

MCAST LINK

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FRONT COVER

Photo by: Jonathan Borg

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Editorial

The College is proud of the 571 students that graduated at Level 5 and Level 6 during the MCAST Graduation Ceremonies that took place during November 2019. Students graduated in various areas including Applied Sciences, Business Management, Community Services, Creative Arts, Electrical and Electronics Engineering and Information and Communication Technology. All graduate names are included in this edition.

During Freshers' Week new students had the opportunity to discover and learn more about the College, the services available to them as well as the College's links to industry. Various activities and games were organised to welcome these students and provide the space for them to interact and mingle with each other. Important guests were welcomed and also given a tour of the College.

MCAST launched the Multifaith and Contemplation Room which is situated at the MCAST Student House on the Main Campus. This room was created to provide students of any faith or ethical practice within a safe, welcoming environment to reflect and carry out any spiritual activity. Leaders of various faiths and religions were invited to the launch.

Several MCAST students and members of staff are participating in international competitions and faring very well. MCAST ICT students successfully participated in an international Robotics Competition in Dubai and Creative Arts students in the Playful Learning Conference in Leicester. MCAST continues to invest in Research. MCAST lecturer Dr Mario Balzan was awarded the José María Sarriegi Major Catastrophe Research Award in Spain for his research paper on local climate action plans.

MCAST prides itself on the success of its Entrepreneurship Centre. This Centre gives students the opportunity to benefit from the incubation services and transform their creative and innovative ideas into profitable and sustainable business ventures. This edition features their work that was showcased at the MFCC Trade Fair and which received a lot of positive feedback.

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PRODUCED & EDITED

Caroline Balzan
Communications & PR Manager

DESIGN

Peresso Design Studio

PRINTING

Print It Printing Services

PROOFREADING

Joyce Hili

ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES

caroline.balzan@MCAST.edu.mt



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Message from the Principal & Ceo

PROF JOACHIM JAMES CALLEJA

As I write this message, Prime Minister Abela announced that the newly appointed Minister of Education and Employment is the Honourable Dr Owen Bonnici. I congratulate Minister Bonnici on his new role in a sector, which is vital for our country's economy and quality of life.

Management looks forward to forging the same visionary and proactive commitment towards vocational education and training as with his predecessor the Honourable Evarist Bartolo.

On behalf of all staff members, I wish to thank Minister Bartolo for his unflinching support to make VET in Malta a first choice based on education and training provision of high quality and relevancy to Malta's employment needs. I am sure that Minister Bonnici will also lend all his political support to MCAST in particular, in making the College the natural choice of all learners for lifelong learning.

MCAST is in an exciting phase of transformation and development. The increase in government's annual subvention is evidence that the College is delivering qualified and employable learners. It is also evident that the quality of our new management structures are yielding good results at all levels of the College. The quality of our programmes and subsequently the employability of our learners is also evidence that the College is moving towards more synergised work-based learning experiences, which link the world of education with the world of employment.

The articles in this edition of MCASTlink show the eclectic role that the College is forging for current and future students and workers. The multiple activities at national and international level show that all staff are increasingly aware of the importance of pitching our ambitions higher than usual. The increase in a culture of research, of inclusion, of excellence and interaction is evident in the information penned by our editor and staff members. Fresher's Week attracted high profile guests as well as a large number of



companies wishing to attract learners to new and emerging jobs. The interaction between students and industry is on the increase and we are pleased to see that more employers are knocking on our doors to support and interact with our education activities.

The international activities supported by the ERASMUS programme are on the increase and it is customary to walk along the College and meet international students, teachers and managers coming from different European Member States. The College is also an attraction to increased international activities outside the EU. Delegations from South Korea, Gambia, Russia and China are forging new collaborative agreements for in-situ training provision, exchange of information, mobility of students and lecturers and the possibility of attracting investment to the College. Today MCAST hosts over 790 students coming from 72 different nationalities. The inauguration of a Multifaith room in December 2019 aims at providing a space for the spiritual needs of our international community.

Our links with CIESEM (the Mediterranean Science Commission) and the project Farm the City are two out of many other initiatives which are linking our College to

international partners and sowing the seeds of capacity building in STEM subjects and in knowledge and skills on how to cultivate basic crops and carry out other basic agricultural tasks inside one's home. The project NEEMO which focuses on electric mobility operations is also an important research development at the College.

The projects that students produce are increasingly becoming a centre of attraction in international for a such as the one organised in Leicester, at the Malta international Games Festival and at the Robotics Competition in Dubai.

