Malta the European country with the most submissions for the challenge. The three finalists also received the compact disc of American jazz classics, “The Best of Ken Burns’ Jazz” to recognize their status as finalists.

“We were immediately enthusiastic and eager to encourage our students to participate in such a prestigious contest,” said Stephen Vella. “We feel that participating in such competitions and events, especially when they are on an international scale, is important from different viewpoints, the prime one being the exposure given to students and their works, particularly on an industrial level. Furthermore, our students’ involvement in such contests, undoubtedly acts as a promotional tool to raise awareness on the kind of skills and knowledge that may be acquired at the MCAST Institute of Art and Design.”

These three final videos will be Malta’s entries in a Europe-wide competition that will be judged by an independent panel made up of NBC Universal, the Directors Guild of America, and the Tisch School at New York University, in partnership with the U.S. Department of State. On 15 May 2009, the State Department announced the 21 finalists for the European region selected by the independent panel. The general public then voted through YouTube on the six regional grand winners, and the results were announced on 15 June 2009. These six regional grand winners, including one from Europe, will be eligible for an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., New York and Hollywood, California, in October 2009. The winning videos will be screened at red carpet galas in New York and Hollywood, and winners will have the opportunity to meet filmmakers and U.S. film and television industry personnel.



From left: Kane O'Flaherty, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, and Mark Scicluna



Screenshots from "Democracy Video Challenge," by MCAST student Kane O'Flaherty



Screenshots from "Democracy is (not)..." by MCAST student Mark Scicluna



# Institute of Art and Design students participate in the NSTF Science Week

As in previous years, Art and Design students were invited to participate in the annual NSTF Science Week that was held at St. James Cavalier during the first week of March 2009.

The event was very well organized. The venue teemed with activity as a large number of secondary and post-secondary students presented their science projects to their peers, the public and dignitaries alike. As always, the projects were all very interesting and included various alternative energy contraptions, ways on how to save on your water and electricity bill and also statistics exposing the grim truth on the effect of TV radiation on your eyesight!

Primary school children also attended the event with great enthusiasm. They too were guided through the exhibition and were given the opportunity to view the projects and ask questions. They also had the chance to participate in the popular Science Workshops. For the past four years, these workshops were run by MCAST Art and Design students with the organisation and supervision of Mark Theuma, Deputy Director.

The aim of the workshops is to convey to children from an early age the excitement of learning through scientific experiments and activities. For an hour or so children became scientists and, through the use of household items, built fun science toys to take home.

This year, children enjoyed four different workshops through which they constructed a wind turbine, a wind-speed measuring instrument, a sundial and a star-constellation viewer.

Participating as helpers in these workshops has never been an easy task. Children sometimes flock in groups of fifty at a time and explaining what needs to be done may become a daunting task! This year, students following the National Diploma in Design Crafts stood up to the challenge. For most it was the first experience with young children but they all coped very well, effectively organising the kids in smaller groups for better delivery. They enthusiastically provided clear instructions and invaluable support to the younger ones to finish off their task successfully. Seeing the smiles on the children's faces as they show off their small projects always provides great satisfaction to all participants.

The College and NSTF thank the National Diploma students for their wholehearted effort.



*Group photo featuring first year National Diploma students with Mark Theuma, Deputy Director*



*Maria enjoys a brief moment of popularity!*



*Methodically testing out the finished wind turbines!*

# Art and Design student wins EU Cartoon Competition

Higher National Diploma Graphic Design student Roderick Pace has recently won a competition organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security.

The competition entitled 'European Union and Citizenship' was launched among all of the 27 Member States. Participants were required to individually create a one-page cartoon with no text, illustrating the theme of citizenship in the European Union.

The competition was mainly geared towards art and design students aged 16 years or over, residing in the 27 Member States of the European Union. However, it was also open to any other person aged 16 years or over who is resident in the European Union and is interested in graphic arts and inspired by the subject of the competition.

Roderick was selected and proclaimed winner on a national level during an awards ceremony organised on Friday 3 April 2009. He was also invited to Brussels between the 9 and 11 May 2009 to compete with the other 27 national winners.

Mr Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security met the winners at the European ceremony.

*Roderick Pace*



# INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

## Participation in the EEVA 2009 Award

Two students from the MCAST Institute of Business and Commerce participated in the international competition European Entrepreneurship Video Award (EEVA) 2009. The competition required participants to produce a short video clip focusing on the concept of entrepreneurship. Higher National Diploma in Business students, Edmea Marie Abela and Nadia Cutajar, teamed up to bring together their ideas and talents so as to take part in this international competition. Their video was mostly graphical, and explored the central question of their chosen theme, "What would you do if you knew you could not fail?" as placed in the video through Robert H. Schuller.

The video clip was built up on the idea that entrepreneurship began 'long before Bill Gates, Napoleon, Julius Caesar and Ramesses'. The clip emphasizes that entrepreneurship began during pre-historic times. Pre-historic people were unknowingly the first entrepreneurs in the world because they went beyond their own knowledge with the invention of fire and tools.

The video then proceeds with shots of different entrepreneurs from different companies flashing to the rhythm of the chosen musical score. The video ends with a rhetoric question – "What would you do if you knew you could not fail?" (Robert H. Schuller).



*From left: Edmea Marie Abela and Nadia Cutajar*



*One can watch the video on YouTube by following this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YznH-o0WUmc>*

## Visit to Progress Press

**Submitted by Donna Bonello (Certificate in Marketing Studies – year 2)**

Students following the Certificate in Marketing visited the Progress Press on the 21 April 2009 and witnessed the printing process right before their own eyes.

The students were escorted around Progress Press, which forms part of Allied Newspapers. They were shown every stage of the printing, sorting and packing of newspapers. As the visit took place in the morning, the machinery was not actually functioning but was being worked on by members of the maintenance staff. Printing begins at 11pm and ends at 2am, which is why it is important that reporters stick to deadlines, in order for the production to take place on time. It is of utmost importance that these machines are cleaned and serviced on a daily basis in order to ensure that the final product is of top quality.

The Marketing students were then given an explanation of each department within Allied Newspapers and the importance of teamwork in order to achieve a satisfying end result. They were also provided with information on the importance of advertisements to cover their basic costs and generate revenue for the company. The editorial work was also analysed and this gave the students the opportunity to truly understand how every article and advertisement is placed on the newspaper and how the editor opts to give priority to certain items over others.

Allied Newspapers has been established in Malta since 1939. Both Progress Press and Allied Newspapers are about to embark on a new project to transfer their offices and equipment to new, larger premises.

# INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

## ANNUAL HAIR AND BEAUTY MARATHON

On Sunday 17 May 2009, the Institute of Community Services organised a 12-hour Hair and Beauty Marathon as part of the MCAST Open Day. This year the aim was to raise funds for children's homes. Students following hairdressing and beauty courses provided services such as blowdrys, cuts, colours, manicures, pedicures, facials and massages. They were continuously supervised by their lecturers and other professionals. Students following the Sports Programmes participated in a five-a-side soccer tournament whilst the Health and Social Care Students organised a car wash.

Students following the Foundation Certificate in Health and Social Care organised a book sale, a cake sale and also a nutrition stand. The healthy meals, including fruit and vegetable salads, were prepared by the students.

Child Care facilities also helped to raise funds! Staff giving a helping hand at the Marathon and customers who made use of the services had the opportunity of leaving their children at the premises in the care of students following the National Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development. Play and learning activities were organized by these students for the little ones who really enjoyed playing with hoops and blocks as well as painting and reading activities. These students also displayed activities and presentations in relation to their unit on Environmental Science.

Students following the Pharmacy Technician Course prepared presentations on birth control and non-governmental organizations whilst the Applied Science students participated in three experiments at the new lab within the building.

On a completely different aspect, photos which were taken in the Christmas Hair Show 2008 were the subject of an exhibition. The pictures depicted dramatic hair styles which are not normally seen in salons but are very much used in theatres and films that make use of special effects. Foundation students studying Personal Development also participated in an exhibition organized at the Administration Building.



The highlight of the day was the opportunity to throw a plate full of cream at lecturers. This initiative was undertaken by some lecturers who, armed with goggles and extra T-shirts, offered to be the targets with the sole aim of raising money for such a good cause!

Other lecturers helped in ushering customers in the salons, washing of towels and making sure that everything ran smoothly. The administration staff of the institute manned the cash point.

The Prime Minister, the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi and Mrs Kate Gonzi, the Hon Dolores Cristina, Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, as well as the Hon Dr Chris Said, Parliamentary Secretary for Public Dialogue and Information, visited the Marathon and congratulated everyone for giving some of their free time for such a good cause.



# GROUP DYNAMICS LIVE-IN

A group dynamics live-in was organised for first and second year students currently following the National Diploma in Health Studies at the Institute of Community Services. The aim of this live-in was to help the students grow both emotionally and intellectually through various activities and exercises. It also presented an opportunity for students to better understand the different characters in their group and learn to work as a team. This also enabled the students to reflect on themselves and confront their own fears.

The live-in was organised by two lecturers, Mr Jason Aquilina and Ms Marcelle Cutajar. Fr. John Curmi was also invited to celebrate mass and discuss ethical and moral dilemmas related to gene and reproductive technologies, which is a part of a unit delivered in their course.

At the end of the live-in, an evaluation exercise was carried out to obtain feedback from the students. They mentioned how important such activities were in order to grow up individually and as a team as well as to improve their relationship with lecturers. They suggested that more such live-ins are organised throughout the year.

## Quotes from students about the experience:

Amy Craus:

“I felt that in this live-in we reflected on what was done throughout the year.”

Jonathan Farrugia:

“The live-in was great! A very wonderful experience. I learned a lot to appreciate my life! Thanks for everything.”

Nabille Calleja:

“This live-in helped us appreciate each other and grow together as a team. Thanks.”

Loraine Mifsud:

“The live-in was great and an important experience in my life.”



# INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

## ANOTHER SUCCESS FOR ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING STUDENT AT THE EU CONTEST FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS 2009.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering once again participated in the NSTF Science Week. The Science Week is an annual event and for these last years have been organized at St. James Cavalier, Centre for Creativity.

