



MCAST

Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

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MCAST Board of Governors

2017 - 2020



From left standing are Mr Frank Farrugia, Ms Louisa Grech, Mr Frederick Schembri, Dr Amanda Bezzina, Prof Mark Borg
From left sitting are Ms Marietta Lanzon, Ms Rhoda Garland, Prof James Joachim Calleja, Ms Claire Grima, Mr Brian Farrugia

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Mr Frederick Schembri

Principal and CEO

Prof James Joachim Calleja

Deputy President

Prof Mark Borg

Dr Amanda Bezzina

Mr Brian Farrugia

Mr Frank Farrugia

Ms Rhoda Garland

Ms Louisa Grech

Ms Claire Grima

Ms Marietta Lanzon

Board Members

Introduction by the Minister for Education and Employment

Hon. Evarist Bartolo



MCAST has taken giant steps in developing Malta's education framework over the years. A period of continuous achievement has resulted in excellence as we have developed from a competent and resourceful society to one with a competitive culture, driven by the critically mindful and innovative approach to learning for development. This philosophy has been rewarding to hundreds of students as they taste first-hand the real world of employment.

MCAST has been at the forefront in shaking the educational system from one-size-fits-all to the current approach, providing various courses leading to different learning routes and pathways. It has helped bring about a major revolution even through the My Journey project. This will come into force during the next school year at secondary level. This more holistic educational experience will prepare students for their future employment. The factual difference is not between vocational and academic courses but between good and bad education and helping students obtain the necessary skills for the real world of work.

MCAST's ideology is aligned with European and world benchmarks and strategic goals. In today's globalised age, the

pace of educational change is not determined only at a national level but equally, or more importantly, by what is happening in the rest of the world. Ultimately, an education experience should not be evaluated by how traditional its methodology is, but by how successful it is in delivering a relevant, innovative and fruitful experience, which not only helps young people master a skill-set but also prepares them for the ever-changing realities of the modern world particularly those posed by technology, artificial intelligence and automation.

The Maltese government remains committed to the development of MCAST by strengthening the legal framework of this educational institution and improving its financial resources. The Ministry remains in touch with reality and works in close collaboration with the educational and economic sectors and civil society to endlessly follow the updated educational needs of our nation. We want all students to develop their personal and social potential and acquire the appropriate knowledge.

MCAST is a success. My hope for the future is for MCAST to remain a fresh and innovative vocational and professional educational College.



Message from the President of the MCAST Board of Governors

Mr Frederick
Schembri

On behalf of the Board of Governors, I am pleased to present MCAST Annual Report 2017/18 to the Minister for Education and Employment, the Hon. Evarist Bartolo for the academic year ending August 2018. The report highlights the College's achievements in fulfilling our mandate and commitment in the principles of good education.

In the year under review, the Board of Governors sought to establish the strategic direction for the College, by building on previous accomplishments whilst addressing contemporary challenges. An extensive consultation process was launched targeting an inclusive audience comprising of internal and external stakeholders including staff members, students, alumni, employers, social partners and policy makers. The scope was to understand how MCAST remains relevant and central to the progressive economic development of our country. The MCAST Strategic Plan 2019-2021 revolves around the synergistic interplay between seven strategic objectives, each of equal importance. Ambitious goals have been set for the College, but we remain confident in management's ability to drive forward the strategy for MCAST.

STUDENTS ARE OUR #1 PRIORITY.
In a time where intolerance, hatred and fear permeated the media, educational institutions offer havens of hope, creating space where diversity is valued, where dignity towards humanity is respected, where compassion is extended and fear is mitigated by education; creating space where all are invited, and more importantly, everyone feels welcomed.

We took time as a country to reflect on our rich history that laid the foundation to develop into the nation we are today. We took time to acknowledge social equity, cultural diversity and inclusion, the building blocks of a strong nation grounded in the values of dignity, respect and tolerance for all. As we stand at this juncture, it is important for all of us to acknowledge and come to understand our true history, and to work together to form a nation where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. At MCAST, we confront the issues our country and her people have faced for years: connecting with our past, our present and our future. MCAST provides the opportunity to celebrate shared values, mutual achievements and to reflect upon what it means to be Maltese. It also lets us explore the contrasts and similarities found within our country and its people: diversity and inclusion, youth and wisdom, reconciliation with humbleness and compassion, and reflecting and understanding our shared history.

Perhaps more importantly, we look forward to our future. We must continue to plan for our students' future, including strategy implementation, development of our campus, continued partnerships with stakeholders and the well-being of our students and employees.

At MCAST, we have bold ideas and aspirations for an inclusive society. It is only through courage, education, respect and compassion that we will change the world for the better.



A Year's Review by the Principal & CEO

Prof James Joachim Calleja

MCAST is a unique educational institution awarding qualifications from the lowest to nearly the highest levels of the Malta Qualifications Framework. We are proud to do this because our efforts reflect what workplaces actually need – skills, competences and talents at all levels.

MCAST's academic year 2017/18 witnessed changes in management but a stable attractiveness to students and adult learners. A total of 7,325 applications were received for the academic year 2017/18. In Q3 2018, on recommendations completed by the Mullard Report (in early 2018), a College-wide consultation process was initiated to ensure that the future of MCAST is rooted in an ownership process by all stakeholders. It culminated with the launch of a strategic plan for 2019/21 by Prime Minister Joseph Muscat in May 2019 when he visited MCAST to inaugurate the first phase of the state-of-the-art Institute of Engineering and Transport.

The management reform system, spearheaded by the recommendations of the Mullard Report, moved away from the three college system and instead reinforced the structures and ethos of the six Institutes and appointed six new Deputy Principals to oversee and manage distinct areas of importance for the College namely Administration, the Registrar's Office, the Institutes, Curriculum and Student Affairs, Research and Innovation. In addition, management set up a Grievance Office to give staff and students institutional support and to management first-hand information for addressing inefficiencies and structural deficits. Addressing head-on managerial

and administrative shortfalls has enabled the College to move towards a more professional approach in implementing decisions by the Governing Board which is also in a process of a robust procedural reform system.

Strong governing and management systems allow the College to continue building first class industry-driven qualifications, community-oriented vocational education and training, and impact research across all Institutes.

Notwithstanding reforms, the successes in the academic year 2017/18 must be attributed to a combination of exceptional efforts undertaken by the various Institutes and Departments by committed personnel with unfailing loyalty to the College. This report gives an overview of the various initiatives that the Institutes, the Departments and the Units have undertaken to drive the College to new levels of excellence, inclusion and growth.

In many respects, MCAST boosted the growth of its research development area by launching the Applied Research and Innovation Centre giving rise to new opportunities for research studies, propagating new methodologies and improving MCAST international networks. This development is an important one for MCAST as it creates a research mind-set within the College that creates a culture of new knowledge and solving real-work problems.

The MCAST partnership and international office continued to expand its education and industry network to attract more businesses and VET schools, colleges and Applied Universities both locally

and internationally, while also providing an opportunity for MCAST to form part of various renowned VET international organisations. Additionally, during the College year being reviewed, more than 200 MCAST students and members of staff members travelled overseas through the ERASMUS+ programme to gain fresh knowledge and skills through training and/or work experience.

A key part of the development of MCAST is the Curriculum. A new suite of six generic Bachelor programmes was created and MCAST added new areas of focus such as the ACCA qualification and the BSc in Physiological Measurements. During the year under review, MCAST also laid the groundwork for eight new Masters programmes, all focusing on areas relating to sustainability of national resources and activities. The programmes were launched in early 2019 attracting over 150 adult learners.

MCAST continued the strong investment and involvement with the local industry by further increasing the number of programmes offering apprenticeship schemes to students across several areas of vocational education and training, including engineering, community services, information technology, business and administration, applied sciences and community services. Almost 900 apprentices were placed in programmes which combine work, education and training in key sectors of employment.

In 2018, MCAST doubled its efforts to ensure the reaching to several young prospective students through its effective team of career guidance initiatives. We have also further developed the student support services to cater for all types of student needs. The Psychosocial

Services have been an effective and professional tool for the well-being of students and staff. Through its increasing services and high standards, MCAST has established a hub for personal support throughout the year.

In 2017/18, the College focussed on providing various CPD opportunities to staff members at MCAST. In addition, in 2018 discussions were finalised and in early 2019 a new Masters in Vocational Education Applied Research 4.0 (MVEAR 4.0) was launched, attracting over 50 MCAST and the Institute of Tourism Studies lecturing staff. The professional development of lecturing staff is one of the key priorities of management. Our ambition is to support lecturers in putting students first.

A further reason to celebrate 2018 is that 2,618 students successfully completed their programme of study and graduated during the ceremonies held in autumn. Every day, one notices students across all the institution thriving and doing their utmost to improve their learners' education. Dedicated lecturing staff are always keen to provide students with new learning experiences whether on campus or in workplaces. Employers are increasingly becoming our formidable partners. Without their participation in the College's education and training programmes, MCAST would not be a vocational and professional College as we know it today. Their feedback is a gold mine for development.