At a more technical level, the increase in the number of apprenticeships and more focused work-based learning programmes is becoming the hallmark of MCAST. Employers are eager to take on more work-based learners and in supporting the College in updating its curricula and in collaborating on initiatives that would attract learners to jobs offering attractive salaries and good career prospects. Indeed, the 7000plus full-time learners at MCAST is a human resource community which can make a significant positive impact on Malta's economy. The variety of courses at practically all levels of the qualifications framework that the College offers is an excellent platform to forge permanent links between working and learning environments.

To ensure more synergy between the two worlds, MCAST's first intake of the Master of Vocational Education Applied Research 4.0 is equipping our lecturing staff with the required competences to help learners address the challenges of tomorrow's labour market. Shortly the College will also introduce a Bachelor's Teaching Degree in Vocational and Professional Education and Training aimed primarily at those who wish to teach vocational subjects or support work-based learning in industry and in other work places. Apprentices require special attention in places of work and this programme will create a new job profile aimed at educating apprentices during their work experience.

A further significant development at the College has also been the organisation of classes for the elderly known as *Ibqa Attiv Maghna*. Besides forging links with our alumni, MCAST is also keen on providing our community of elderly persons with learning experiences, which they will find useful in their retirement period. Lifelong learning is not an option in today's society. It is also one of the key strategic goals of Minister Bonnici. MCAST is the lifelong learning institution *par excellence!*



Hon. Owen Bonnici

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Owen Bonnici is the Minister for Education and Employment.

He was born in Żejtun and is the youngest of two siblings. He believes that his family has given him the values of commitment, hard work and the meaning of what one can do to contribute towards a better society.

He achieved a Doctor of Laws from the University of Malta in 2004 and obtained a Diploma in Canon Jurisprudence in 2005, from the Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Tribunal.

He worked as a lawyer in a private practice and lectures at the Faculty of Law at the University of Malta.

Minister Bonnici moved forward gradually in the political spectrum. He started as a Councillor and then Deputy Mayor in Marsascalea. He was also elected various times as a member in the Party's Executive Council.

He was elected in Parliament for the first time in 2008 at the age of 27. During the voting day of this general election, he became a father to Ema.

Between 2008 and 2013, Minister Bonnici served as Opposition Spokesperson for Youth and Culture and subsequently Higher Education, University, and Research. Upon re-election in 2013, he was given the role of Parliamentary Secretary for Justice. He served as Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government from 2014 to 2017.

He was once again re-elected in the general election of 2017 and was reconfirmed in the role of Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government, until he was appointed as Minister for Education and Employment in 2020.

Owen Bonnici's favourite pastime is football and is one of the few people in Malta who supports Southampton FC. He enjoys reading, the arts, culture and music. He can be auto critical, but he believes in what he can accomplish.

New courses in agriculture for farmers



MCAST has announced new courses in agriculture at the Institute of Applied Sciences – Centre for Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences in Għammieri.

Ten courses will be on offer, aimed both at farmers and those who work the land, so that through this training, their

operations can be more profitable.

Mr Malcom Borg, the Deputy Director at the Centre, said that right now there are 200 students, aged between 17 and 23, studying at the Centre. The farmers will be in class with these same students.



Ethiopia delegation at MCAST

A delegation made up of senior officials from the investment promotion agency of Ethiopia held a familiarization visit to MCAST on the 28th of November 2019. During their visit they met with Mr Schembri, President of the MCAST Board of Governors, Prof Joachim James Calleja, MCAST Principal and CEO, and Mr Stephen Vella, General Manager, MCAST Gateway to Industry. The main themes discussed focused on possible collaboration between the two countries in the areas of Vocational Education and Employment.

South Korean students to undergo aviation maintenance training at MCAST

MCAST has reached an agreement with two private companies and the South Korean government to train students from South Korea in the aviation sector at MCAST.

Stephen Vella, the General Manager of MCAST Gateway to Industry, explained that as per agreement reached with EOS Projects and the American aviation company, Wasinc International, the Government of South Korea would send students to Malta not only to study but also

to carry out their practice in aircraft maintenance with companies in Malta.

Captain Eric Abela, CEO of EOS Projects, said that this was an initiative of the MCAST and of Malta Enterprise to support the aviation sector in Malta. It is an initiative which, he said, had attracted the South Korean government which provided a fund for South Korean students to be able to study and work abroad.