Philip Cardona a student following the MCAST Diploma in Industrial Electronics presented his final year project 'Cappuccino Logo Printer'. Philip Cardona won the first prize and will be representing Malta in an international competition in Paris.



*Philip Cardona and the award-winning Cappuccino Logo Maker Machine*

The aim of the project is to draw vector design on the froth of a cappuccino cup. It prints a design which is accurate and fast so that it will not take too much time to print the logo. The theory behind the project is that it gets data as g-code from a computer (This is a common language used to draw vectors images on plotters and CNC machines). The microcontroller receives this data serially and writes it all on the SD card for later use.

The computer is then removed and the data from the SD card can be loaded by following the menu instructions on the LCD. The selection is made through the interfaced keypad.

The project uses an XYZ table that moves its print head to form the logo. Vector images can be loaded (lines and circles) to the computer and with a program one can convert these images to a format that the machine understands. Using a Visual C# Program one can dump (send) the image to the SD Card of the machine or literally save the image on the SD Card directly. The SD Card is inserted in the machine and the right instructions from the keypad are given to print the design.

Designs such as logos, text, messages can be drawn on your Cappuccino, beer or cakes with this easy-to-use machine.

Best wishes to Philip for the forthcoming important event in Paris.

# INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

## ICT Courses Accessible to All

The Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) has again organised a number of European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) courses for disabled persons with intellectual or communication difficulties. This was possible thanks to the help and support of MCAST and the Education Division.

These courses started as a FITA and MCAST pilot project back in 2003. Over the years the interest in these courses kept on increasing, therefore more ICT courses were organised to cover different IT proficiency levels, including ECDL.

FITA collaborated with the Computer Society of Malta in order to improve the accessibility of the ECDL examinations, whilst maintaining the same difficulty levels and qualification criteria.

The 2008/9 sessions consist of five courses as described in the table.

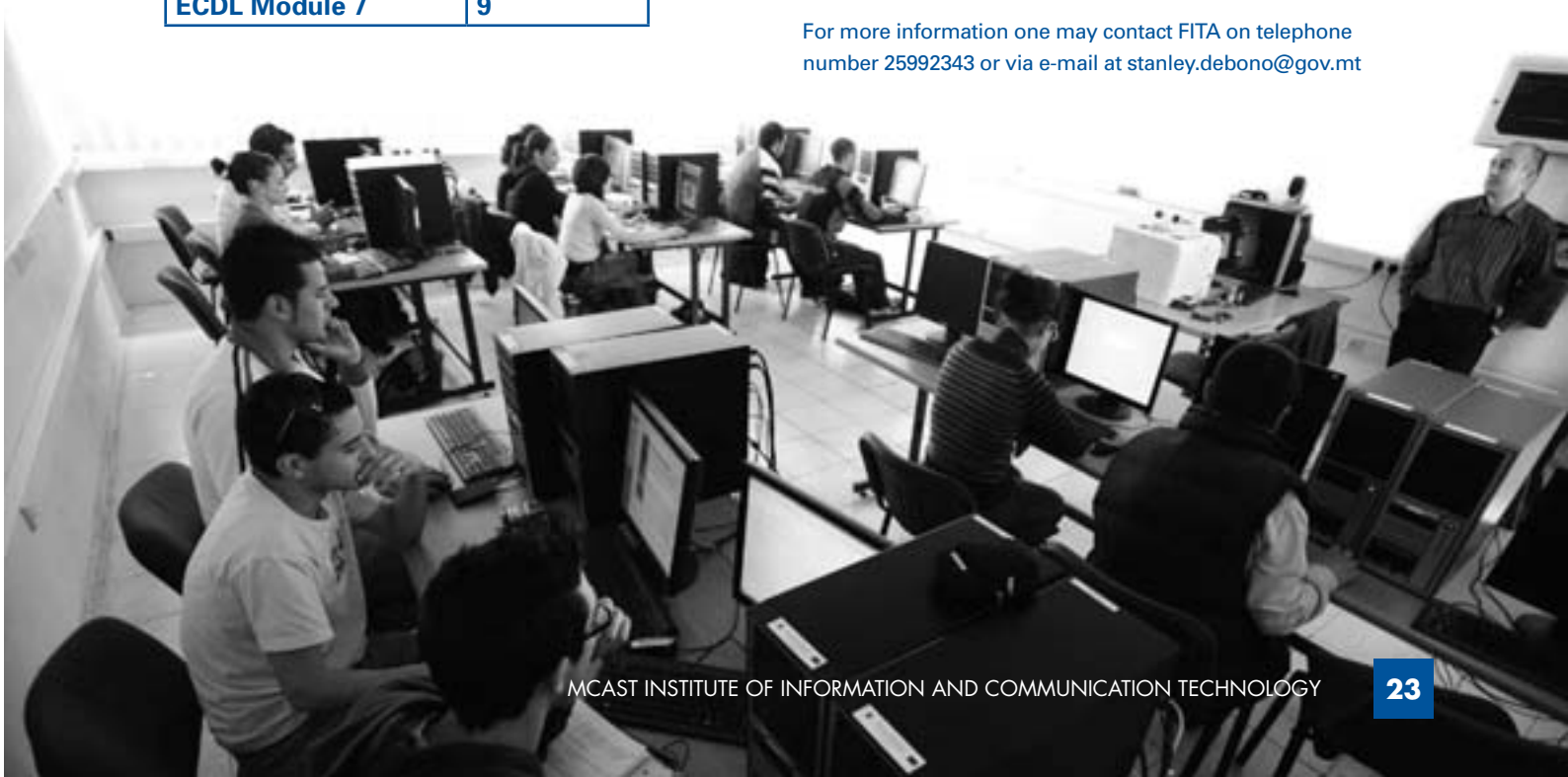
Course	Students
<b>Beginners 1</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Beginners 2</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ECDL Module 5</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>ECDL Module 7</b>	<b>9</b>

Until a few years back, disabled persons who were looking for ICT training courses, found it close to impossible to source the arrangements they needed. Thanks to the work of the National Commission for Disabled Persons (KNPD) and the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) the level of physical access is constantly increasing. Today there is more awareness on how accessibility is beneficial to all.

Together with MCAST and the Education Division, FITA has given tangible proof that providing accessible training courses is possible. Amongst the minor arrangements, for example, the desks within classrooms should be of a comfortable height, enabling their use by wheelchair users. The canteen and toilets also have to be accessible. Courses for persons with an intellectual impairment and communication difficulties normally involve more lessons, and simpler examples so that new concepts and ideas can be explained. Therefore, adequate course training materials and exams that work on the same principles are among the obvious solutions.

FITA is also making contact with companies that showed interest in providing these types of arrangements, across the courses they provide. With an increased awareness on what disabilities involve and what tools are needed by a person to participate in these types of courses, it will be easier for a disabled person to achieve qualifications and find a job.

For more information one may contact FITA on telephone number 25992343 or via e-mail at [stanley.debono@gov.mt](mailto:stanley.debono@gov.mt)



# MARITIME INSTITUTE

## MCAST Maritime Institute receives Certification of Quality Management Systems of Maritime Training Institutes from Bureau Veritas

After a long period of preparation and hard work in March 2009, the Maritime Institute was granted certification from the world-renowned classification society Bureau Veritas. Apart from having its own Quality Management System in place shortly after its establishment in 2001, the Maritime Institute has been working to gain international recognition through a process which gives quality and value to the courses it delivers. In March 2009, the MCAST Maritime Institute received the Certification of Quality Management Systems of Maritime Training Institutes from Bureau Veritas.

This certificate ensures equivalence with the requirements of ISO9001:2000. It ensures that all requirements have been taken into consideration and are in compliance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1995 Convention. A big thank you goes to the Deputy Director of the Maritime Institute, Mr. Adrien Bonnici (who is the Institute's Quality Assurance Manager), the Institute Officer, Ms. Audrey Zahra Davis, and to all the Maritime Institute staff who in some way or another contributed to making it possible to receive this prestigious certification.

## MCAST Maritime Institute Lecturers participate in popular TV programme "Lura fil-Klassi"

Seven lecturers from the Maritime Institute are participating in the popular TV Programme "Lura fil-Klassi" which is running a theoretical course on the handling and driving of small sea craft. The course, which commenced in March, consists of two, one-hour programmes per week on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a total of twenty-six sessions. The programmes are televised on TVM and on Education 22 channels at 1000hrs and with a repeat of the programme on Education 22 at 2130hrs on the same day.

The programmes are very interesting and our lecturers have gone into quite a lot of preparation work in their own free time to develop the TV programmes. Televiewers also have the option of handing in homework which is corrected by the lecturers and which entitles them to receive a certificate of participation towards the end of the course.

The viewer ratings for the Maritime Course are very high and in fact in 2008, "Lura fil-Klassi" actually won the Best Educational Programme Award from the Malta Broadcasting Authority. Let's hope they win it again this year!



*Lura fil-Klassi Logo*



# Officer Cadets Abseiling and Cooking out!

On Monday 30 March 2009, Maritime Institute Probationary Officer Cadets and First Year Officer Cadets had a day packed with events when they took part in abseiling and cooking out, as part of their leadership and management training programme. The event was organized and coordinated by Mr. Martin Borg, the Institute's Physical Training and Drill Instructor, and commenced at 0800hrs when the Officer Cadets were taken to Wied ix-Xaqqa near Ghar Lapsi for their activity. The Officer Cadets had already gone on a trekking activity followed by a cook-out on the 27 November 2008 so they had already put their cooking skills to the test; this time they could only improve!

Braving cold weather and strong winds the Officer Cadets applied various abseiling techniques under the watchful eyes of their instructor and fellow shipmates! The day came to an end with a scrumptious meal of burgers, sausages and other foods (including a few insects and grass which would have fallen into the open fire) prepared by the Cadets themselves.

*The two Stephanies: Probationary Officer Cadets Stephanie Scicluna and Stephanie Bugeja respectively.*



*Officer Cadets going "over the top" at Wied ix-Xaqqa.*



# MARITIME INSTITUTE LECTURERS, OFFICERS AND OFFICER CADETS ATTEND SUPERYACHT SEMINAR

On Thursday 30 April 2009, Maritime Institute Lecturers, Officers and Officer Cadets had the opportunity to attend a seminar on superyachts organised by Wilfred Sultana and Associates in collaboration with the International Superyacht Society and VT Flagship. The title of the seminar was: The Superyacht Industry: A Challenge – An Opportunity. The seminar was attended by a very large number of participants; all connected to yachting and yachting services, who actively participated in the seminar.