Additionally, MCAST is currently benefiting from over €34 million to have new buildings. In 2018 MCAST benefitted of an astonishing €14.4 million in EU funding. Since 2004 over €100 million have been invested in MCAST. Two new buildings are being built to host the Institute of Information Technology and the Learning Resource Centre. It is hoped

that by 2020 these buildings will give the College a totally new image which will increase its attractiveness.

In 2018, the College initiated the implementation of ESF 02.058 – Adding Value: Nurturing Learning Journeys with the aim of developing innovative support structures to increase student engagement while making learning more fun. In a College where qualifications span nearly the whole spectrum of the Malta Qualifications Framework, the lower levels are equally important. It is the mission of MCAST to give learners a second chance. We will continue to strive to give learners in initial vocational education and training the best learning environment be it physical, financial or related to adequate human resources.

MCAST is an evolving educational experience which will be revamped by a new legislation which will capture its triple vocation to aim for inclusion, excellence and equity. With a staggering increased population including 691 international students from 70 different nationalities, we are ambitious and determined to make MCAST a first choice for students and the most rewarding road to employment.

Our focus in the coming years will be threefold: (i) an improved learning environment for students and lecturing staff, (ii) an effective management that responds to needs in real time, and (iii) increased stakeholders' participation in the life of the College.

Our ultimate goal is to have students at MCAST who feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued while reaching their educational potential. They are Malta's present and future. As a public funded institution our obligation to provide a formidable workforce to Malta's flourishing economy is a moral task.

Curriculum and Student Affairs

The Curriculum Department

In 2017/18 the Curriculum Department worked closely with Institutes and experts regarding the development of new programmes of study for both the full-time and part-time Prospectus published by MCAST. Existing programmes and units were reviewed to ensure that these remained relevant.

MQF LEVELS	PROGRAMMES REVIEWED	UNITS REVIEWED
Level 1 – Level 3	60	81
Level 4	39	48
Level 5 – Level 6	28	60



Participants during the Erasmus+ project RUECVET in Nukus, Uzbekistan

Five members of the Curriculum staff participated in Erasmus+ and ESF projects in areas that include ECVET, personal development, financial literacy and healthcare. The Curriculum Department also actively participated in continuous professional development sessions, whereby members of staff attended various conferences that were organised by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education or the ECVET forum. A member of staff from the Curriculum Department who is an ECVET expert attended an ECVET Forum in Sofia, Bulgaria. The amount of CPD attended depends on conferences and seminars that are organised by the National Commission or any other conferences that target the needs of the members of staff of the Curriculum Department.

The Office also collaborated with other government entities as well as industry in various national and international initiatives.

The online repository was also further consolidated and enhanced following its launch in October 2017. The online repository is continuously updated



Curriculum Department members of staff at the first transnational meeting held in Bratislava, Slovakia

with reviewed and new programmes that change and evolve with MCAST and its new programmes and initiatives. A section was recently included for the courses pertaining to MCAST's commercial arm.

Quality Assurance Department

The Quality Assurance (QA) Department carried out six academic process reviews, in collaboration with various internal stakeholders, resulting in process optimisation. The process reviews conducted are carried out through internal audits and/or new

process designs/updates. This Department also undertook the co-ordination of the re-launching of the Manual of Procedures for the non-academic processes following internal consultation with the process owners. The main focus of the internal audit function was aimed at the effectiveness of the internal verification process of the assignment briefs and assessment decisions. As part of the

continuous professional development process of lecturing staff, more than 100 full-time and part-time lecturing staff have been appraised and given feedback following class-observation visits by QA personnel. The QA Department provides regular updates to NCFHE on the developments of the implementation of the recommendations from the EQA audit held in 2015.

Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Department

MCAST added two new programmes offering apprenticeship schemes to students, namely the Diploma in Fashion and Retail and the Advanced Diploma in Marketing. During the academic year 2017/18 a total of 730 MCAST students carried out apprenticeships. By the end of the academic year, 880 students following MQF Level 3 and Level 4 programmes benefitted from the Apprenticeship Scheme across several areas of vocational education and training, including engineering, community services, information

technology, business and administration, applied sciences and community services. During the academic year 2017/18 other work-based learning schemes, including work placements and internships were consolidated further with students taking on real, work-based learning opportunities during their period of study at MCAST. Nearly 1,200 students carried out work placements and 1,000 students conducted an internship experience. The Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Department has further increased the industry activity base, with over 1,000 companies and entities registered as MCAST partners. This relationship between industry and education allows employers to offer vacancies to MCAST students for a work-based learning opportunity.

Learning Support Unit

During the year 2017/18 the Learning Support Unit (LSU) lecturers delivered Key Skills units to MQF Level 1 to Level 3 students across most of the Institutes at MCAST. The LSU has also provided additional support in Mathematics, Maltese, English, Information Technology, Assignment Support, Study Skills and Time Management to over 220 full-time students enrolled in MCAST courses at MQF Level 1 up to Level 6.

Following collaboration with MEDE, the Unit has also introduced language courses in French, German and Italian at MQF Level 1. These language courses give equal importance to writing, reading, listening and speaking and have attracted students from different Institutes and different levels. 12 students have successfully completed these language courses, some of whom showed interest in taking the language courses at MQF Level 2. MCAST looks forward to provide additional language courses and attract more students in the future.

Once again, the Learning Support Unit collaborated with GEM16+ to verify Mathematics, English and Maltese content delivered as part of this programme and with St Patrick's School to facilitate transition of students from secondary education to MCAST.

Centre for Professional Development

The Centre for Professional Development re-introduced CPD sessions on a voluntary basis for all staff at MCAST (Academic and Administrative staff). 20 different workshops were organised in October 2018 and staff had the liberty to register for workshops of their interest. 95 members of staff registered for at least one workshop and some attended more than one, adding

up to 195 registrations. Feedback received was very positive and requests came in for other similar initiatives. Following a one-week training mobility in Finland, a team of staff and consultants within the Centre for Professional Development concluded the programme 'Pedagogical Training Qualification in VET' at Masters level. The Masters in Vocational Education Applied Research 4.0 (MVEAR 4.0) is a three-year qualification of 120 ECTS with three exit points, either after one year with a Post-Graduate Certificate or after the second year with a Post-Graduate Diploma or after the third year, which is the dissertation year, with a Masters.



Diversity Day



EXPO 2018



Spring Days

Student Outreach, Services and Events Department

The Student Outreach Services and Events Department has organised and coordinated various activities and events during the academic year 2017/18.

The academic year started with Freshers' Days in October to welcome both new as well as progressing students. Events continued throughout the year and these included the College's participation in the National Anti-Domestic Violence Campaign, Waste No Waste Sessions, I Choose Career Fairs, Celebrating Diversity and a number of sports activities including the Annual Spring Days and the EXPO where students' projects were exhibited and representatives of Industry partners were present.

Outreach Events and Career Guidance

The Student Outreach Services Unit is committed to reach out to young prospective students who are seeking to take their next leap to post-secondary and tertiary education through talks, career fairs and one-to-one career guidance sessions. Between October 2017 and September 2018, 746 guidance sessions were carried out on a one-to-one basis. A 16% increase in career guidance sessions was registered. Guidance Teachers' training is held on a yearly basis in June to ensure that the Guidance Teachers within state and non-state schools are continuously updated and equipped with the latest MCAST courses and entry requirements. 74% of all Guidance Teachers attend this training.

Outreach is also held with current College students studying at Level 2 to help guide them in the choice

of their next step at a higher level. Students are serviced by career sessions either in group or individual meetings often self-referred or referred by MCAST support services. Outreach services have increased through the delivery of 28 workshops in different satellite Institutes and reaching out more to the needs of foreign students through group meetings and several activities.

Student Liaison

During the academic year 2017/18, 23 students contacted the Student Liaison Office with diverse motives, the majority of which to seek financial assistance. Eight students were helped financially through the Help Me Succeed Fund. They were provided with hairdressing equipment, safety shoes, goggles and boiler suit, books and a Health and Safety course required by the study programme which they were following. The cases were individually assessed and students assisted according to their individual needs.

Other requests came from direct liaison with the respective Institute or Department such as Apprenticeship or Stipends. Students also requested course guidance help from this Office.

Aġenzija Żgħażaġh Youth Hub

The Youth Hub at MCAST offers a safe environment where young people can relax, play indoor games and meet the youth worker who is always ready to assist and give support.

Various activities were organized during the academic year 2017/18, namely campaigns including Organ Donation, EU Opportunities and Gender Equality, the Annual Indoor Games Tournament, the launch of the Youth Film Festival, Educational and Informative talks delivered by professional guest speakers, and other events linked to International Days observed by the UN.