MCAST partners with Ghana Universities

Mr Sandy Osei-Agyeman and Mr Afua Asabea Asare of Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) on a recent visit to MCAST, during which discussions were held on the possibility of developing a strategic partnership with various industry partners and universities from Ghana.



NEW MEMBERS OF STAFF

Ms Denise Cortis

Human Resources Director

Ms. Denise Cortis holds a degree in Business Administration Management and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from, Edinburgh Business School of Heriot-Watt University. She further her studies with Heriot-Watt University and specialised in Human Resources Management. Her career in Human Resources Management started at APS Bank where she worked in Human Resources, Training and Development. Later on, she joined Michele Peresso Group Ltd. where she was the Group Human Resources and Training Manager. She later joined an international company, G4S Security Services (Malta) Ltd., and was appointed Head of Human Resources.

During her career she has set up Human Resources Departments and HR teams, policies and procedures, and trained HR staff members to enable them to give the best service to the organisation's employees. Driven by a passion to achieve strategic goals, and recognising the importance of the well-being of the employees, supporting employees in continuous career development and training was the goal of her successful career.

At the start of her career, Denise was studying science subjects, and joined Farsons as a Quality Assurance Analyst. Her job involved testing and analysing beer, soft drinks and water. Her work included carrying out quality assurance checks, communicating with the production line and setting up the machines. While working there, she continued her studies and obtained a Degree, following which she joined APS Bank and started her career in HR, as an HR Officer. Being very ambitious and goal-oriented, she then continued her studies to obtain a Master's from Heriot-Watt University. During her studies she had the opportunity to attend lessons in Edinburgh and meet very successful people from all over the world, who were studying with her. Later on she joined Michele Peresso Group as a Group Human Resources Manager and continued to strengthen her HR skills. She worked hand in hand with the Directors to increase employee motivation and commitment through HR initiatives, development and training. She then took a bigger challenge and took up the position of Head of Human Resources with G4S Security Services Ltd. Here she experienced HR from a contractor's point of view and had the opportunity to attend training in Human Resources practices



at G4S global in Amsterdam.

Denise believes that sports should be part of everyone's life as this keeps one healthy and away from bad habits. She is also a triathlete and has been involved in sports for several years. Two years ago she placed 14th Woman in an international 42 km trail running race, in Gran Canaria in the Canary Islands. Last year she placed 5th female in the National Triathlon championship.

When she was younger, Denise used to study piano with the Royal School of Music. She also taught piano and theory for several years. At her local council in Mtarfa she trained the choir, conducted plays and organized talent shows to help people boost their self-esteem.

She is the mother of a 10 year old boy. She enjoys fishing and going for trail runs with him. Another hobby that she enjoys is helping out her father in the fields, as she comes from a family that has been making wine for generations.

Mr Peter Borg

Financial Controller

Mr. Peter Borg is a certified public accountant and auditor. He achieved his B.A. (Hons.) Accountancy degree from the University of Malta in 1988. His thesis was a study into how the limited liability concept is adopted in Malta in view of our particular circumstances. He is also a Fellow of the Malta Institute of Accountants. Mr. Borg started his career with an 18-month traineeship with Chrysler Corporation in the U.S.A. where he worked in three departments of this huge corporation, namely the International Accounting Department, the International Finance Department and the Business Operations Department.

Coming back to Malta Mr. Borg worked with PriceWaterhouseCoopers in financial services, accounting and auditing and was awarded the Practising Certificate in Auditing by the Accountancy Board during this period. Work at PwC has given him a wide and varied experience which led him to Industry. He has worked for ST Microelectronics as Head of the Management Accounting Department and then moved on to Borg and Aquilina Ltd., an import company where he



transformed the manual accounting system into a fully-fledged computerised accounting system, restructured the accounting and finance departments and was Head of Finance during his last few years in the job.

Peter has an interest in teaching. He is in possession of a permanent teacher's warrant and has taught mathematics and accounting at various levels. He also enjoys various sports, namely windsurfing, football and table-tennis.

Liza Franco

Director of Library and Learning Resource Centre

Ms. Liza Franco is the Director of Library and Learning Resource Centre. She is responsible for the effective management of MCAST Library and its campus libraries in coordination with the rest of MCAST institutes.

Ms. Franco has vast experience as a professional librarian in various well-known institutions in Malta, Dubai and India. Prior to joining MCAST, she held the position of Library Manager of Middlesex University Malta. She came to Malta from Middlesex University Dubai with a challenging responsibility of starting Middlesex University Library at Malta when Middlesex opened its Malta Campus in 2014.