A panel, made up of a number of eminent speakers, gave presentations on various aspects of superyachting and the prospects of superyacht operations in Malta. Ship finance, job opportunities, legal aspects, ship registration and management, were amongst the interesting subjects discussed in the seminar. The Officer Cadets of the Maritime Institute also smartly lined up the Corridors of the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta, the venue of the seminar, prior to the arrival of distinguished guests.

*Maritime Institute Officer Cadets with speakers during the Superyacht Seminar held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta*



# NEW COURSES AT THE MARITIME INSTITUTE

The staff at the Maritime Institute have been very busy in the development of new courses which have commenced this year. One of the highlights was the commencement of the full-time Chief Mate STCW Course in which five Officers are attending. This course has also brought with it a new intake of part-time lecturing staff, mainly in the ranks of Master Mariner and a Chief Engineer.

Another course which lasted around four weeks was the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) Operators course which was offered to personnel from Malta VTS of 4th Regiment, Armed Forces of Malta and operators of the Valletta VTS of the Malta Maritime Authority.

Another new course, the Boatswain Course has been offered to personnel from the Armed Forces of Malta, Maritime Squadron in view of the fact that the Squadron will be augmented with another four Patrol Craft in the coming months and therefore require further trained personnel. More courses are being planned for the AFM later this year.

Of interest to many is the fact that the popular Basic Seamanship and Safe Boathandling Course, which was being offered over two weeks in Malta and over a full weekend in Gozo, is now being offered in Malta as a full-day course for the same price and over a period of three days. This was done due to the ever-increasing demand for the course and also to facilitate class attendance for personnel working on different shift systems or hours.



## OFFICER CADETS AT SEA

The following officer cadets were at sea on the following vessels during the period this article was written:

**OFFICER CADETS AT SEA**

VESSEL	CADET	DATE EMBARKED
MSC New York	Jesmer Vassallo	15/01/09
MSC Seattle	Jacqueline Spiteri	26/04/09
MV Eurocargo Istanbul	Clyde Camilleri	04/02/09
MT Paradise Bay	Andrè Agius	05/04/09
MV Eurocargo Valencia	Vivienne Chircop	27/10/08
MV Maersk Dampier	Laura Falzon	15/01/09
MT Salina Bay	Dorian Grech	16/04/09
MSC Boston	Ben Vassallo	13/01/09

# INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

## PLAYMOBIL/UNIPLAST LTD DONATE AN INDUSTRIAL SPRAY BOOTH TO THE INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

On the 16 March 2009 Playmobil and Uniplast Ltd donated a brand new, industrial Spray Booth to the Institute of Mechanical Engineering. This professional equipment is an important donation as it will assist students attain accredited City and Guilds Certification in Spray Painting up to Level 3 and will ensure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to cope with the evolving car technology.

The professional Spray Booth is housed within the MCAST Motor Vehicle Department. This is a milestone for the Institute as now it can hold its Spray Painting classes in-house. In the past years the College used to hire private premises where it delivered practical sessions related to the Spray Painting Modules. Even if we are grateful to the private concerns that assisted MCAST, yet one must admit that this presented difficulties in scheduling.

In order to meet the demands of industry, MCAST is now licensed to deliver the new City and Guilds 4101 Certificate in Motor Vehicle. This meant that MCAST needed to invest and improve its facilities so as to meet the demands by the foreign accredited body issuing the licence. These facilities included a VRT (Vehicle Roadworthy Test lane), a 4x4 dynamometer,

various car lifts, diagnostic tools, special tools and equipment, car lifts, car repair jig, various welding equipment, a cleaning degreasing bay, a professional car spray booth, a preparation area for spray and a mixing room. Students now have the opportunity to progress up to Level 4 in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework.

Prof. Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO, mentioned the strong partnership that exists between MCAST and Playmobil. He stated, 'It is encouraging to see industry investing in the training and development of our students. This is a model example showing the type of involvement and participation MCAST seeks from industry. Companies from all sectors of the industry are invited to collaborate with MCAST and contribute effectively towards the education of our young and adult learners.'

Ms Helga Ellul, CEO of Playmobil, stated that Playmobil works closely with MCAST as it believes in 'on-the-job' training. She also mentioned the success of the Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence that MCAST and the Malta Federation of Industry have designed for the benefit of the student and of enterprise.

*The professional Spray Booth*



*Student spray painting*

# ANOTHER SITE-SPECIFIC PROJECT FROM THE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN

By Alfred Camilleri (Tutor-in-charge of project)



What does Pablo Picasso's Guernica have in common with Microchip Technology, Vincent Van Gogh's Starry Night with Microscopic Cells and Piet Mondrian's Broadway Boogie Woogie with Gears and Cog Wheels? As far as documented history is concerned nothing has been shown that hints at a logical link between them. Nevertheless, one may argue that an element of creativity and inventiveness in human activity is common in all, and that is true, while a rather philosophical approach to the question may also lead to some surprising rational conclusions. Well, as far as the subject of this article is concerned they do not only relate but they must stay together. It is all about the realms of Art, Science and Technology, about the College itself, that a series of murals have been created by a group of students from the Institute of Art and Design.

It all started when this year's BTEC Community Art Unit was launched with the second year students from the National Diploma Course in September 2008. The project started off with a complete survey by all students of the specific spaces in the Main Administration Block at MCAST, Paola. Subsequent assignments led each learner through a process of research, development and evaluation towards a final piece representing the three main areas of study offered at the College. Learners were directed in the search for significant and highly symbolic landmarks in the main areas towards a balanced thematic composition. While giving substantial leeway to an individual interpretation, a semi-abstract style was requested with the scope of helping anyone viewing the works towards a better comprehension of the subject matter, and hence a better appreciation of the art works themselves.



The use and amalgamation of a variety of media, materials and techniques was encouraged while safety awareness was brought to the attention of the learners. The resultant works combining two- and three-dimensional elements varying from single vertical and horizontal panels to a triptych format are now hanging in the main offices, corridors and stairways of the building. These works of art complement other works done through a similar unit last year for the adjacent Students' House.

Once again a valuable learning experience has contributed towards the making of a pleasant environment for others. Well, on such occasions I recall what Gertrude Stein, the famous American writer, had said: 'Art isn't everything, it's just about everything.'



# MCAST OPEN DAY

On Sunday 17 May 2009 the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) organised an Open Day and the annual Hair and Beauty Marathon in aid of Children's Homes. The Open Day took place at the MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola from 10 am till 5pm. The Marathon ended at midnight.

The MCAST Open Day and Hair and Beauty Marathon was held as part of the celebrations of Malta's fifth anniversary of entry into the European Union.

The following activities took place:

- Various Hair and Beauty Services
- Car Inspections by the students of the Institute of Mechanical Engineering
- Police Dogs Demonstrations
- Armed Forces of Malta Demonstrations
- St John Ambulance
- Donkey rides for children
- Street Soccer Football Tournament
- Martial Arts
- Car Wash





The model of the new MCAST Campus was on display for the first time.





Photo: Mario Pace

At the Institute of Art and Design stand

A Sculpture Exhibition by Martin Bezzina Wettinger and a Photography Exhibition by Mario Pace were held at the Administration Block Foyer.



Photo: Mario Pace

Fr John, MCAST Chaplain celebrating Mass



Photo: Mario Pace

Marshall Arts



Photo: Mario Pace

During the car wash



Photo: Mario Pace

At the Institute of Mechanical Engineering



Photo: Mario Pace

A big thanks goes to Marco Mifsud, Felix Farrugia and Pierre Bonello and the rest of the team



Photo: Mario Pace

Bjorn Azzopardi on the International Programmes Office Stand



Photo: Mario Pace

Sculptor Bezzina Wettinger busy at work



Photo: Mario Pace

Marthese Vassallo, Counsellor busy explaining the progression routes to prospective students



Photo: Mario Pace

The ICT stand was very popular with the visitors



# LEPO Garage donates a Mercedes 'C Class' and other vehicles to the MCAST Institute of Mechanical Engineering



Mr James Armeni, Managing Director of LEPO Garage donated a Mercedes 'C Class', a Bedford Midi passenger van, a Hyundai Atos, a Daihatsu YRV and a considerable amount of car body parts, engines, and sectioned cars to the Institute of Mechanical Engineering.

*From left: Mr D Bonello, Deputy Director, Mr A Saliba, Deputy Principal, Mr E Zahra, Director, Mrs Armeni, Mr J Armeni, Director LEPO Garage, Prof. M Grech, Principal and CEO, and Mr E Attard, Project Director*

During the presentation that was held on Friday 6 March 2009 at the Motor Vehicle Complex, Mr Armeni addressed the audience present including Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, Mr Emanuel Attard, Project Director, Mr Anthony Saliba, Deputy Principal, Mr Emmanuel Zahra, Director, Mr David Bonello and Eng Mario Cassar, Deputy Directors, lecturers and students. In his address Mr Armeni mentioned that he set up his business in 1994 after spending a number of years employed as a service manager with a car importer. He stated that by donating the vehicles he is helping students gain knowledge and hands-on experience thus enabling them to be fully trained and professional employees in the future.

Mr Emmanuel Zahra, Director of the Institute of Mechanical Engineering, thanked Mr Armeni and stated that the donation was an asset for all MCAST students and lecturers attending the Motor Vehicle Complex. The resources offered access to various modern technologies used by the car manufacturing industry. They therefore provided a better understanding of the theory covered in class and also helped incorporate hands-on practical experience.

Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, welcomed and thanked Mr Armeni. He declared that on occasions such as these he realised industry's appreciation and acknowledgement of MCAST. 'These partnerships with industry are very important for MCAST and the College would not be what it is today without industry's support.' It is encouraging to see industry investing in the training and development of our students.



*The Mercedes 'C Class'*

# Industrial Visits

Industrial visits are a teaching tool and a stimulus to further educational motivation.