Well-being Support Services Department

The Well-being Support Services Department has continued to build on the concept of a multi-disciplinary response to the psychosocial, emotional, mental health issues that MCAST students and staff members encounter. The Student Support Services Department is made up of the Director, a Senior Counsellor, three Counsellors, a part-time Counsellor in Gozo, an Administrative Officer and Student Support Services Administrator. Ten Institute Student Support Services Coordinators carry out related psychosocial work in their respective Institutes.

Throughout the academic year 2017/18 the management of the Well-being Support Services Department oversaw that the department's strategic direction was being followed and ensured a smooth running of the clinical domain. The Director carried out clinical supervision with all the practitioners and Coordinators and provided support and direction to the core team. The Director also reviewed the department's operational systems including forms, guidelines, policies and other documentation to ensure that these were in line with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The Department further consolidated relationships with external entities. Meetings and discussions with the Commissioner of Mental Health were introduced. Other outside entities included the Mental Health



Student Support Services staff training on 'Awareness of mediation skills used in an academic environment' delivered by the Probation and Parole Department



Members of staff at the Student Support Services Department

Services, the Drug Squad, the Malta Police Force, the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Richmond Foundation, the Probation and Parole Department, YMCA Homeless and the University of Malta.

The counselling ambience was further enhanced and another therapy room/ office was created to cater for the increase in practitioners.

The following is a list of the main services offered and duties carried out by the Department throughout the academic year under review:

- a. Monitoring of Action Plan 2017/18 and formulating Action Plan for 2018/19.
- b. Promotion of the visibility of the services through induction sessions with students, distribution of promotion flyers and bookmarks, meetings, consultations and presentations.
- c. Outreach with students included other activities organised for a total of 1,217 students. These covered topics on domestic violence, anger management, addiction, communication and group dynamics as well as familiarisation with the therapeutic process.
- d. Outreach with staff included training with Senior Management, the MCAST Pastoral Care Team and MCAST Security Staff.
- e. Ensuring the efficiency of services through the referral system, vetting and dissemination of cases, immediate response to crisis, related meetings, consultations, follow-up sessions and database record-keeping. The therapeutic work was carried out by all practitioners at Paola Main Campus, all Satellite Institutes and Gozo Campus.
- f. Weekly case overviews and client distribution meetings were held with all the practitioners.
- g. Logging of crisis and sensitive cases for accountability purposes and efficient follow-ups as needed.
- h. Diverse Continuous Professional Development training was organised by the Department and certified by MCAST Registrar in conjunction with external agencies/professionals.
- i. Eight team-building sessions and Departmental Evaluation.
- j. A departmental Annual Report was compiled at the end of the academic year. This also included the Department's statistics and their analysis, issues encountered in therapy with students and staff, as well as the way forward.

Institutes of Technology and Applied Sciences

During 2017/18, the Office of the Deputy Principal Institutes of Technology and Applied Sciences, incorporating the Institute of Applied Sciences, the Institute of Engineering and Transport and the Institute of Information and Communication Technology focused on strengthening the contact with partners from industry, rationalising courses to consolidate provision and listening to students' voices.

Visits to 12 different industries, particularly related to electrical, electronics, mechanical, automotive engineering as well as heritage conservation and restoration were held during the academic year 2017/18. The College gained feedback in relation to the effectiveness of the MQF Level 4 courses, their relevance to industry needs and their long-term sustainability. The feedback was gained through several meetings and discussions with the top management of the industries concerned.

Meetings with student representatives from all the six Institutes as well as from the Gozo Campus were held in order to obtain feedback from students. A special meeting was held for all student representatives at the ESPLORA with the aim of fostering inter-institute collaboration at student level. This half-day activity was held with the financial assistance of Aurobindo, through a Memorandum of Understanding that exists between the company and MCAST.

Institute of Applied Sciences

During the academic year 2017/18 the Institute of Applied Sciences launched the Northumbria University Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing Studies. This three-year full-time degree programme provides students with the necessary competencies and qualifications required to register as a Level 1 nurse in Malta and across all EU member states. Academic nursing staff from Northumbria University travelled regularly to Malta to lecture the new cohort of students, working alongside the Institute staff.

Apart from the wide range of full-time courses run at the Institute, the Institute ran several bespoke part-time courses, such as the MQF Level 5 Certificate in Health Practice, the MQF Level 4 Certificate in Phlebotomy, the MQF Level 4 Certificate in Decontamination Science and the MQF Level 5 Higher Diploma in Physiological Measurements. These courses were run in collaboration with governmental entities such as the Health Department.

The Water Research and Training Centre within the Institute organized an Annual Water Conference entitled 'The Science and Creativity in Water' and involved external participants from several entities such as the Water Services Corporation, the Malta Business Bureau and Cranfield University of the UK. The conference focused on three main themes: Science and Sustainability of Water, Water Enterprise and Water Innovation. A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between MCAST and the Malta Business Bureau on this occasion. The Water Research Training Centre was also invited to present and discuss greywater recycling as well as to discuss the green roof project at the Global Water Partnership-AlterAqua event. During the same academic year, students following the Advanced Diploma in Food Technology worked in collaboration with a local craft beer manufacturer and MBO Life Science of the Netherlands to produce a beer which was subsequently chosen as the official Valletta 2018 Craft Beer. The Institute was also involved in different areas of research via several projects. These were:

NUMBER OF STUDENTS THAT ATTENDING THE BESPOKE PART-TIME COURSES

Certificate in Health Practice	15
Certificate in Phlebotomy	13
Certificate in Decontamination Science	5
Higher Diploma in Physiological Measurements	5

- SMIRES — Science and Management of Intermittent Rivers and Ephemeral Streams;
- DNAqua-Net "Developing new genetic tools for bioassessment of aquatic ecosystems in Europe";
- OPPV (Offshore Passive Photovoltaic), Fusion project (R&I-2013-023 – OPPVs);
- PINE (Practical Innovative Nature Education);
- Erasmus+ project (2017-3-MT01-KA205-038314);
- DIVERCROP - Land system dynamics in the Mediterranean basin across scales as relevant indicator for species diversity and local food systems;
- ReNature: Promoting research excellence in nature-based solutions for innovation, sustainable economic growth and human well-being in Malta.

The Centre for Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences

Housed within the Institute of Applied Science is a very active Centre for Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences. Throughout the year 2017/18, the Centre embarked on a review of the MQF Level 3 Diploma in Horticulture which is now made up of 4 separate awards which can be chosen in isolation or as a combination. This was done to cater for potential students wanting to study only more specialized subjects to further their personal and professional development in the sector. This was done after various continuous requests from industrial stakeholders.

A number of students participated in ERASMUS visits and spent 11 weeks working in various farms, clinics, stables, in a number of countries, whilst a group of lecturers accompanied students to the VIV Livestock Fair – an international fair showcasing the latest technologies in livestock production.

The Centre's working relationship with the various stakeholders in the sector has been strengthened. This has been done through continuous bi- and multi-lateral meetings. The Centre was also involved in the Horizon 2020 project entitled FOWARIM – a €1 million Horizon 2020 project that is seeking to enhance the research capacity of MCAST staff and other stakeholders in the use of water in agriculture. This is being done together with the Directorate of Agriculture and in collaboration with Italian, British, Spanish and Belgian partners. The Centre also submitted three

applications for funding under different EU project calls. These included an application for a water in agriculture project under the European Neighbourhood Instrument call, an aquaponics related project under the LIFE (Financial Instrument for the Environment) call and an urban agriculture project under the ERASMUS call.

The Centre launched the Malta Small-Scale Fisheries Network that was established with the aim of discussing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Maltese small-scale fishing sector, and to seek possible strategies for the development of small-scale fisheries within the framework of the blue economy. The Centre also helped in the coordination of slots for the Futur Kreattiv documentary series, in which were featured various past and current Centre students talking about their educational journey and the respective career opportunities in the various sectors.

Institute of Engineering and Transport

The academic year 2017/18 was a year of restructuring and consolidation for the Institute of Engineering and Transport. Major effort was expended in a bid to improve the structure of several courses from an operational and curricular point of view.

An important component of the restructuring process consisted of re-organising the MQF Level 4 courses to run on 3 years, rather than 2 years. This was done after extensive engagement with Industry, lecturing staff and students. Having the course set on 3 years meant that the students will be better trained and will be in a position to assimilate the technical content more effectively. This change was conducted in all of the Institute's MQF Level 4 courses. This major adjustment was also coupled with consolidation processes in the degree courses at MQF Level 6 and in the MQF Level 4 Electrical and Electronics course.

This extensive exercise started with the design and setting up of a new MQF Level 4 Industrial Electronics course where six separate and distinct courses were combined in one course. This led to the development of the Advanced Diploma in Industrial Electronics which is a new MQF Level 4 Advanced Diploma focusing on the design, manufacturing and utilisation of electronics technology in industrial settings. To cater for the individual requirements of each student a number of electives were designed to be selected in the third year of the course. The degree courses offered by this Institute were also consolidated into three, rather than five BSc degree courses while

retaining the specialisation option as necessary by each student. Analogous consolidation was also carried out in the Civil and Construction Engineering Diplomas, where the two courses were combined into one course with electives, thereby making the programme more attractive to students and more sustainable in the medium term.