Liza joined Middlesex University Dubai in 2004. Leaving traces of various successful contributions, she strongly believes her success was in teamwork, consultation and participation. Ms. Franco graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and pursued Librarian studies after



that. She obtained her Postgraduate Diploma in Library Science before her Bachelor of Library and Information Science degree. Her Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education with Middlesex University has helped her to take the librarianship profession to different levels.

A passionate professional who believes that Librarians indeed deeply influence the lives of youngsters by helping them achieve their dreams. According to her, Librarianship is a noble service to humanity than just being labeled as custodian of books.

MCAST celebrates Constitution Day of India



On Tuesday 26 November 2019 MCAST in collaboration with the High Commission of India organised an event to celebrate Constitution Day of India. This day commemorated the adoption of the Constitution of India which was held on 26 November 1949 and which came into effect on 26 January 1950. Speakers at the event included Mr. Rajesh Vaishnav

, the High Commissioner of India, Mr Frederick Schembri, the President, MCAST Board of Governors and Professor James Calleja, MCAST Principal and CEO who spoke about the rich democratic traditions of India. The event also included the screening of a short film about the Indian Constitution and Indian food and refreshments.

Mind the Gap event by Aġenzija Żgħażaġh



On December 10th 2020, Aġenzija Żgħażaġh organised an informative event for post-secondary students. Students attending courses at the MCAST Gozo Campus joined other post-secondary students from other institutions participating in this event.

The Mind the Gap initiative involved a historical and cultural trip around the three cities (Vittoriosa, Senglea and Cospicua). Later on during the day, a last and important stop at the Aġenzija Żgħażaġh South Regional Centre in Birgu permitted the students to participate in a workshop facilitated by the Eurodesk Mobility Adviser. The workshop promoted learning mobility opportunities provided by Eurodesk, both on a national and international level, targeting internships, studying and working abroad, as well as volunteering programmes.

Antibiotics Awareness Seminar

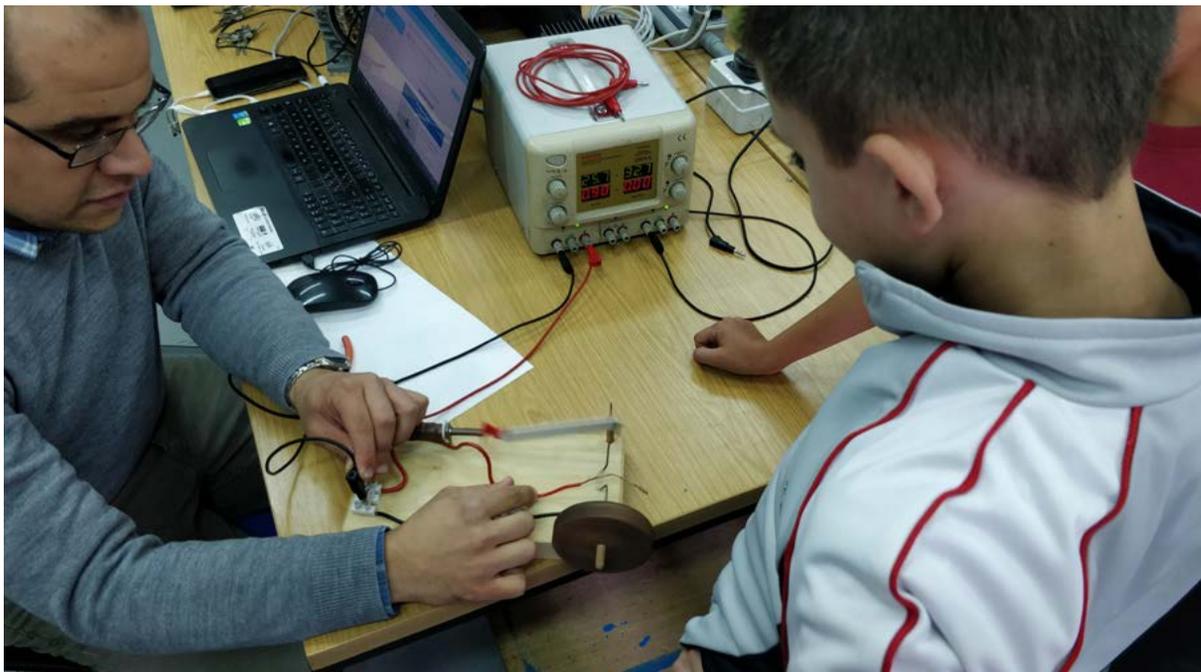
On the occasion of the World Antibiotic Awareness Week held between 18th and 24th November 2019, Dr Graziella Portelli from the Gozo General (Steward) Hospital was invited to deliver a talk to MCAST students enrolled on the Diploma in Health and Social Care, the Advanced Diploma in Health and Social Care and the Advanced Diploma in Health Sciences programmes.