Within this paradigm, a number of industrial visits have been organised between January and April 2009, by Ms. Mariella Fenech B.Eng (Hons.), Assistant Lecturer at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering. Aimed at giving the students a better understanding of the modules learnt in class, students from the National Diploma Course and the Higher National Diploma Course at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering had the opportunity to visit several companies.

At Playmobil Malta Ltd. in Hal Far, students from the National Diploma Course had the opportunity to follow the whole process in which the Playmobil products are manufactured in high quantity and quality. They observed the manufacturing process in which the raw material was turned into the finished product. This involved a manufacturing line with the following subsequent stages of mechanical engineering: the injection moulding process, the spark erosion (the process of how the contra forma is made), the ultrasonic welding and many others.

Whilst explaining and showing the mechanical processes at Playmobil, Mr. Noel Borg, Human Resources Executive, stated that the company was further investing in more high-tech machines that will allow the company to produce new products. The company will continue to couple this investment with further apprentice sponsorships to students from MCAST, extending their yearly commitment with the College.

*Students from the National Diploma Course at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering who visited Playmobil Ltd*



Two other industrial visits were organised for students from the Higher National Diploma Course. Together with Ms. Fenech, the students visited Toly Malta Ltd and Enemalta's Delimara Powerstation.

At Toly Malta Ltd, students had the opportunity to view various processes such as injection moulding, mirror cutting, U.V. lacquering and many others. Toly Malta is a vertically integrated operation with in-house U.V. lacquering and mirror cutting operations. Toured by Mr Jason Zammit, Training Executive, the students learnt how new concepts in the clean room assembly have been developed and saw how Toly Malta continued to invest in automated product packing.

The visit at the Delimara Powerstation was very interesting and with the help of Ing. Testaferrata from Enemalta, students had the opportunity to see the 75MVA BHEL electric generators, 47MVA / 55MVA brush generators, the 37.5MW / 38 MW gas turbines, the 60 MW fully condensing steam turbines, steam generators, and the 132kV / 33kV outgoing feeders.

*Students from the Higher National Diploma Course at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering who visited Delimara Power station*





*Students from the Higher National Diploma Course at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering who visited Delimara Power station*

Whilst appreciating the time and support shown by the visited companies and their personnel, Ms. Fenech said that, “the feedback given by the students shows that these visits serve them as a good opportunity to familiarise themselves with the work place and helps them to consider new work opportunities.” Such industrial visits will be continued to practically complement the modules taught at MCAST.

## Lenten Activities

A number of Lenten activities were organized for the staff and students at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering during March and April. The Automobile Section students had the opportunity to attend a half-day seminar with Fr. John Curmi. Other students attended short talks and Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Marco Portelli at the Institute’s main building.

For another consecutive year , two groups of students from five different classes (MVT1, A2, PB2, FD1A and

FD1B) spent some time at Ir-Razzett tal-Hbiberija doing voluntary work. The students did a lot of gardening and other odd jobs assigned to them by the maintenance team at ir-Razzett tal-Hbiberija.

An activity was also organized for all the staff and their families on the first day of the Easter Holidays. The staff met at Mtaħleb chapel for a talk by Fr. Franco. This was followed by confessions and Holy Mass. Later all those present went to Il-Veduta Restaurant for lunch.

*Helping out at ir-Razzett tal-Hbiberija*



# SPORTS DAY

Friday 27 March 2009 was a very different day for the MCAST Gozo Centre. Instead of lectures, tutorials, assignments and tests, lecturers and students from both the Xaghra and Xewkija Centres participated in an extra curricular activity organized at the Gozo Seminary Sports Complex. The attendees engaged themselves in different types of sports and games. With the belief that sports is an important part of everyone's every-day life and with the target of having a curriculum aimed to develop a range of skills, MCAST Gozo Centre, throughout this Sports Day activity, tried to develop an appreciation of concepts of fair play, sportsmanship, self-discipline and respect for rules, together with an understanding of the importance of exercise in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

This Sports Day enhanced confidence and self-esteem, and also helped students to have a positive approach to leisure activities, which may be carried into adult life.

Students were very eager to perform especially in the games against lecturers. Excitement ran high. And the feeling of competition was very much evident. Football was the most aspired game, followed by volleyball and basketball. Other competitions included a number of fun games such as the potato and spoon race, the sack race, the tug-of-war and the three-legged race. The winners were all presented with a medal as a remembrance of this yearly event. It was felt that such an event was the perfect healthy option for people who were constantly faced with stress related to doing assignments, memorizing information, preparing material to lecture and doing corrections. The event was also an effective leveller as staff and students worked together with entertaining results!

A big thanks goes to the team of lecturers who organized this event, Maurice Saliba, Victoria Sultana and Joe-Louis Xiberras.

## OUR RELATION WITH GOD AND CHURCH - LENTEN SERVICES 2009

This was this year's theme for the Lenten services which were held at both Gozo Centres between 1 and 3 April 2009. The service was delivered by Fr. George Buttigieg of the Franciscan Order. Fr George made two very interesting sessions making use of powerpoint presentations to facilitate an interactive discussion with the students. He showed that, contrary to the wrong image and perceptions that are often attributed by today's media to Christ, the Church and its teachings, Christ and the Gospel are not at all outdated. Christ is the Truth and we belong to or, more precisely, we form the Church.

Fr George reminded that the Church is changing with the times but it can never accept as right what is morally wrong, mentioning amongst other things popular current issues of debate such as euthanasia, abortion, the indissolubility of marriage as well as the importance of the sacraments of penance and reconciliation and the Eucharist. However, he reminded us that Christ leaves us

free in the choice of our lifestyle but those who really want to follow Him, must not give in to the currents of relativism and try to adapt and interpret the Gospel according to their own exigencies or whims. Fr George encouraged us that we must staunchly support the truth and that we must revive the Church, especially through our presence and participation. The Lenten programme ended with the celebration of Mass for all the staff and students of the two Gozo Centres on Friday 3 April 2009, on the occasion of the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows.

# OCCULT SEMINAR

The last seminar from a series of three was held on Wednesday 22 April 2009. The topic chosen was occult and the guest speaker for this half-day seminar was Fr. Marcello Ghirlando. Satanism, black magic, white magic, witchcraft, ouija board, voodoo and spells were some of the core words mentioned throughout this seminar. Some students, and even lecturers, were scared, while others were anxious to know more. Attendance was very good and students participated actively during the video forum discussion.

After an introduction by Fr. Marcello, students had the opportunity to watch the DVD named "The Exorcism of Emily Rose", a 2005 film directed by Scott Derrickson. The movie, based on a true story, largely takes place in a courtroom. It depicts the trial of Father Moore, Emily's parish priest, who performed the exorcism, and who was accused by the state of criminal negligence. The movie, although mostly trial-based, shows flashbacks of the events leading up to Emily Rose's exorcism, and ultimately, her death. During the talk and the discussion it was apparent that the word "occult" brings to people's mind many different definitions.

Fr. Marcello tried to answer a very common question that students had: What does it mean and what practices are involved? It is a fact that the occult world is more detailed than what many of us may think or what the movies portray. The word "occult" is derived from the Latin word "occultus", which means things that are mysterious, hidden, and very secretive. Angelic and demonic forces play a large part in the practices which make up a part of the occult world. Some of those practices entail the use of astrology, fortune telling, ouija board, spirit channelling and witchcraft because all of them fall into the category of being practised in secret, and considered very mysterious. During the video forum, Fr. Marcello showed that occult is an extremely dangerous area in which to experiment, so one must be very careful.

By sharing some of his personal experiences, Fr. Marcello clearly portrayed what is involved in helping people who are practising Satanism and who are the most prone to diabolic oppression and possession - talking to them to discover the needs and problems they are facing, and guiding them through a process of prayer so that through their faith and with the power of Jesus Christ, they can be liberated from the diabolic grip shattering their lives.

An evaluation sheet was distributed to students as part of an exercise to evaluate the students' feedback about the various seminars and other extra-curricular activities that were held during this academic year at the Gozo Centre with the objective of delivering and improving such initiatives in 2009-2010.

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MCAST GOZO CENTRE

# LIST OF COURSES

**MCAST Foundation Certificate in Computing**  
**MCAST-BTEC First Diploma for I.T. Practitioners**  
**MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Computing**  
**Diploma in Banking and Financial Services**  
**MCAST Certificate in Administrative and Secretarial Studies**  
**AAT Diploma in Accounting**  
**MCAST Foundation Certificate in Business**  
**Certificate in Electrotechnical Technology (C&G 2330)**  
**MCAST-BTEC First Diploma in Engineering (Electronics)**  
**Certificate in Electrical Installation/Maintenance (C&G 2330)**  
**MCAST-BTEC First Diploma in Construction**  
**MCAST Foundation Certificate in Care**  
**MCAST-BTEC First Diploma in Health and Social Care**  
**MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Health and Social Care**  
**Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (Craft Level) (C&G 1155)**  
**MCAST Foundation Certificate Course**



# INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES OFFICE

## An Erasmus Mobility Experience in one of Europe's most inspiring cities...York

by Noel Muscat, Student Admissions Officer

During the past years, MCAST has established strong links with York St John University (YSJU) in the UK, where Maltese students were successfully continuing their studies in Art and Design. This year, an opportunity arose to visit YSJU on a one week work placement visit. This was made possible under the Erasmus Staff Training Programme, thus providing the opportunity for staff to gain first-hand experience in a foreign University. This week coincided with an International Week organised by YSJU. When I got to know about this opportunity, I started my research on the Internet to familiarise myself with York and YSJU.

York St John is a University of Higher Education with an Anglican foundation offering degree programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Its origins can be traced back to the diocesan teacher training college, St John's College, founded in York in 1841. It developed through a merger with the women's teacher training college in Ripon in 1975 to form the College of Ripon and York St John. In 2001, following a wide ranging strategic review, York St John withdrew from its site in Ripon to consolidate and further develop its provision on its site at Lord Mayor's Walk in York. York St John received approval from the Privy Council of the United Kingdom to become a University College and later adopted the full title of York St John University as of 1 October 2006.