Another course which saw major restructuring was the Advanced Diploma in Electrical Systems. This course was totally restructured under the supervision of the Regulator for Energy and Water Services (REWS) to be in line with requirements for wireman's Authorisation A&B. This means that students who are successful in this course will be fully trained to certify industrial installations rated at up to 300A TPN.

The academic year 2017/18 was also a year of preparation for new courses which were planned to start in the academic year 2018/2019. One of the courses prepared was the new BSc in Quantity Surveying, which was launched after extensive feedback from Industry. Since buildings are becoming more technologically advanced, the profession of the Quantity Surveyor is becoming more central to the design and building process.

The Diploma in Aircraft Maintenance was another course which started in 2017/18. This course was designed as a one year course to act as the first step for students wanting to take a step in the aviation sector.

The maritime sector was also a vibrant sector in terms of activity within the Institute. In conjunction with City of Glasgow College and the Malta Maritime Forum, a new project called ProCrew was set up. The scope of this project was to create an offering of three course structures for the superyacht industry. These

structures catered for careers in the deck, engineering and hotel areas.

Towards the end of the year 2017/18, the Institute was involved in the planning of the launching of courses abroad, half way around the globe, in Kazakhstan. This consisted of an Award in Electrical Systems at MQF Level 4.

During the academic year 2017/18 works on the Institute's new building continued with special focus on the transfer of the Naxxar Building and Construction facilities to Paola.

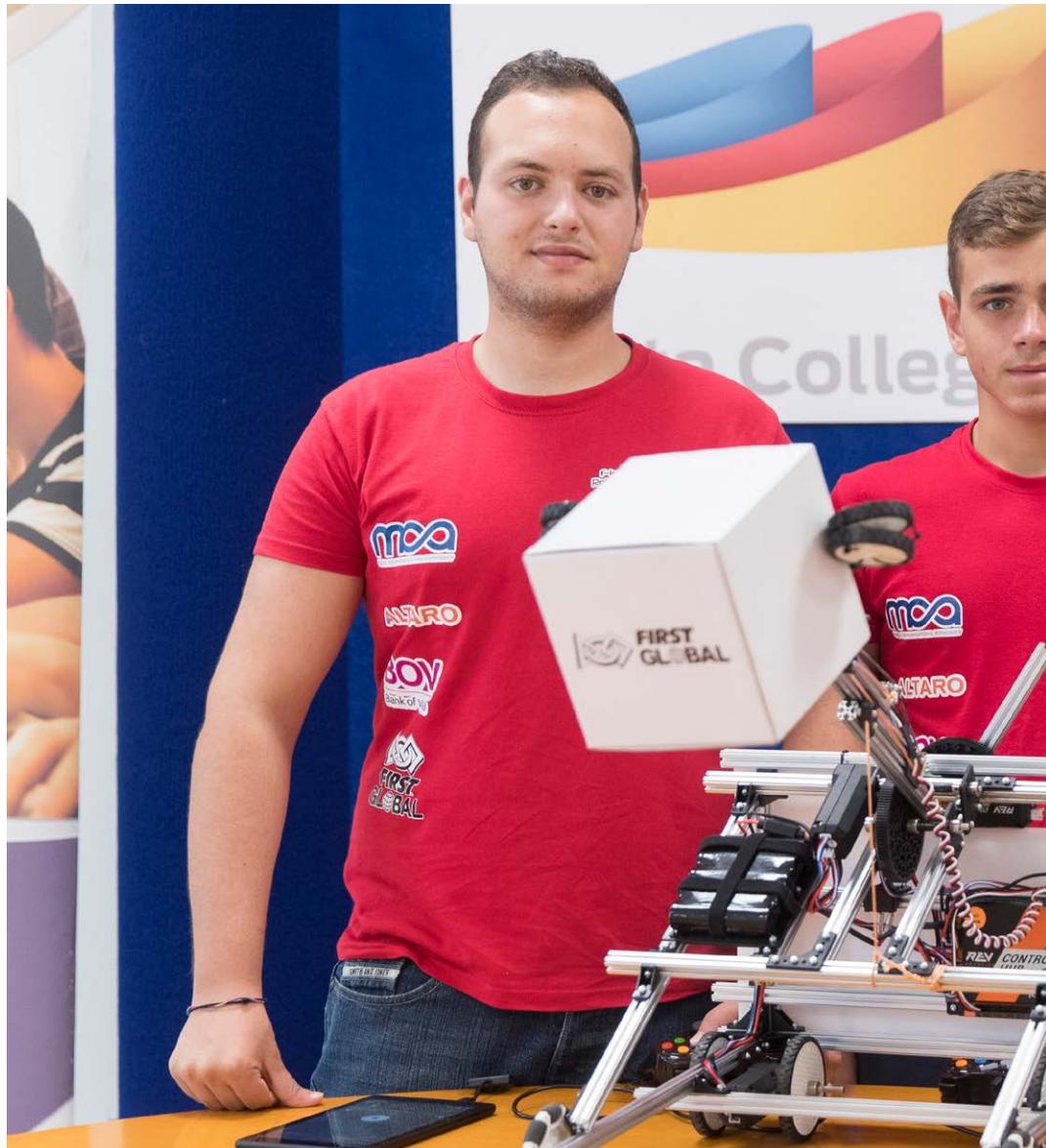
Institute of Information and Communication Technology

During the academic year 2017/18, the Institute of Information and Communication Technology participated in a number of activities together with other stakeholders such as the E-Skills Malta Foundation to organise Code Week and also the Ministry for Education and Employment to contribute to the Malta Robotics Olympiad. The events were part of the 2017 European Code Week which is celebrated in October all around Europe and during which ICT professionals raise awareness and motivate the general public to learn how to build mobile apps, websites and also encourage youngsters to learn how to code free of charge.

In order to attract more female students to choose a career in ICT, the Institute organised a Boot Camp on how to build a website with a group of Form 2 students from St. Joseph Middle School, Paola.

A team from the Institute attended the international robotics competition, First Global, which was held in Mexico City in August 2018. It was an excellent experience for the team as they had the opportunity to collaborate with other countries and compete to solve challenges related to renewable energy while promoting the choice of STEM subjects amongst youngsters.

The Institute also had great support from industry to host 43 degree students to carry out an internship during their second year of study. This was possible because industry has recognised the high level of technical skills that MCAST students possess. These skills are in high demand to fill in the jobs available in the ICT sector. In fact most students are offered employment opportunities after their internship experience.



At the international robotics competition First Global which was held in Mexico City



Meetings with student representatives from all the six Institutes as well as from the Gozo Campus were held in order to obtain feedback from students. A special meeting was held for all student representatives at Esplora with the aim of fostering inter-institute collaboration at student level. This half-day activity was held with the financial assistance of Aurobindo through a memorandum of understanding that exists between the company and MCAST.



The most striking feature of the "LXX" script is
the fact that it has been found in such a
wide variety of localities. It has been
found in the ruins of the great cities and
in the most remote and isolated places.
The discovery of these sites combined with the
fact that the fragments have been
found in the same localities has convinced
many scholars that the "LXX" script
was used by a single people and that
it was the same people who used the
"LXX" script in the most remote and
isolated places.



The "LXX" script is a
very ancient script
which has been found
in the ruins of the
great cities and in
the most remote and
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Institutes of Arts and Social Sciences

During 2017/18, the Office of the Deputy Principal Arts and Social Sciences, incorporating the Institute for the Creative Arts, the Institute of Community Services and the Institute of Business Management and Commerce, has been very active on different levels. Not only were a number of new study programmes launched, but there was also synergy between the different Institutes on various levels with a marked increase in engagement with society at large.

Institute for the Creative Arts

The academic year 2017/18 saw a number of diverse and significant developments at the Institute for the Creative Arts. It was actively engaged in projects supported by the Valletta 2018 initiative, most being life cases which formed an integral part of its programmes of study.

Chief amongst these were the participation in the projection mapping for the launch of Valletta as the European Capital of Culture, participation in Action Planet with Fiona Hornstein and Spazju Kreattiv which cut across many departments, and the involvement in the production of Giuseppe Verdi's Aida by Dutch opera company Opera Spanga, both in Malta and in Spanga (The Netherlands). This was the culmination of a project that was born some 36 months before in The Netherlands, with a view to MCAST, Friesland College and Opera Spanga collaborating in a Valletta /Leeuwarden 2018 project. All departments of the Institute for the Creative Arts (around 200 students) were involved, and the collaboration extended to include MCAST's Institute of Community Services.