The purpose of the presentation was to raise awareness of the increasing resistance to antibiotic treatment, one of the most urgent threats to public health, which is being exacerbated by the misuse of antibiotics.

The World Antibiotic Awareness Week (WAAW) is celebrated annually by governments, health facilities, schools and communities. The campaign promotes good practices among the general public, health workers and policy makers to help combat antibiotic resistance to ensure that this lifesaving medication will retain its effectiveness and be available for future generations. Students demonstrated interest in the presentation since both in their private life as well as in their future career as healthcare professionals, they should be responsible in the way they consume or administer antibiotics.

Exposing Gozitan Year 8 students to VET Opportunities

As part of the events for the European Vocational Skills Week, MCAST Gozo Campus held a series of activities on two consecutive days, the 25th and 26th of November 2019. This year's theme was VET for ALL – Skills for life. Hence, the activities focused on inclusive practices and the lifelong aspects of VET.



The activities were intended to involve and engage students through interactive, fun-learning activities and thereby promote the skills and knowledge acquired through courses in the Vocational Education spectrum. The activities were an opportunity for students to experience hands-on practice in the various VET fields such as ICT, Engineering, Woodwork, Health and Social Care, Early Childhood Education, Accounting and Financial Services.

In this way, the initiative also served to promote and raise awareness of the wide range of VET opportunities available at MCAST and to highlight the advantages achieved through VET. Students in year 8 attending the Gozo College Middle School and the two Gozitan Church secondary schools, namely, the Sacred Heart Minor Seminary and the Bishop's Conservatory Secondary



School, together with the respective educators and guidance teachers, were invited to participate in these activities. It was indeed a most enjoyable learning experience!

Gozo Campus Hairdressing and Business Lecturer on an Erasmus+ mobility in Scotland

Ms Sarah Camilleri, Hairdressing and Business lecturer at the MCAST Gozo Campus, visited City of Glasgow College on an Erasmus+ mobility programme between the 7th and 11th November 2019.

City of Glasgow College is a large vocational college with a student population of around 27,000 students.

The Scottish college offers hairdressing courses from SQA Level 1 to SQA Level 8 on both full-time and apprenticeship basis. Ms Sarah Camilleri could compare practices adopted by MCAST and the Scottish college and noted that models for students' practical lessons are provided by the school where appointments are taken at the school reception. This practice helps students gain more confidence during work as they always have new clients, enabling them to expand their experience by being exposed to a very wide spectrum of individuals. Ms Camilleri also experienced the wide exposure that staff and students alike had to important industrial players in the sector. For instance, during the week of the mobility, students and lecturers had several such opportunities. A

group of students were taken on a trip to Liverpool for a Vidal Sassoon training programme and two lecturers were chosen to go on a trip to London for one-to-one training with Patrick Cameron, a world-famous stylist.

Ms Camilleri also received an insight into the curriculum review process adopted by the Scottish college. The Hairdressing Curriculum is reviewed and updated periodically as the college and industrial stakeholders meet on a regular basis to review the curricula and syllabi according to the emerging needs and trends.

This mobility was an enriching experience for Ms Camilleri as it exposed her to different teaching approaches and methodologies which she can surely put into practice in order to improve the learning experience of MCAST students.

Sexuality and Relationships Seminars by Willingness Hub and Dar Ġużeppa Debono

Speakers from the Willingness Hub held a seminar related to Sexuality and Relationships for a number of MCAST Gozo Campus students. This seminar was held under the 'Speaking the Language of Youths' project, as part of an educational campaign undertaken by Dar Ġużeppa Debono intended to promote healthy relationships, including sexual relationships, amongst youths. The sessions were interactive, whereby the students involved themselves in discussions on the theme.

Pink October at the MCAST Gozo Campus

On October 31st 2019, students and staff members at the MCAST Gozo Campus wore a touch of pink in a symbolic manner to endorse the Pink October cause. Staff and students made voluntary donations and in doing so they were given a pink ribbon to wear for the day. They were also encouraged to post a photo on their personal social media platform account in order to continue raising awareness.