My experience started on Sunday 22 March 2009 on a flight from Malta to Manchester Airport, followed by a direct train to York Railway Station. The hotel was a stone's throw away; my home for the week in the medieval city of York.

On Monday, all international visitors (from Norway, Poland, USA, Spain, Italy, France, Kenya and obviously Malta) were welcomed by the International Programmes Manager, Ms Valerie Holmes. After her introduction to the forthcoming International Week, she organised a campus tour around YSJU showing us the different departments and buildings around the University. This was followed by official speeches from Professor Dianne Willcocks, Vice Chancellor and Marion Yates, Head of International Centre. Dr David Moulds, Head of International Office delivered a speech on the subject "YSJU and Internationalisation", during which he spoke about partnerships with other universities, mobility projects and internationalization - the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution. Currently



Noel in front of the York Minister

YSJU has 5,000 students of which 6% are foreigners. Their aim is to reach 10% within the next 5 years. In the late afternoon, YSJU organised an interesting historical tour around the city of York where an experienced guide explained the history of the buildings, walls and monuments. On Tuesday, I had my first meeting with Mr Terry Madeley, the Deputy Registrar of YSJU. We had a very interesting talk in which I noticed some differences in the way the Registrar's Office works in York St. John University compared to MCAST. One of the differences is that, at the YSJU students' desk, there are four to five people who answer the students' queries. In this way, students do not have direct contact with the staff who are directly involved with the processing of the applications. I also noticed that, to have access to internal offices, a digital card was used. This increases security measures and data protection. I suggest that MCAST should look into adopting such a system due to the sensitivity of data processed at our College. We also discussed students' attendance records.



*From left Madhu Benoit, Roeland Vrolijk, Valerie Holmes and Noel Muscat*

I explained to Mr Madeley, that at MCAST, lecturers take students' attendance for each lecture. I learned that attendance records are not taken at YSJU, however, one must consider that students pay for their schooling fees and do not get any stipend; therefore, it is in their best interest not to miss out on lectures. The Deputy Registrar stated that 80% of the entry applications are filled in online by the students through UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). Later that day, I had a meeting with one of the staff members in the Registry, Mr Ken Scott who gave me an overview of the University's Management Information System.

In the evening, a lecture entitled "Hardwired for Wholeness: Learning for 21st Century" was given by Professor Jane Fried, School of Education and Professional Studies, Central Connecticut State University. She highlighted the importance of finding new ways of teaching and learning. A point I found interesting was her way of preparing lectures, where students are seated in a circle to encourage discussions and increase participation. She also stressed the importance to establish the right lecture duration, since after a certain time, students lose their concentration.

On Wednesday, I had a meeting with another three staff members who are responsible for statistics, withdrawals and certification. Mr Andrew Fern is responsible for all the statistics at York St John University. Apart from doing all the required statistics, he prepares analysis reports which are then forwarded to the top management of YSJU. During our conversation, Mr Fern pointed out that the University compiles several surveys for students throughout the year, such as the Student Satisfaction Survey, the Student Induction Survey and the Module Survey/Evaluation. This may be an area that MCAST could explore further.

In the afternoon, a half-day Internationalisation Conference was organised. This included several speeches from lecturers and professors sharing their own experiences in lecturing in their own country.

On Thursday, I had a meeting with Ms Stacy Lloyd, Admissions Manager, who described the process of the full-time applications. These are received at UCAS, an organisation outside of YSJU. Once all the applications are collected, they are then passed on to York St. John University for processing. The period of applications is generally held between September and January of each year. Accepted students will then start their course the following September.

One of the duties of the Admissions Manager is to decide whether a student is accepted or not. This depends on the student's qualifications, academic reference and a personal statement. Applicants must prepare a write-up explaining why they are applying for the course and what their future ambitions are. For each of these three factors, the student is allocated points. Each course has its own minimum points to be achieved and so, the student must reach that quota.

UCAS also has a Result Service system where students' qualifications are registered. Once this information is entered, students who apply to the various Universities/ Colleges do not need to show their certificates as proof of their qualifications, as these may be accessed from the said system. I believe that this would be a good system for Malta to adopt, as this saves a lot of time, resources and is subject to fewer errors.

Ms Lloyd also mentioned the process behind the issuing of the prospectus. The University issues a prospectus every year, 18 months in advance. In the near future, they are planning to have the prospectus available only on the Internet thus saving on printing costs and use of paper, while promoting a more eco-friendly environment. Another interesting topic discussed, was the way the administration handles the students' queries. Any queries students may have, must be put in writing, even if they want to ask why they have not been accepted at the University. A reply will then be given to them by return letter or e-mail. If students do not agree with the reply given, they have the option to file a complaint. Subsequently, if the student persists, then they have to file an appeal. The final decision will be that of the YSJU top management.

In the afternoon I attended some lectures as part of the Internationalisation programme. In the evening we were invited to attend for a talk at the York Minster presented by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

On my last day at YSJU, the Deputy Registrar, Terry Madeley gave me the opportunity to attend a staff meeting. During these staff meetings, which are held every three weeks, the staff in the Registry department meets with the Deputy Registrar to discuss issues and problems. Mr Madeley asked all members of staff about their work during the previous week and whether they had encountered any problems.



The staff members presented a short verbal presentation of the work they had been doing and when problems were raised, the Deputy Registrar gave feedback. Finally, Terry Madeley spoke about some new developments that will take place and assigned new tasks to his staff to be tackled in the following days. Through these meetings, and the presentations given by individual staff members, all registry staff would be constantly aware of what is happening in the Registry. Another advantage of these meetings is that everyone is informed about new developments at the same time. After the staff meeting, a final lunch was organised by the University for the International visitors as well as the team that organised the International Week at York St. John University.

On Saturday, I woke up early and headed to York Railway Station from where I took a train direct to Manchester Airport. When I returned to Malta, I realised what a great experience it was for me to spend a week in a foreign university. Apart from meeting new people with different cultures and views, I can say that this experience enriched me with a broader understanding of different practices and methodologies in my area of work. I brought back many interesting ideas that I believe may be beneficial should they be implemented in our College.



*Main entrance of York St John University*

*York – the medieval city*



# A VETPRO MOBILITY EXPERIENCE IN JYVÄSKYLÄ, FINLAND

By Burton Baldacchino

Finland has consistently been among the highest scorers worldwide according to the OECD's international assessment of student performance. Along with the other Scandinavian countries it ranks very high in reading literacy, mathematics, science as well as problem solving. Whilst Finns are probably the most literate people in the world, they are also considered to be the largest consumers of coffee, though whether these two characteristics are related remains to be seen!

As part of a Vocational Education and Training Professionals (VETPRO) exchange programme, in March 2009 I came to be in Finland together with Alexia Vella, lecturer at the Institute of Art and Design, on an exchange visit at a college situated in Jyväskylä. After establishing the mobility dates we organised several meetings to plan the logistics of the exchange due to the fact that we had to report to two different Institutes. As far as my programme was concerned, after considering my exchange proposal Ms Päivi Hirvonen, the Director of the Management and Business School in Jyväskylä, tailored a programme for the time I was going to spend at the college.

We planned to arrive in Helsinki on a Saturday evening so that we could familiarise ourselves with the city and some places of cultural interest on Sunday. Besides, we were also aware that Jyväskylä is situated approximately 270 km to the north of Helsinki – translating into a four hour train journey from downtown Helsinki – thus giving us ample time to travel.



*Inside Helsinki Cathedral*

As soon as we walked out of Vantaa airport, Helsinki's International airport, the striking feature was the below-freezing temperature which at the time of our arrival stood around -3°C. For a short while we felt like we were placed in a Christmas card! Being used to a temperate Mediterranean climate, this temperature was quite a shock, especially for a day in March. It certainly comes as no surprise that Santa Claus is considered to be a Finnish citizen!

We dedicated our first full day in Finland to visit Helsinki's city centre. Without any doubt the most distinct landmark is the particularly built neoclassical Helsinki Cathedral with its tall green dome surrounded by four smaller domes. The church was originally built as a tribute to the Grand Duke, Nicholas I, the Tsar of Russia and until the independence of Finland in 1917, it was called St. Nicholas' Church. Of particular interest is the fact that there are around 300 small islands connected by a maze of bridges and metro lines to greater Helsinki. Some of these islands are almost indistinguishable from the mainland. Others are reserved for weekend cottages and are reached over the ice in winter or by motorboat in summer. During our stay we had the opportunity to visit Suomenlinna which is one of the most popular of Helsinki's islands.

Even though during the day the weather became increasingly freezing, we decided to mark the day with something really different – a visit to La Bodega ice bar.

This is a very particular bar which as its name implies is made completely of ice including the counter, shelving and banners. We were told that the temperature of the ice bar is kept constantly at -10°C. Apart from the thick and several layers of clothes we were wearing, we were asked to put on a cape and thicker gloves before entering the bar. Even though the temperature in the bar was really cold we enjoyed ourselves in a relaxing atmosphere whilst listening to a selection of music spanning from the 70s up to contemporary.

We left off for Jyväskylä early on Monday. As we made our way to Helsinki's main station, it was snowing heavily, even though it seemed to be just a common day for the Finns who seemed relaxed, preparing themselves to travel and go to work. As we proceeded on our train journey from Helsinki to Jyväskylä, we could immediately notice the drop in temperature... the houses and roads became increasingly white.



*Helsinki Cathedral*

My experience at the college was very enriching. During the week I spent at the AO Jyväskylä Ammattiopisto, I had an opportunity to experience what it entails to work as a lecturer at the School of Management and Business, the institute involved in my exchange programme. The lecturers, as well as the students, were a very sweet-natured and amicable bunch. There was also the opportunity of involving myself in a number of different lectures including, labour law, financial and management accounting, computer accounting skills as well as financial management. The main problem encountered was the fact that the books, handouts, computer software and notes were all in Finnish. However, lecturers went out of their way to speak in English and make the necessary translations. During the lectures, I also had the opportunity to deliver my own material and exchange ideas about the treatment of accounting practices in Malta which we compared with similar accounting practices used in Finland. The fact that Malta and Finland are both member states within the EU means that there are a lot of similarities, particularly because of the applicable EU directives.