Also within the context of Valletta 2018, the Institute took its end-of-year festival from Mosta to Valletta, where students celebrated their work and participated in various events in important sites including the Bibliotheca, the Archbishop's Palace, Teatru Manoel, Palazzo Ferreria and Spazju Kreattiv. Through this initiative, ICA renewed its collaboration with Spazju Kreattiv so that, in the future, festival editions would take place there. As in previous editions, the festival was supported by Arts Council Malta as well by other collaborators including a number of NGOs, government entities and private companies.



MCAST students with Maltese fashion designers Charles and Ron preparing the costumes for the production of Giuseppe Verdi's Aida

Other significant landmarks related to students' projects were the launch of the Coca-Cola bottle designed by BA Graphic Design students, a project undertaken in collaboration with General Soft Drinks, and the participation in Junior College's Holqa International Youth Arts Festival, through which the production of students following the Advanced Diploma in Performing Arts won an

award.

Further developments took place in other programmes such as the Advanced Diploma in Cultural Heritage Skills, together with the BAs in Journalism, and Game Art and Visual Design. Work on a new BA in the Performing Arts was also carried out in preparation for applications in summer 2018.

Institute of Community Services

In 2017/18, the Institute of Community Services launched a number of new courses including a BA (Hons) in Sport, Exercise and Health and an MQF Level 3 Diploma in Foundation Studies for Security, Enforcement and Protection, opening a new avenue for students wishing to pursue a career in the disciplined forces.

2017/18 has been an interesting year for the Institute of Community Services with emphasis placed on forging

stronger ties which ensure that the courses reflect the needs of industry. Twenty-five hairdressing and beauty students were offered placements. They also had the possibility to practise in MCAST's salons which are open to the general public. Students attending this Institute engaged in several events and activities within the community through activities involving areas such as hairdressing and beauty services, sports and care.

Every week, MCAST Hair and Beauty salons received around 30 clients at the Hair Salon and around 25 clients at the Beauty Salon.

Institute of Business Management and Commerce

The academic year 2017/18 was characterised by change and preparation for new challenges. Throughout the year, the units of two main degrees offered by the Institute were reviewed in order to make them more relevant to industry. These amendments were done following a number of consultation meetings with industry across different sectors. The Institute of Business Management and Commerce consolidated its MQF Level 4 apprenticeships, enabling 290 students to learn and gain valuable experience at the place of work. During 2017/18 the Institute started offering the ACCA accountancy courses and at the other end of the academic spectrum launched two new MQF Level 1 programmes, one in Hospitality and one in Retail.

ESF 02.058 Adding Value: Nurturing Learning Journeys

The year under review also saw the start of the implementation of ESF 02.058 Adding Value: Nurturing Learning Journeys with the aim of developing innovative support structures to increase student engagement while making learning more fun. The provision of student mentors started in 2018 where student mentors supported students following study programmes up to MQF Level 3 with the aim of encouraging them to maintain motivation for further studies while tackling concerns that might be hindering their learning process.

Piloting of Level 2 Awards

A number of Level 2 Awards, which are typically shorter than the full qualifications, were also piloted. These courses were piloted half way through the academic year so that they offered students who wished to transfer to

shorter courses, the possibility to do so. The Awards, which were 12 weeks long, covered Retail Sales, Manufacturing of Fibreglass Products and Production Operations and focused on a strong element of work-based learning, offering more possibilities for students who find full qualification programmes too challenging, to study at their own pace. The nature of the courses target employability skills which are essential within the labour market. The substantial work experience within the Awards, gives the opportunity to students to engage at the place of work gaining a solid stepping stone to employment in the sector, thus enabling these young people at a particularly vulnerable time in their life, to be equipped with skills for employment and to build contacts with the workforce.

MQF Level 1 Skills Kits Programme

The MQF Level 1 Skills Kits Programme was also ongoing during this year. This cross-curricular programme consists of short bite-size courses covering several vocational areas as well as Personal Skills, Employability Skills and Functional

Skills. Skills Kits offer students the opportunity to create their own programme of studies, selecting topics which are of interest to them, and to study at their own pace. Moreover, a number of Skills Kits were also delivered as part of outreach programmes to particular cohorts from secondary schools. Thus, there was an increase in awareness of the value of vocational education, exposing potential students to the College and increasing their interest in education through the Skills Kits' hands-on component.

Outreach with Secondary Schools

Outreach within secondary schools was also further consolidated through close collaboration with the MCAST Partner Schools whereby in 2018, Year 9 and 10 secondary school students at St Benedict College, Kirkop Secondary, had the opportunity to take up Performing Arts, ICT and Engineering MCAST vocational units. Moreover, within the Education Hub, another MCAST Partner School, teachers were trained to start delivering the Skills Kits to students at the Education Hub.

Award Ceremony at St Benedict College, Kirkop Secondary, MCAST Partner School



MCAST GOZO Campus



The academic year 2017/18 saw the continuation of the previous years' trend to consolidate the VET provision on the island of Gozo through the delivery of a wide spectrum of courses, both in terms of vocational areas as well as MQF levels.

In 2017/18, two new full-time programmes were offered for the first time at the Gozo Campus. The Diploma in Business is intended to provide an internal progression route to the existing Level 4 programmes in Accounting and Financial Services. On the other hand, the Advanced Diploma in Health Sciences is deemed to be very much in line with developments in the health sector in Gozo.

In 2017/18, four academic members of staff from the Gozo Campus participated in the Erasmus KA1 programme mobilities, visiting a number of Further/Higher Education institutions in Ireland and Serbia. Three staff members visited the Colaiste Ide College for Further Education in Dublin, Ireland and one staff member visited the University of Nis in Serbia. The objectives of these visits were the observation of different pedagogical and training approaches and assessment methods adopted at the foreign institutions, sharing of best practices, possibly adopting the new insights and knowledge obtained from the mobility experience, and job shadowing.

Two staff development sessions were held in 2017/18. In November 2017, a seminar on Domestic Violence was held for students and members of staff at the Gozo Campus. It covered various diverse aspects, including Domestic Violence, Equality and Gender Based Violence in Youth Relations, Homelessness in Malta

and Gozo as well as Dating Violence. In March 2018, a development session was delivered by the MCAST Curriculum Department, namely by Dr Nadia Vassallo and Mr Kenny Muscat. The training session covered various aspects, including Assessment in VET, Feedback in Assessment, Verification towards Quality Assessment and Dissemination of Best Practices.

Graduation ceremonies for students successfully completing their programmes of study at the MCAST Gozo Campus in 2017/18 were held in March 2018. 125 students were presented with awards in recognition of their efforts.

During the academic year 2017/18, a number of events were organized at the Gozo Campus. These included the Girl2Leader campaign, Information Meetings in feeder schools for Form 5 / Year 11 students, an Open Day for Form 5 / Year 11 students attending all Church and State Secondary Schools in Gozo, the Don't Waste Waste Campaign, the I Choose – a career choice event, the MSSF Football tournament, an Online and Social Media Safety seminar, Spring Days events at Golden Bay, a Hop-on Hop-off activity in collaboration with Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, talk by EPSO, Dar Malta and the MCAST EU Careers Ambassador to promote internships, and a talk by the Gozo Association for the Deaf.

Throughout 2017/18, the MCAST Gozo Campus continued to support the Gozo College Secondary School in the delivery of its Core Curriculum Programme (CCP) and Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) through the provision of our physical (workshops and equipment) and human resources.



MCAST Gozo Campus students in the Gender-based violence awareness event held in conjunction with the Gozo Ministry



Research and Innovation

During the academic year 2017/18, the Office of the Deputy Principal Research and Innovation continued to develop professional higher education across MCAST's six Institutes. From an academic perspective a new suite of five generic Bachelor programmes was created to complement the existing 40-odd degrees, allowing for students to build a portfolio of qualifications with a dedicated focus but diverse content. At Masters Level, work proceeded under the project ESF 03.003 for the launch of eight new Masters programmes, all focusing on areas relating to sustainability of national resources and activities.

The Post Graduate Certificate in Research attracted 18 lecturers from various Institutes. This will enable the lecturers to sharpen their research techniques as well as provide better guidance to students carrying out their dissertation.

Applied Research and Innovation Centre

This Office launched the Applied Research and Innovation Centre (ARIC) within MCAST. Through research and innovation, the College is aiming at enhancing MCAST's research potential in specifically identified fields and enriching its research critical mass. The MCAST Applied Research and Innovation direction is anchored in the premise of making existing structures more flexible and fostering their ability to innovate, react and respond. Three main underlying pillars of the Centre are:

1. A focus on key, select research thrusts leading to smart specializations.
2. Creating and working within one or more Knowledge Centres/R&I Ecosystems, Centres for Smart Specialization, and peer learning through international networks

such as ASEF, Eurashe and UAS4Europe.

3. Developing and propagating new research, innovation and pedagogical and andragogic methodologies and technologies.

There are two main concepts that fuel the Applied Research and Innovation Centre. These are: 'What' constitutes research, and similarly, what constitutes innovation? Research aims to establish new knowledge or explore the feasibility of a new or improved technology, product, process, service or solution, whilst innovation aims at producing designs for the application of new, altered or improved products, processes or services, and for the vital piloting and dissemination of these innovative solutions.

'Why' the need for Applied Research and Innovation? Research and innovation aim to provide MCAST with:

1. New knowledge, not reproduction;
2. A solving of real world problems;

3. a process of learning, translating into new teaching;
4. A cycle of collaborating and disseminating findings, solutions and new understandings. This shall be achieved by enabling motivated lecturers through research hours, working within the Institutes, and driven/supported by the Centre. This should have a multiplier effect whereby senior academics guide juniors who then enable students.

This internal capacity is also used to acquire externally-funded EU research projects that would significantly add to the funding volume. This shall allow for a combined top-down, largely smart specialization themes as well as EU project-driven research, with bottom-up curiosity-driven research that has the potential to open unexpected new fields of research and innovation. MCAST also plans to have strong pre-award and post-award support teams that assist in, and take on, part of the ownership of the research projects.

Partnerships Office

During the year 2017/18, the Partnerships Office signed 14 new Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and 7 agreements that help to increase the cooperation between MCAST and industry as well as with various other educational and non-educational institutions.

The Partnerships Office continued to expand its network of contacts with local and international industry in order to attract more business for MCAST Gateway to Industry especially in terms of high-level technical training. The Partnerships Office has also developed and enhanced its UNESCO-UNEVOC Centre for TVET in Malta

and has participated and contributed towards the development of TVET internationally. The Office has signed 21 new Erasmus+ Inter Institutional Agreements with EU based TVET institutions and Universities. It has pursued its contribution to the UNESCO UNEVOC TVET network both on a European as well as on a global level. The local centre at MCAST has also been entrusted to lead UNESCO UNEVOC initiatives.

In addition, the Partnerships Office has contributed in helping MCAST join the European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training (EVBB) and the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EFVET) networks.



MCAST signs a memorandum of understanding with C.V. Raman Group (India)



Library and Learning Resource Centre

In 2017/18 the Library and Learning Resource Centre retained the provision of its services for students, staff and lecturers as in previous years, both on the Main Campus in Paola and in its Satellite Institutes, including the Gozo Campus in Ghajnsielem, the Centre for Maritime Studies in Kalkara, the Centre of Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences in Qormi, the Institute of Engineering and Transport - Building and Construction Engineering in Naxxar and the Institute for the Creative Arts in Mosta.

When it was officially known that the Building and Construction Engineering Centre will move to its new building at the Main Campus in Paola, the Library personnel carried out a thorough stock-taking of the resources available in Naxxar to ensure that single copy resources are stored on the shelves of the Paola library, while second copies were sent to the storage rooms for future use. The migration of the Naxxar library to the Main Library was carried out by all the Library personnel and completed successfully by mid-summer 2018.

During 2017/18, the Library managed to purchase 85% of the resources that were

suggested by various Institutes in view of their new curricular demands, with specific focus on the sector of performing arts for the Institute for Creative Arts.

One of the major targets set for the Library as part of the MCAST Master Plan was to plan the migration from its current location on the Main Campus to an area adjacent to the Institute of Business Management and Commerce as well as close to the newly established Student House. This major task included the planning of the use of existing furniture suitable for the new library, the purchasing of new furniture, and the planning out of the layout of each storey of the new library to ensure that the resources and their relevant technological support systems are in place for all library users.

In the meantime, great importance was given to create a more suitable environment for study groups at Floor 3 in the current library. The Library was welcoming an average minimum of six different study groups on a daily basis through a booking system. The collaboration of both lecturers and students with this new procedure attracted more students than before.

There was also an increase in the provision of a specialized service for MQF Level 6 students. The number of undergraduates making reference to

and reading dissertations stored in the Main Library increased notably. Also, students were more frequently assisted in small groups by individual librarians and were given explanations about effective research methods in the LLRC, especially in view of the increasing number of online resources.

As in previous years, the Main Library kept hosting students who formed part of the Learning Support Unit, where their lecturers provided them with individual and small team sessions to consolidate their learning journey at MCAST.

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 COMPLETE
IBMC	11	11
ICT	7	31
ICA	9	27
CAAS	1	6
IAS	2	4
IBCE	3	6
ICS CARE	5	17
ICS HAIR	9	26
ICS SPORTS	4	18
IET IEEE, IME	8	31
GOZO	10	3
TOTAL	69	180





International Office

The International Office continued in its operation to increase the participation of MCAST students and members of staff in the ERASMUS+ programmes in both Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET). These international mobilities concerned educational, training and working programmes under Erasmus+ and other EU-funded projects. During the year more than 200 MCAST students and of staff members travelled overseas to gain knowledge through training and/or experience through work placements. A similar number of European students visited Malta and were assigned work placement opportunities in local industry by the MCAST International Office. Various delegations from EU Universities and Colleges also visited MCAST as it continued to expand its international network of educational contacts through the International Office



Enrolment and Certification

The Office of the Deputy Principal - Registrar is responsible for several functions at MCAST including Local and International Student Admissions and Records, Examinations, Certification and Stipends.

Admissions

During the College Year 2017-2018 the Admissions Office received a total of 7,325 applications of which 3,265 were received from new candidates while 1,429 were received from students progressing to a higher level course. 2,158 applications were received from students continuing the second or subsequent year of their studies while 473 were repeating a unit or a number of units of the course in order to conclude their qualification. 183 candidates were admitted as mature students. 460

APPLICATION TYPE	TOTAL
New applicants	3,265
Progressing to a higher level course	1,429
Continuing subsequent year of course	2,158
Repeating units	473
Grand total	7,325

foreign students from 69 different countries were studying at the College. The total number of registered full-time students throughout the year amounted to 6,733.

Records

This Office is responsible for the issuing and filing of all records related to the academic performance of students as well as letters of reference, transcripts of achievement and other academic references. It also keeps records

of all Council of Institutes, Boards of Studies, Review Boards, Admissions Board and Corporate Appeals Board Meetings.

Another important function includes the maintenance and publication of statistics that are continuously required internally and externally.

RECORDS ISSUED	NUMBER
Transcripts generated upon request	47
Reference letters	49
MQF Level rating letters	80
Council of Institutes meeting's minutes	9
Degree Ratification Board meetings' minutes	9

Courses

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the publication of the annual Prospectus. In 2017/18 the College offered 180 courses distributed across all Institutes and the Gozo Campus as follows:

INSTITUTE	FOUNDATION COLLEGE	TECHNICAL COLLEGE	UNIVERSITY COLLEGE	GRAND TOTAL
Gozo Campus	13	10	2	25
Institute for the Creative Arts	6	7	9	22
Institute of Applied Sciences	8	8	8	24
Institute of Business Management and Commerce	5	6	4	15
Institute of Community Services	10	4	4	18
Institute of Engineering and Transport	21	25	14	60
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	3	4	5	12
Pathway to Independent Living (Gozo)	1			1
Pathway to Independent Living (Malta)	2			2
Cross-Curricular (Skills Kits course)	1			1
Totals	70	64	46	180

During the same year, 12 new courses were introduced, namely:

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE
AS6-04-17	Northumbria University Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing Studies
AS6-05-17	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Environmental Health
CA4-02-17	MCAST Advanced Diploma in Graphic Design and Interactive Media
CA4-04-17	MCAST Advanced Diploma in Photography
CA4-A1-17	MCAST Advanced Diploma in Fashion and Retail
CS3-05-17	MCAST Diploma in Foundation Studies for Security, Enforcement and Protection
CS6-02-17	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Sport, Exercise and Health
ET1-01-17	MCAST Introductory Certificate in Engineering
MI3-01-17	MCAST Diploma in Deck Operations

New Courses offered in Gozo

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE
BC3-01-14G	MCAST Diploma in Business
AS4-04-15G	MCAST Advanced Diploma in Health Sciences
CS5-02-16G	MCAST Higher Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education

Registrations

In 2017/18, students were registered across the different MQF levels as follows:

	A&B	1	2	3	4	5	6	EASA	IMO	GRAND TOTAL
Cross-Curricular (MCAST Skills Kits)		20								20
Gozo Campus			27	51	121	10				209
Institute for the Creative Arts		8	60	131	399		386			984
Institute of Applied Sciences			29	70	310	1	206			616
Institute of Business Management and Commerce		15	64	151	560	12	344			1146
Institute of Community Services		12	150	457	452	186	116			1373
Institute of Engineering and Transport			124	204	496	12	295	58	67	1256
Institute of Information and Communication Technology		8	86	139	479		389			1101
Pathway to Independent Living (Gozo)	6									6
Pathway to Independent Living (Malta)	17	5								22
Grand Total	23	68	540	1203	2817	221	1736	58	67	6733

Examinations

The Examinations Office processes all registrations, fee handling, examinations and result management of all such students according to the regulations stipulated by the respective awarding body. In 2017/18 the number of examination sessions offered to students with foreign awarding bodies are as follows:

INSTITUTION	NO OF STUDENT EXAMINATION/CBE SESSIONS
Association of Accounting Technicians	557
Chartered Institute of Insurance	39
Transport Malta	96
Total	692

As from 2017/18 MCAST started offering ACCA-X Computer Based examinations while the same year marked the last of the MCAST-BTEC programme certifications with the final four candidates graduating in Building and Construction Engineering. A new system for Basic Seamanship and Boat handling examinations was established in conjunction with Transport Malta and the MCAST Centre for Maritime Studies within the Institute of Engineering and Transport. 1,572 candidates sat for these examinations during the year under review.