Notwithstanding the fact that there are a lot of students in the AO Jyväskylä Ammattiopisto, I was surprised by the way in which the lecturers monitor the progress of each individual student. Lecturers tend to carry appropriate records detailing the progress and performance of each student. Whenever a student completes a particular task these records are updated accordingly. Action is then taken on those students whose progress seems to be weak.

Also, of particular interest is the use of technology in the classrooms. Eighty percent of what we normally refer to as 'ordinary' classrooms are equipped with computers which students are allowed to use when they are asked to work on their own, especially, during tutorials. The tutorials are, in fact, self-learning sessions – the tutor being called to solve any problems which the students do not manage to solve on their own. There is less emphasis on the teaching aspect and more prominence is given to the learning process.

A lot of importance is given to workgroups in order to simulate workplace conditions, the eventual place for the students. The majority of the classrooms are organised in clusters, each cluster consisting of a number of desks and computers for use by the students who are organised in teams, usually, from the start of the academic year. Team sharing and group problem solving is a philosophy embraced by all members of academic staff and not just as a one-off lecture, tutorial or exercise.

During my visit at the Finnish college, one could also observe a number of other good practices, even as far as layout and college design and security are concerned. Even though the Finns seem to lead a very relaxed lifestyle, it is clear that in the average classroom you would usually find discipline, respect towards lecturers and a healthy self-learning attitude – qualities which are not always found in the Maltese educational context. Following my experience I could picture and understand even better why Finland always ranks so high when it comes to education.

Personally, I have no doubt that my exchange experience in Finland has helped me to broaden my perspectives on vocational education provision. EU funded exchanges, both for lecturers and students, are enriching in the sense that one is exposed to new ideas. Malta, being both the smallest member state within the EU and geographically isolated, stands to gain a lot from these highly educational exchange programmes.



*From left: Burton Baldacchino, Alexia Vella with a colleague from Jyväskylä*



# CARE STUDENTS IN LINCOLN, UNITED KINGDOM

Five students from the Institute of Community Services were among the Leonardo da Vinci project beneficiaries to follow a three week work experience in Lincolnshire, UK. The students, Elaine Pavia, Geraldine Grech, Riona Barbara, Georgette Farrugia and Elaine Formosa recount their experience and memories in Lincoln, England. "Our preparations started way back in July 2008, when during the last couple of days at College all applicants were to sit for an interview with the Director of the Institute and the International Programmes Coordinator. By the end of July we received the letter informing us that we had been selected."

In September 2008 we started working on all the preparations. We first followed a first aid course and then started corresponding with Lincoln College in Lincolnshire.

Our work experience started on 8 January 2009. We were working in different sectors such as Queen's Park Special School, which catered for children and adolescents aged 5 to 19 years with disabilities especially autism, Bishop King Primary School working with children aged 5 to 10 years with challenging behaviour and YMCA, which offers housing support to homeless people with different issues such as alcohol, drugs or simply homeless in Lincoln.

It was an amazing experience as I learnt more about the support measures for children, more about Lincoln, and got to bond with my fellow classmates. On behalf of my group Geraldine, Riona, Georgette and Elaine, I would like to thank Ms. Dorothy Meli, Director Institute of Community Services and Mr. Bjorn Azzopardi, International Programmes Officer for giving us this terrific opportunity.

# GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING SERVICE

## TOMORROW'S ENTREPRENEURS

On 30 April 2009, MCAST students from various Institutes participated in a discussion entitled 'Tomorrow's Entrepreneurs' on the occasion of the launch of the 1st European SME Week '09. During the activity, which was organized by the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Investment, students had the opportunity to discuss business start ups. The Hon. Tonio Fenech, Minister of Finance, Economy and Investments, Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, Mr Anthony Saliba, Deputy Principal, Mr Alan Camilleri, Chairman Malta Enterprise, and Mr Joe Bezzina, ETC Executive Officer, participated in the discussion and urged students to embark on such business ventures. A number of past students who set up their own business shared their experiences and reinforced the idea that it is possible to succeed in a business career.

Students present were given details on the existing support schemes for new entrepreneurs. Some of the schemes that were mentioned included financial support, consultancy and advice and also the opportunity of acquiring learning experiences in other European Countries. During the discussion, it was highlighted that one should calculate the risks involved, learn from failures and not to expect to be successful and rich from the very first attempt.

Following the activity, a number of students visited the Careers and Business Information Fair which was held between the 6 and the 9 May 2009 at the Royal Theatre site, Valletta.



*At the discussion*



*Mr John Bartolo, Director Information and Support Services and Ms Marthese Vassallo, Counsellor together with the students*

## COUNSELLORS AND MARITIME CADETS AT FORT MADALENA

First year Officer Cadets will soon be venturing out for their 12-month phase of training at sea. Some of them might be even already at sea by the date of publication of this magazine. In preparation for this, MCAST Counsellors organised a 2-day seminar at Fort Madalena for these students.

Students who have travelled away from home for some time know what it is like to be independent – sometimes tougher than we can imagine, however being away for a year at sea is an experience on its own. One will not only miss family and friends but a good number of other things that we take for granted. Students on board will have a routine that they would have to strictly abide by, with daily chores they can not refuse. Boredom can strike and self-control is a must in order to overcome it. Getting used to living with people with different personalities, values and who would most probably be coming from other cultural backgrounds, is another challenge. What we can vouch for is, that students who complete this year of training gain a level of maturity that is clearly evident as we could notice in two third year students who shared their experiences with the group.

Keith Marshall and Angele Marie Abela gave a good picture of their own encounters at sea during the first day of this training which was held at the Maritime Institute itself. They also answered any questions that were raised in the group. Themes that emerged from these disclosures were tackled the following day during a relaxing, yet insightful day at Fort Madalena. Awareness activities were carried out and the day at Fort Madalena not only served to deepen the students' insight towards possible, prospective encounters and how to handle them, but it also created a sense of consolidation and support between them.

Thanks to the auspices of St John Rescue Corps, the second day of this seminar was held in a most tranquil and ideal setting. Fort Madalena is the training school of this organisation.

Finally we wish the best of luck to our Officer Cadets who will be embarking on seagoing vessels in the coming months and to others who are already there.



# INTERESTED IN HELPING YOURSELF & OTHERS?

For the first time, the MCAST Counselling Department offered a course for all MCAST students who were interested in student-to-student helping skills. This has been a great opportunity for all the participants.

Due to its success the Counselling Department will relaunch this course. The student-to-student helping skills course consists of 30 hours of training in various aspects such as: self-awareness, peer relations, values, beliefs, attitudes, confidentiality, and so on.

### Recognition Ceremony

Once the training is completed, a recognition ceremony will be held whereby all participants will obtain a participation certificate from MCAST which can also be added in their Curriculum Vitae. This is done as MCAST believes that encouraging its students to develop their full potential is a necessity.

### What can you do once you complete the course?

The Counselling Department introduced a student-to-student network which consists of students who have completed the course and wish to become volunteers in helping other students who might need a helping hand. This network is regularly supervised by the College Counsellors.

For further information kindly email:

**student2student@mcast.edu.mt**

## MESSAGE FROM THE COUNSELLORS ON RELATIONSHIPS

Whether family or intimate relationships with a partner, they can provide a great source of love, pleasure, support and excitement. However they can also be a source of grief and suffering if they go wrong. The issue is made more relevant for students by the fact that most people at College are in a period of personal change, which can make them feel less sure of what they want or how they can expect others to react. The following are just a few golden rules:

### Do -

- Listen to the other person and show them you want to understand
- Know why you are arguing before you start
- Dedicate some time to resolving the problem - compromise
- Sit down and make eye contact
- Speak personally about what you feel
- Acknowledge when the other person makes a valid point
- Agree to differ if you cannot agree
- Stick to the matter in hand
- Stop arguing and separate if there is any likelihood of violence.

### Try not to -

- Behave aggressively or disrespectfully
- Argue on purpose to hurt the other person's feelings
- Generalize (e.g. You always do this)
- Bring up old unresolved disputes (e.g. And another thing...)
- Walk away without deciding when discussion will be resumed (unless violence threatens)
- Bring other people's opinions in
- Argue about something for more than an hour
- Argue late at night or after drinking.

There is a great range of relationships and of relationship difficulties. Counselling can be a great help in allowing to clarify complex relationship problems.

**counsellors@mcast.edu.mt**

**marthese.vassallo@mcast.edu.mt**

**Tel.: 23987133**

# WE MUST DO WHAT MATTERS IN LIFE

BY ROBERT CASSAR



**Robert Cassar**  
Career Adviser

**“We were not hoping for happiness---  
And yet we were not prepared for unhappiness.”**  
Man’s Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl

Countless studies underline the strong link between our career choices and our happiness. In this article we will not explore such a link but rather seek to work on it. In doing so, keep in mind that many pretend to be key experts in this area. Well the truth is no one truly is. A former teacher of mine used to write “TINTT” on the whiteboard at the beginning of every lecture. Midway the first lecture a brave student asked him about it. The answer was simple. It is an acronym for ‘This is not the Truth’. So I ask you to trust your guts and see for yourself if this article seems valid to you or not.

As a career guidance practitioner, I continuously meet clients who ask themselves if they are happy at their workplace..... or if it is truly their calling. This may lead to feelings of unhappiness, dissatisfaction and low self-esteem. The situation is usually characterised by feelings of helplessness and thoughts of yes.., but.., For example we would be saying to ourselves and others:

**I can change my area of study but ...**

**I want to change my place of work but...**

These “buts” can be of financial or social origin however for the most part it is because we have no clue of what needs to be changed.

## So what can we do?

### **Make a decision to decide about your vocation**

The first step is to make your mind up, to decide.

We are always dreaming or thinking...

### **What if I could?**

### **I wish my life was...**

The truth is if we don’t decide, the world will decide for us. No change will happen unless we make it happen. If we don’t take steps in making our dream job a reality, we will still remain in our jobs or current study direction.

### **Begin by research**

The first key is to know yourself. It is amazing how many times I ask the client about his or her skills and an empty stare is returned. The truth is that find yourself is the only way to kick-start your dream of a career.

**Break down the big question, “ What am I going to do with my life?” into smaller, more manageable chunks.**

Most of us dream of many interesting careers not just one. It is rare to meet a person who is simply focused on just a job or particular career. This makes the decision process a very complicated one that we often delay or simply ask others to take. An ideal way is to divide the big question “What shall I do with my life?” into smaller chunks or thoughts.

### **Show willingness to stretch your boundaries**

It is easier to stay in one’s comfort zone and not try to do what we feel we can do. The secret is to

“Go for vitality, not comfort.”

### **Seek to fulfill your goals or mission**

Have rewards that fit your values. A satisfying career is a rewarding one. Doing something for most of your days without adequate recognition (both financial and social) will erode your well-being.

### **Seek work environments that you like**

An ideal work environment is a place where our stress levels are kept at bay; a place where your work is recognised in a healthy physical work setting. Keep in mind that we often may have little control in deciding the work environment yet we can always aim high.

### **Plenty of courage**

It takes courage to be the author of your life. When we struggle to achieve our dreams, we would wonder why we are so full of fear and uncertainty. You may even feel that you are not courageous like your friends are. Well...the truth is that courage is not the absence of fear but rather the strength to do what you commit yourself to do.



# SPORTS

## TRACK AND FIELD SCHOOL SPORTS MEETING

An athletics meeting was held at the Marsa Sports Ground on the 2 March 2009 against Higher Secondary and Junior College students. Well done goes to all MCAST students who participated and also those who helped out in the organization of the events. Good results were recorded by MCAST students in particular by Steve Camilleri who won three gold medals in the 200m, 400m and the 4 x 100m relay; Nigel McCarthy silver in the 200m and gold in the 4 x 100m relay, Gabriel Rizzo, gold in the 800m, Charlene Monreal gold in the shot put and Maria Angela de Battista, gold in the discus and silver in the shot put, Antonio Flores and Jurgen Pisani gold in the relay.



*MCAST Relay Team. Antonio Flores passes the baton to Steve Camilleri*



*Mario Farrugia and Stephanie Des Jardins defending*

## HANDBALL SCHOOL SPORTS MEETING

On the 29 of January 2009 the MCAST Handball Team participated in a tournament held at St. Aloysius College against Junior College and St. Aloysius College 6th Form students.

## MCAST STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN MANOEL ISLAND CANOEING RACE

*The start of the race*

A group of MCAST students recently competed in the Manoel Island Canoeing Race. These students had virtually very little experience in the sport, having only attended around three introductory sessions. They competed against some seasoned canoeists and performed well. Andre Buhagiar managed to place 2nd in the 3km 1 lap race. Mario Farrugia and Francesca Psaila Savona were not far behind.



*Mario Farrugia and Andre Buhagiar*

# Baseball/Softball Course held at MCAST

A baseball/softball course was held at MCAST in collaboration with the Malta Baseball Federation. This half day course was conducted by Mr Patrick Pace who gave both theoretical and practical information regarding the game of baseball and softball. Anyone interested in this sport is to contact the Sports Co-ordinator at the gym or at: [adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt).



*Mr Patrick Pace explaining the batting techniques to the students*

## FOOTBALL REFEREEING COURSE FOR MCAST STUDENTS

The Malta Football Referees Association together with the MCAST Sports Department recently held a course for MCAST students wishing to become Football Referees. This course was conducted by Mr Victor Mintoff, himself an MFA referee, over 10 sessions at the Main Campus in Corradino. Around 20 students attended this course.

## OFFICIATING TENNIS COURSE HELD FOR MCAST STUDENTS

MCAST students were invited to participate in a Tennis Officiating Course held over two days on the 26 and 27 March 2009. There were about 35 students who attended this course to become tennis umpires or line judges in the hope of being able to travel abroad for international tournaments in the future and umpire such names as Nadal and Federer! In April 2009, these students were also asked to umpire during the Ladies Federation Cup Tournament held in Malta. Thanks goes to Dr Mohab Fahmi from the Malta Federation for providing us with this opportunity.

## MCAST STUDENTS VOLUNTEER IN TABLE-TENNIS ITTF JUNIOR RANKING TOURNAMENT

Between the 8 and the 15 March 2009 a number of MCAST students offered their help in an International Table-Tennis Junior Ranking Tournament which was held in Malta and was organized by the Malta Table-Tennis Federation. The students helped in the organization of the event and had several jobs including accreditation documentation, transport, meals and helping in the prize-giving ceremonies.

# STC FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

A football tournament was held on the 17 March 2009 for students attending STC in Pembroke. STC is one of the College's private training providers. This tournament was well attended and was held at the Melita Football Grounds in Pembroke. Thanks goes to Mr. Paul Vella and also to Mr Henri Miceli for helping in the officiating.

*Students at the STC private training provider participate in a football tournament.*





STC 1st and 2nd placed teams

# FOOTBALL LEAGUE WINNERS



The MCAST football league winners for this year are Street Fighters from the Institute of Community Services followed by Havana from the Institute of Information and Communication Technology.



Sports students from the Institute of Community Services – this year's football league winners

# ROUND GOZO TREK

Between the 28 and the 31 March 2009 a group of Community Services and Electrical and Electronics Engineering students attended the Round Gozo Trek over 4 days which was organized by the MCAST Sports Department in collaboration with Malta Outdoors. The students were accompanied by the Sports Co-ordinator Ms Adele Muscat as well as lecturer Ms Dorianne Bonnici. The trek involved trekking all around the Gozitan coast starting off from Mgarr Harbour and finishing off back in Mgarr. Throughout this trek the students had to carry a backpack with their clothing, water, food, tent, sleeping bag, stove etc. (approx 12-15kgs each.) During the three nights in Gozo the students slept close to Xlendi on the 1st night, Wied il-Ghasri on the 2nd night and San Blas Bay on the 3rd night. The terrain included scrambling and bouldering. This was a tough activity but one greatly enjoyed by all. Anyone wanting to attempt this activity next year is to contact the Sports Co-ordinator.



*MCAST students on their 3rd day trekking at Marsalforn salt pans*

*The team, heavily loaded on their way round the coast of Gozo*



# Library & Learning Resource Centre

## MORE DONATIONS TO THE MCAST LIBRARY & LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE

Books Plus (of Sliema) and Mr Paul Sammut, Secretary to the Public Service Commission, donated books to the MCAST Library and Learning Resource Centre.

Books Plus donated over 200 publications worth over €3000 to the MCAST Library and Learning Resource Centre. The books include titles in Architecture, Art and Design, Biology, Building and Construction Engineering, Chemistry, Information and Communication Technology, Philosophy, Physics and Physiology and Sociology amongst others. The books will be shelved in the six Libraries spread across the MCAST Institutes that welcome around 1,200 to 1,300 visitors (students, lecturers and staff) on a daily basis.

“We are proud to have our name down as a contributor to this fine institution. Education has come a long way and today’s young people are spoilt for choice with the variety of subjects to pursue,” stated Mr Simon Bonello, Director of Books Plus and of Audio Visual Centre Ltd, one of the main Book Sellers in Malta.

Mr Paul Sammut donated part of his private collection to the Library. The bulk of the donation includes Management books. Mr Sammut stated that he is glad his books will be of help to MCAST students and staff.

Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO, thanked Mr Bonello and Mr Sammut for their generous donations and commented on the quality of the books offered and relevance to the various areas of study at MCAST. He stated, “We interpret these donations as recognition to MCAST’s delivery and commitment and a sign of confidence, appreciation and support.”

MCAST has invested heavily in the six Libraries and Learning Resource Centres. Besides the classical library facilities and services the Libraries are also Learning Resource Centres. This is in line with the strategy of ensuring that its graduates acquire the skill of life-long independent learning. It is this skill that will guarantee that MCAST graduates, over the years, can continuously keep up to date with their chosen area of expertise and as necessary branch out into new areas of knowledge for their own and their employers’ mutual benefit.



*From left: Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, Mr Laurence Zerafa, Librarian and Mr Simon Bonello, Director of Books Plus and Audio Visual Centre Ltd.*



*From left: Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors, Mr Paul Sammut, Secretary to the Public Service Commission, Mr Laurence Zerafa, Librarian and Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO.*

# LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT

## Is the nice lecturer the effective lecturer? The scarcity principle applied to an educational setting.

by Ernest Spiteri (LSU lecturer)

One of the major problems faced by lecturers, whether it is in secondary schools, colleges or any institution, is that of maintaining control of the classroom. If something is difficult to get, then getting it demonstrates to ourselves and others that we are in control of our environment. Threatening to take something away is showing the other person that you are in control. The desire of scarcity is thus the competitive urge to maintain control.

Aristotle knew this too, commenting in his 'Rhetoric': 'That is why what comes to us only at long intervals is pleasant, whether it be a person or a thing; for it is a change from what we had before, and, besides, what comes only at long intervals has the value of rarity.'

The lecturer who praises his or her students frequently for every little thing is not appreciated as the one who praises his or her students sparingly. By sparingly giving out praise the lecturer gives more value to it. The lecturer who never praises students in one way or another on the other hand most often is viewed as stiff. And if he or she would ever give out praise it would probably be viewed as awkward and possibly fake. So the action of long intervals is a necessary tool. The lecturer may use other forms of rewards other than praising, rewards which could be invented by lecturers themselves.

They could use for instance a system of points which after being accumulated yield a reward. This principle may also be used in creating surprise activities which are different, entertaining and educational. Performing such activities on a regular basis makes their value wither and eventually die value wise. If the lecturer does not change the format of the lesson occasionally, he or she is viewed as boring but utilising activities sparingly and with surprise would skyrocket their worth. Students will be wondering when the lecturer will give them the next quiz and what it will be about. If students start misbehaving the lecturer may threaten to take one of these rewards away thus showing he or she is in control.

There are various other situations where the scarcity principle can be used in an educational setting. Try thinking of some and apply them to your classroom. You will see that maintaining control and gaining respect will become much easier.