Certification

At the end of the academic year 2017/18, 2618 students successfully completed their programme of study and graduated. These students were presented with certificates during the ceremonies held between December

2018 and March 2019. These ceremonies were all held on MCAST premises in Malta and Gozo.

A breakdown by MQF level and Institute can be found hereunder:

	A&B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	EASA	IMO	Grand Total
Centre for Professional Development							36	18			54
Cross-Curricular		26									26
Gozo Campus			22	35	47	3					107
Institute for the Creative Arts		6	20	71	127	2	105				331
Institute of Applied Sciences			17	43	105	3	38				206
Institute of Business Management and Commerce		11	19	71	171	4	95	12			383
Institute of Community Services		3	65	201	161	297	25				752
Institute of Engineering and Transport			72	119	134	18	51	2	6	13	415
Institute of Information and Communication Technology		4	41	93	116	2	69	4			329
Pathway to Independent Living (Gozo)	3										3
Pathway to Independent Living (Malta)	8	4									12
Grand Total	11	54	256	633	861	329	419	36	6	13	2618

Apart from processing the 2,618 certificates for these graduates, the Office also issued 1,758 certificates to students who successfully completed an evening course and a further 413 candidates were certified for part-time Maritime courses. MCAST also certified 151 candidates through its Partner Secondary Schools and 41 candidates in Assistive Technology.

Diploma and Certificate supplements were issued to all candidates who successfully completed an MCAST accredited full-time programme of study.

Short Courses	1758
Maritime Certificates	413
Partner Schools Awards	151
Assistive Technology	41
Total	2363

Stipends Office

The Stipends Office is responsible for receiving and vetting each application in liaison with the Stipends Maintenance Grants Board (SMGB) to determine eligibility according to SMGB Guidelines. During 2017/18, 5,252 students were issued with a stipend at any one time and a total of €4,867,239 were disbursed through the SMGB.

Out of the 5,252 students, 572 also applied for and received supplementary allowance. Following the 2017 Budget measures, more students qualified to receive a maintenance grant, while single parents received also an extra grant.

During the same academic year, 864 students were registered as apprentices at any one time. A total of €382,585 was paid to apprentices and students on work placements from July to September 2018.

Over 700 refund requests were issued to students who terminated their studies prematurely and had to refund their maintenance grant according to stipulated regulations. Around 420 requests for overpayment were issued for the academic year 2017/18 up to end December 2018 amounting to €108,675, out of which €95,185 were recovered up to end December 2018. Thus 88% of funds were recovered.

Programme Funding

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for registering programmes for funding under the Get Qualified scheme. In 2017/18, 65 new programmes were approved, with 534 candidates benefiting from tax rebates under the approved programmes.



Office of the Deputy Principal - Administration



In 2017/18 the HR department played an important role in bringing to a close the Collective Agreement for Administrative, Clerical and Support Staff which MCAST signed with the UHM – Voice of the Workers on 8th March 2018. This Collective Agreement provided for considerable increases in the salaries of the categories of employees represented by the UHM, and for more flexible working hours which should help employees attain a better work-life balance.

The HR department participated also in the negotiations leading to the conclusion, with the Malta Union of Teachers, of the Collective Agreement for Lecturing Staff, Learning Support Educators, Technicians and Student Support Services personnel. This Collective Agreement, which was signed on 27th July 2018, was instrumental in achieving substantial salary increases for these employees, together with better resources and more favourable working conditions.

During 2017/18, the HR Department issued 320 calls for application for vacant positions. Of these, 103 had the purpose of filling full-time vacancies, while 217 sought to engage part-time lecturers.

As a result of these calls, MCAST recruited 88 full-time employees. 61 of these new recruits filled an academic position; the remaining 27 new employees were engaged in an administrative, clerical or support role.

Part-time lecturers recruited in

2017/18 totalled 340. Over half of these (192) were employed to teach on programmes offered to full-time students; the remaining 148 were engaged in the delivery of courses run by the MG2I.

The HR Department also processed applications for family-friendly measures. During the period under review, the highest demand was for reduced hours (a total of 50 applications, 44 of which were submitted by female employees and 6 by their male counterparts). 24 female employees and 1 male employee applied for (and were granted) parental leave, while 13 female members of staff applied for teleworking. 8 female employees and 1 male employee applied for a career break, and 7 male members of staff availed themselves of paternity leave.

The HR department also organised several training opportunities ranging from Pre-Recruitment Briefing sessions to Industrial Relations and GDPR training sessions. Other sessions had the aim of training staff in the use of the MCAST Job Portal, the on-line submission of vacation, sick and special leave applications, as well as in the performance of telephone audits.

The best attended training programme was related to Customer Care, with 115 participants, followed by the Orientation sessions attended by 80 employees, and by training in Excel and Word which attracted 30 and 25 staff members respectively.

EU Projects Office



During 2017/18, the EU Projects Office was instrumental in securing further European funds to support the academic growth of the College.

MCAST was awarded €6.5 million to implement project ESF 03.0081: Achieving Vocational Excellence Through Enhanced Work-Based Learning. The aim of this project is to consolidate MCAST's structures as an indispensable pre-requisite to address shortcomings within the context of the National Apprenticeship Schemes and Work-Based Learning (WBL).

Additionally, during the same period, MCAST was also implementing another three major projects which are funded through the European Structural Funds 2014/20. A substantial amount of activities have been contracted. MCAST benefitted from €14.4 million in EU funding by the end of December 2018. The projects include:

ERDF 09.036

MCAST Campus Master Plan: Phase 2

This project comprises the construction of three new buildings: the Building and Construction Facilities within the Institute of Engineering and Transport, the MCAST Resource Centre and the Institute of Information and Communication Technology at the MCAST Main Campus in Corradino. The project also includes a College Management Information System to complement the physical development and to optimise the efficiency of MCAST's operational procedures and processes. The value of this project is €30.7 million, of which €26.7 million had been contracted by end of 2018. Total disbursement up to end 2018 was €12 million.

The new Institute of Information and Communication Technology



ESF 02.058

Adding Value - Nurturing Learning Journeys at the MCAST Foundation College

The aim of this project is to set up state-of-the-art support structures for students with learning difficulties and individuals pertaining to vulnerable groups. During the lifetime of the project, MCAST aims to identify the typical barriers to training which socially excluded individuals encounter. As a result of this exercise, MCAST will be able to create long-term structures that can provide immediate support to vulnerable students while they are following courses at the Foundation College. The value of this project is €9.4 million of which €5.5 million have been contracted and €0.4 million disbursed by end 2018.

ESF.03.003

Development of Training Programmes at MQF level 7

The project aims to consolidate the University College's tertiary offers, specifically at MQF Level 7 courses. The value of this project is €3.3 million. The contracted amount is €2.2 million of which €2 million were disbursed by end 2018.



MCAST Gateway to Industry

As the commercial arm of MCAST the role of the MCAST Gateway to Industry (MG2I) is to support, enhance and complement the operation of the College. In 2017/18, MG2I has sought to consolidate its provision of courses in the area of training for industry and part-time, with a continuing and intensified focus on internationalisation.

As the commercial arm of MCAST, the role of the MCAST Gateway to Industry (MG2I) is to support, enhance and complement the operation of the College. In 2017/18 year, MG2I has sought to consolidate its provision of courses in the area of training for industry and part-time, with a continuing and intensified focus on internationalisation.

The portfolio of programmes offered on a part-time basis was reviewed; the most successful courses were identified and, where possible, offered as course bundles. 42 bundles were created. These benefit both the students and MG2I; by making it easier to follow multiple courses to deepen one's knowledge of a subject, MG2I maximises student engagement with the courses. There has been a 1% increase in students from 2017 to 2018. 112 new courses were added in sectors which are at the moment particularly sought-after, such as in the Maritime, Aviation and IT sectors.

The year under review also saw the creation of MCASTeens, which extended the provision of education and training at MCAST to an age group which had previously never been targeted, that of 12 to 16-year olds. 71 students participated in these programmes. Through the activities organised during this summer camp, teenagers were given a taste of the opportunities on offer at each institute within MCAST. These ranged from outdoor activities, such as raft-building and abseiling, to indoor ones, including robotics and flight simulation.