*Ernest Spiteri teaches Mathematics at the Learning Support Unit*

# LSU LECTURERS ATTEND MODEVAL 2 PROJECT SECOND MEETING IN BUDAPEST

**Between the 2 and the 4 of April 2009, David Muscat, Co-ordinator of the Learning Support Unit, and Elisabeth Mifsud and Maria Galea, lecturers at the Learning Support Unit, attended the second meeting of the Modeval 2 project in Budapest. This meeting followed the first meeting held in Jena, Germany in December 2008.**

Modeval 2 project is a two year Leonardo Transfer of Innovation Project coordinated by Francis Laveaux from Agora, a non-governmental organization based in Lorient, France. MODEVAL 2 project partners will establish a set of recommendations allowing theoretical and practical structures to develop tools for basic skills evaluation. The aim of the current project is to develop training materials targeted towards tutors and trainers in the area of low level skilled adults. The participants are the University of Barcelona, Spain; the University of the Aegean, Greece; the University of Lyons, France; the University of Kaposvar, Hungary; l'Agence Nationale de Lutte contre l'illitrisme, France; Thuringen Volkshochschulverband e.V., Germany; Taleinstuttet, Region Nordjylland, Denmark; the Hungarian Radio, Budapest and MCAST's Learning Support Unit, Malta.



*From left: Elisabeth Mifsud, Lecturer, David Muscat, Learning Support Unit Coordinator, and Maria Galea, Lecturer.*

During the second meeting the partnership approved the Reference Manual which was compiled by project partners from Denmark, Malta, France and Greece. The Manual identifies the target groups of the project and reviews the key concepts involved. It explains the methodological approaches recommended for the assessment and discusses the issue of comparison between the different target groups on a European and International level. The Manual also comprises the actual assessment tool. The Psy Ef from the University of Lyon, led by Jean-Marie Besse, were responsible for the construction of the test which had the aim of evaluating the comprehension of the spoken and the written word, and the processing of the written word through reading or through a written output.



The meeting in Budapest focused on the creation of a framework for the training sessions which are to be held with the target groups during which the proposed training material will be presented. The next meeting of the Modeval group will be held in Malta at the end of October 2009.



# OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDSMAN



**Prof Charles Farrugia**  
University Ombudsman

Eligible grievances and disputes on matters that are not within the institutions' academic jurisdiction and which the University Ombudsman has the authority to investigate include issues that relate to:

- student admissions and enrolment;
- non-academic resource management and allocation;
- inefficiency, maladministration and system deficiency;
- bias;
- unfair practices and treatment;
- the organisation, adequacy and accessibility of the institutions' infrastructure, facilities and services;
- procedural flaws and irregularities;
- discrimination;
- breaches of disciplinary codes, disciplinary proceedings and rulings;
- observance of rules and regulations on proper conduct of examinations;
- non-academic misconduct and inappropriate behaviour;
- the provision of student support services and facilities;
- abuse of power and harassment; and
- employment conflicts and work-related concerns including work environment, job responsibilities, promotions and work conditions.

## The functions and duties of the University Ombudsman are:

- to ensure that registered full-time and part-time students as well as academic and non-academic members of staff at the University of Malta (including the Junior College), the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology and the Institute of Tourism Studies are treated fairly by management of the institutions;
- to ascertain that appropriate processes and procedures are in place and followed in an impartial and objective manner in these institutions; and
- to identify systemic problems in these institutions with a view to submitting recommendations to prevent the recurrence of any wrongdoing and turn sustained complaints into occasions that can improve internal processes and procedures, the administrative ethos and the management of these institutions.

## Type of complaints investigated by the University Ombudsman

The University Ombudsman can investigate grievances about decisions or actions that are alleged to be unreasonable, unjust, wrong or discriminatory or considered to cause distress or hardship to complainants.

## Complaints that are not looked at by the University Ombudsman

The University Ombudsman has no academic jurisdiction and cannot exercise any academic judgement. He does not question, challenge, interpret or interfere with academic decisions and issues related to teaching and learning or overrule any policy or decision by academic bodies on matters concerning:

- academic provision;
- course management issues such as exam results, degree classification, grades and grade review, academic supervision of students, quality and organisation of academic teaching, academic teaching load, decisions by academic panels or appeal bodies, the nature or content of courses, academic awards, etc.;
- academic misconduct;
- academic integrity;
- academic study or research programmes;
- academic policies and practices; and
- academic regulations and course requirements.

For further information you can contact the Ombudsman's Office on telephone number 21247944/5/6 or view the University Ombudsman's website [www.ombudsman.org.mt/uo](http://www.ombudsman.org.mt/uo)

# FULL-TIME COURSES 2009/10

## Receipt of new Applications

### Dates

Monday	27 July 2009	Applicants with surnames starting A to B
Tuesday	28 July 2009	Applicants with surnames starting C to F
Wednesday	29 July 2009	Applicants with surnames starting G to P
Thursday	30 July 2009	Applicants with surnames starting Q to Z

### Venues

#### Agribusiness courses:

Institute of Agribusiness, Triq al Luqa, Qormi

#### Art and Design courses:

Institute of Art and Design, Tar a Gap, Mosta

#### Building and Construction Engineering courses:

Institute of Building and Construction Engineering, Triq il-Kbira, Naxxar

#### Business and Commerce courses:

Institute of Business and Commerce, MCAST Main Campus,  
Corradino Hill, Paola

#### Community Services courses:

Institute of Community Services, MCAST Main Campus,  
Corradino Hill, Paola

#### Electrical and Electronics Engineering courses:

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering,  
MCAST Main Campus,  
Corradino Hill, Paola

#### Gozo Centre courses:

Gozo Centre, 132, Triq it-Tirija, Xaghra

#### ICT courses:

Institute of Information and Communication Technology, MCAST Main  
Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola

#### Maritime courses:

Maritime Institute, Villa Portelli, Marina Street, Kalkara

#### Mechanical Engineering courses:

Institute of Mechanical Engineering, MCAST Main Campus,  
Corradino Hill, Paola

- Applications are received between 08.30 hrs and 12.30 hrs. No applications are received in the afternoon.
- Applicants who wish to apply for courses held in Malta, and who during the week of receipt of applications are residing in Gozo, may submit their application at the MCAST Gozo Centre, Xaghra.
- Any applicants who for some reason cannot present their application on the above dates may do so on Friday 31 July 2009 between 08.30 hrs and 12.30 hrs.

### Method of Application

- All applicants must fill in the official Application Form A (in triplicate) and submit it together with the following documents:
- **Original** certificates/result slips and photocopies of each certificate/result slip
- **Valid ID Card** and its photocopy from both sides. Students who reach the age of 16 by the application date must renew and present a new ID Card.
- **Original School Leaving Certificate**

Applicants may ask another person to present their application as long as the application is signed by the applicant and all the necessary documents are attached to the application. The person presenting an application in the name of another person must also present his/her ID card.

Applications without all the necessary documents and entry requirements will not be accepted.

Application Form A is to be filled in by those applicants who were not students at MCAST in 2008/2009 and by those who wish to restart a course.

Prospective students are invited to discuss future learning and training opportunities by calling for an appointment on Tel: 23987100. Between the 13 and the 24 July 2009, both dates inclusive, the Career Guidance and Counselling Service will be offered without an appointment at the MCAST Students' House, MCAST Main Campus, Paola, between 08.30 hrs and 16.00 hrs.

Applicants requesting special entitlements are to call for an appointment on Tel. 2398 7100 prior to submission of application.



## Talks to Prospective Students & Parents - Admission 2009

DATE	INSTITUTE	TIME	PLACE
Monday 6/7/2009	Building and Construction Engineering	18:00 hrs	Students' House, Paola
Tuesday 7/7/2009	Agribusiness	10:00 hrs	Students' House, Paola
Tuesday 7/7/2009	Maritime	18:00 hrs	Maritime Institute, Kalkara
Tuesday 7/7/2009	Electrical and Electronics Engineering	18:30 hrs	Students' House, Paola
Wednesday 8/7/2009	Gozo Centre	09:30 hrs	MCAST Gozo Centre, Xaghra
Wednesday 8/7/2009	Building and Construction Engineering	09:30 hrs	Institute of Building and Construction Engineering, Naxxar
Wednesday 8/7/2009	Mechanical Engineering	18:30 hrs	Students' House, Paola
Wednesday 8/7/2009	Agribusiness	18:30 hrs	Agribusiness Institute, Qormi
Thursday 9/7/2009	Business and Commerce	09:30 hrs	Students' House, Paola
Thursday 9/7/2009	Community Services	18:30 hrs	Institute of Community Services Carpark, Paola
Friday 10/7/2009	Art and Design	09:00 hrs	Students' House, Paola
Friday 10/7/2009	Information and Communication Technology	18:00 hrs	Information and Communication Technology Carpark, Paola

### Information and Support Centre

MCAST Main Campus  
 Corradino Hill  
 Paola  
 Tel: 23987100  
 E-mail: [information@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:information@mcast.edu.mt)  
 Website: [www.mcast.edu.mt](http://www.mcast.edu.mt)

### Counselling Service

Students' House  
 Corradino Hill  
 Paola  
 Tel: 23987133/4  
 E-mail: [counsellors@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:counsellors@mcast.edu.mt)

### Career Guidance Service

Students' House  
 Corradino Hill  
 Paola  
 Tel: 23987135/6  
 E-mail: [careerguidance@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:careerguidance@mcast.edu.mt)



# Magic Wonders

Child Care Centre

## MCAST NEW CHILD CARE CENTRE SUMMER 2009

The brand new EU funded MCAST Magic Wonders Child Care Centre is opening its doors to the public for the July-September 2009 intake of children from new born till 3 yrs of age.

Magic Wonders Child Care Centre, located on the MCAST Main Campus, is a state-of-the art Child Care Centre that provides quality and affordable child care. The Centre employs fully qualified and experienced Child Assistants and staff. First preference will be given to MCAST students and staff. Space permitting the Centre will also be available to companies and the general public.

The opening hours are from 8am to 5pm from Monday to Friday.

For more information contact The Administration Manager on **23 987 161** or on email address: [irene.bugeja@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:irene.bugeja@mcast.edu.mt)

Applications are also available at the Reception Desk at MCAST Main Campus Administration Block, Corradino Hill, Paola.

MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola PLA 9032  
Tel: (+356) 23 987 100 • Fax: (+356) 23 987 316  
E-mail: [information@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:information@mcast.edu.mt) • [www.mcast.edu.mt](http://www.mcast.edu.mt)

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