MG2I continued to focus also on public relations. The part-time courses prospectus was once again distributed in every household, and MG2I strengthened its presence on social media by increasing its following on its Facebook page by 40%. Courses were advertised on local media in an effort to cast as wide a net as possible.

The training for industry sector continued to grow, with MG2I coming into contact with both new and returning clients. MG2I has continued to explore other means of revenue generation such as renting of spaces and resources.

The strategy of internationalization continued to intensify, with over 600 international students following a variety of courses, ranging from undergraduate certificates to postgraduate diplomas.

In 2018 the graduation of the first international cohort of the Undergraduate Certificate in Care Services Management was held. There were 56 graduates. Summer 2018 was a busy period for MG2I, with both the Undergraduate Certificate in Nursing (Bridging Course) and the Postgraduate Diploma in Business and Administration being launched. The latter course was re-run in November due to popular demand. The Undergraduate Diploma in Hotel and Hospitality Management was launched for the first time in November 2018. The total number of international students at MG2I has risen to over 110 students. Internationalisation efforts have also seen MG2I extend its courses to Kazakhstan, with the creation of an offshore campus catering for 30 students who are being taught by lecturers from MCAST.



Awards Ceremony for foreign students



Indian students at MCAST
with Prof Calleja, MCAST
Principal and Mr Vella,
Manager MG21

Excerpts from the Audited Accounts

MALTA COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2018

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (Continued)

Statement of Board of Governors' Responsibilities

Clause 107 (2) of the Education Act, 1988 requires that "the Board of Governors shall ensure the proper keeping of accounts and other records concerning its operations and transactions, and shall ensure that a relative statement of accounts is prepared for each financial year."

Clause 107 (4) requires that "the Board of Governors, not later than six months from the closing of each financial year, ensure that a copy of the audited statement of accounts is sent to the Minister together with a copy of the report made by the auditor or auditors about the statement, and the Minister shall without undue delay cause such statements and reports to be laid on the Table of the House of Representatives".

Future Developments

The Group is not envisaging any changes in operating activities for the forthcoming year. The Board is positive that the Group will sustain its current operating strategies and intend to continue to operate in line with their current business plan.

The six MCAST Institutes namely the Institute of Applied Sciences, the Institute for the Creative Arts, the Institute of Engineering and Transport, the Institute of Business Management and Commerce, the Institute of Community Services, the Institute of Information and Communication Technology and the Gozo Campus will continue to provide all the technical and professional expertise towards the delivery of the programmes at MCAST. They will also continue to maintain the aim of driving forward all the areas of study under their respective responsibility. This corporate structure will enable focused strategies, which will address the specific needs of students at each level, while maintaining a healthy dialogue with all interested stakeholders in order to provide the best programmes for the needs of the local economy and society.

Events after Balance Sheet Date

No significant events have occurred after the balance sheet date which require mention in this report.

Auditors

The Auditors, PKF Malta Limited, have expressed their willingness to continue in office.

This report was approved by the Board of Governors and was signed on its behalf by:


MR. FREDERICK SCHEMBRI
President


PROFS. JAMES JOACHIM CALLEJA
Principal & CEO

16th July 2019

PKF Malta

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**

To the Board of Governors of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology

Report on the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

We have audited the individual financial statements of Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (the "College") and of the Group of which the College is the parent, set out on pages 10 to 33, which comprise the statement of financial position of the College and the Group as at 31st December 2018, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

Opinion

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as at 31 December 2018, and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the College in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in accordance with the Accountancy Profession (Code of Ethics for Warrant Holders) Directive issued in terms of the Accountancy Profession Act (Cap. 281) in Malta, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified opinion.

Material Uncertainty Related to Going Concern

We draw attention to Note 3b of the consolidated financial statements, which indicates that the Group incurred a deficit after tax of €2,867,541 during the year ended 31 December 2018 and, as of that date, the Group's current liabilities exceeded its current assets by €1,936,750. As stated in Note 3b, these events or conditions indicate that a material uncertainty exists that may cast significant doubt on the Group's ability to continue as a going concern. Nonetheless, the consolidated financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, which assumes that the Government of Malta will continue to provide the necessary funding to the Group in order to continue with its activities. Our opinion is not qualified in respect of this matter.

PKF Malta Limited • Registered Auditor • Accountancy Board Reg: AB/2/19/01
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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (Continued)**

To the Board of Governors of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology

Other Information

The Board of Governors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the report of the Board of Governors. Our opinion on the consolidated financial statements does not cover this information, including the report of the Board of Governors. In connection with our audit of the consolidated financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the consolidated financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

In addition, in light of the knowledge and understanding of the Group and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we are required to report if we have identified material misstatements in the report of the Board of Governors. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Management

The Board of Governors is responsible for the preparation of the consolidated financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with IFRS, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, the Board is responsible for assessing the College's and the Group's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the College and the Group or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these consolidated financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (Continued)**

To the Board of Governors of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements (Continued)

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the College and the Group's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the College's and the Group's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the consolidated financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the College's and the Group's to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Group to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements.
- We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with the Board of Governors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide those charged with governance with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (Continued)

To the Board of Governors of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

Under the Maltese Companies Act (Cap. 386) we are required to report to you if, in our opinion:

- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.
- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or that returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us.
- The consolidated financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns.

We have nothing to report to you in respect of these responsibilities.

This copy of the audit report has been signed by
Mr. George Mangion (Director) for and on behalf of
PKF Malta Limited
Certified Public Accountants and Registered Auditors

Office address:
No. 15, Level 3,
Mannarino Road,
Birkirkara, BKR 9080,
Malta

16th July 2019

MALTA COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2018

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

	Note	Group		College	
		2018 €	2017 €	2018 €	2017 €
Income					
Funds allocated by Government		25,583,829	24,855,399	25,583,829	24,855,399
Course fees		1,183,538	969,833	531,264	300,469
Bank interest income		365	516	91	250
Other income	4	817,943	730,085	577,044	501,853
		<u>27,585,675</u>	<u>26,555,833</u>	<u>26,692,228</u>	<u>25,657,971</u>
Expenditure					
Recurrent expenditure		(30,422,067)	(26,389,173)	(29,539,960)	(25,499,267)
Capital grants depreciation effect	5	-	-	-	-
Pension Contribution	19	(29,552)	(46,840)	(29,552)	(46,840)
		<u>(30,451,619)</u>	<u>(26,436,013)</u>	<u>(29,569,512)</u>	<u>(25,546,107)</u>
(Deficit)/Surplus before tax	6	(2,865,944)	119,820	(2,877,284)	111,864
Taxation	8	(1,597)	(155)	-	-
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year – comprehensive income		<u>(2,867,541)</u>	<u>119,665</u>	<u>(2,877,284)</u>	<u>111,864</u>

The notes on pages 15 to 33 form an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

MALTA COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2018

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As at 31 December 2018

	Note	Group		College	
		2018 €	2017 €	2018 €	2017 €
ASSETS					
Non-current assets					
Property, plant and equipment	9	14,002,766	8,065,724	14,002,766	8,065,724
Investment in subsidiary undertaking	10	-	-	1,999	1,999
Investment in associate	11	200	200	-	-
Deferred tax asset	12	700	700	-	-
		<u>14,003,666</u>	<u>8,066,624</u>	<u>14,004,765</u>	<u>8,067,723</u>
Current assets					
Trade and other receivables	13	2,392,949	1,156,322	2,453,768	1,456,964
Cash and cash equivalents	16	8,957,354	5,870,250	6,233,215	3,982,899
		<u>11,350,303</u>	<u>7,026,572</u>	<u>8,686,983</u>	<u>5,439,863</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		25,353,969	15,093,196	22,691,748	13,507,586
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES					
Capital and reserves					
Endowment capital		232,937	232,937	232,937	232,937
Other reserve	14	14,629,723	8,671,732	14,629,723	8,671,732
Accumulated surplus/(deficits)		(2,795,745)	71,796	(3,240,448)	(363,164)
Total equity		<u>12,066,915</u>	<u>8,976,465</u>	<u>11,622,212</u>	<u>8,541,505</u>
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	15	13,265,781	6,097,054	11,069,536	4,966,081
Tax payable		21,273	19,677	-	-
Total liabilities		<u>13,287,054</u>	<u>6,116,731</u>	<u>11,069,536</u>	<u>4,966,081</u>
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		25,353,969	15,093,196	22,691,748	13,507,586

The notes on pages 15 to 33 form an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

The consolidated financial statements on pages 10 to 33 have been authorised for issue by the Board of Governors on 16th July 2019 and were signed on its behalf by:


MR. FREDERICK SCHEMBRI
President

16th July 2019


PROFS. JAMES JOACHIM CALLEJA
Principal & CEO