The donations were presented to the Marigold Foundation (Pink October Team) at Villa Francia on Monday 2nd December 2019 in an event especially dedicated to this noble cause.

Freshers' Week 2019





At the start of October MCAST welcomed over 7,000 new and progressing students for Academic Year 2019/2020. In keeping with its annual custom, MCAST held Freshers' Days between 07 and 11 October 2019. The event was held at MCAST Main Campus in Paola. Various activities were organised for new students to discover more about the respective institutes and opportunities for both work placements and volunteering. More than 50 exhibitors, including student organisations, industry partners and NGOs set up stands. Various dignitaries including the President of Malta, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Education and Employment were also present during one of the days.



MCAST Lecturer Dr Mario Balzan awarded the José María Sarriegi Major Catastrophe Research Award

Dr Mario Balzan's research study "How are cities planning to respond to climate change? Assessment of local climate plans from 885 cities in the EU-28" has been awarded the José María Sarriegi Major Catastrophe Research Award in its first edition by Fundación Aon España and the Catastrophe Observatory.

The José María Sarriegi prize was created by the Fundación Aon España and the Catastrophe Observatory to recognize the best academic research work on disaster management that was published in the two years prior to the award in a specialized journal. This year's topic is climate change.

Dr Mario V Balzan is one of the 30 co-authors of this study where local climate action plans are analysed in 885 cities in the 28 member states of the European Union. The authors have explained that "progress is concentrated in big cities and also in northern Europe. 66% of cities have a mitigation plan and / or an adaptation plan. Mitigation plans are more popular than adaptation plans, which are only present in half of the cities analysed." Analysing the progress in climate policy by cities is essential, since much of the responsibility, both in reducing emissions and in adapting to the impacts of climate change, relies on them. This large-scale study contributes to the generation of a reference baseline of local policies and plans at European level. For the authors "it is a great honour to be the first to receive the José María Sarriegi award and a great satisfaction for



Marta Olazabal was presented the José María Sarriegi prize, on behalf of the paper co-authors, at the Symposium of the Catastrophe Observatory, held at the University of Navarra, Madrid, under the honorary presidency of Her Majesty the Queen of Spain.

having participated in a work of such impact. The team of researchers has expanded and we continue working to analyse these policies in greater depth. This Prize helps us and motivates us to continue our efforts."

The ceremony was delivered at the Symposium of the Catastrophe Observatory, under the honorary presidency of Her Majesty the Queen, on November 7th 2019 at the Postgraduate Campus of the University of Navarra, in Madrid.

Environmental Engineering students carry out fieldwork session in Gozo



It is clear that we are living in a day and age where people are more conscious about the natural environment. People are more aware of the numerous intrinsic and extrinsic benefits related to safeguarding our natural heritage. That is why it is imperative that students who are studying about safeguarding the environment and providing sustainable solutions do so not just by discussing theories in class, but by actually getting their hands dirty and practising the concepts that are so important for environmental professionals.

That is why, for the second consecutive year, students reading for a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Engineering at MCAST carried out a number of fieldwork sessions in Gozo. Over a span of two days students devised and carried out different sampling techniques within both terrestrial and marine ecosystems. This allowed students the opportunity to apply the concepts discussed in class. These fieldwork sessions complemented class-based lectures during which students were presented with real-life problems. In the field, students had to collect, analyse and evaluate data to deduce the state of different habitats and of the environment. Based on the information they collected, they eventually presented their ideas on how to mitigate the effects of anthropogenic activity.

Whilst importance was given to technical and professional skills that the students will eventually use

in their line of work, particular emphasis was also given to transferable skills, such as problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork and time management, amongst many others. Such initiatives offer opportunities for students to develop and strengthen skills which go beyond the lecture room and are important for day-to-day professional activities in their field.

In a dynamic economy, development and progress depend on the practical application of scientific knowledge. The pedagogy of Vocational and Professional Education and Training ensures that knowledge is practised and applied in real-life contexts. In the case of the BSc (Hons) in Environmental Engineering programme, students actually put into practice knowledge about the environment and develop their professional skills. MCAST aims to play a strategic role in allowing students to develop and enhance skills that enable them to thrive and succeed in a constantly changing market and be catalysts in promoting economic development, expanding opportunities of employment, and improving the quality of employment. Students are also empowered to develop themselves personally and professionally to contribute to their own and society's well-being.

The students were accompanied by MCAST Institute of Applied Sciences lecturers Mr Juan José Bonello, Mr Edwin Zammit and Ms Francesca Spagnol Gravino.

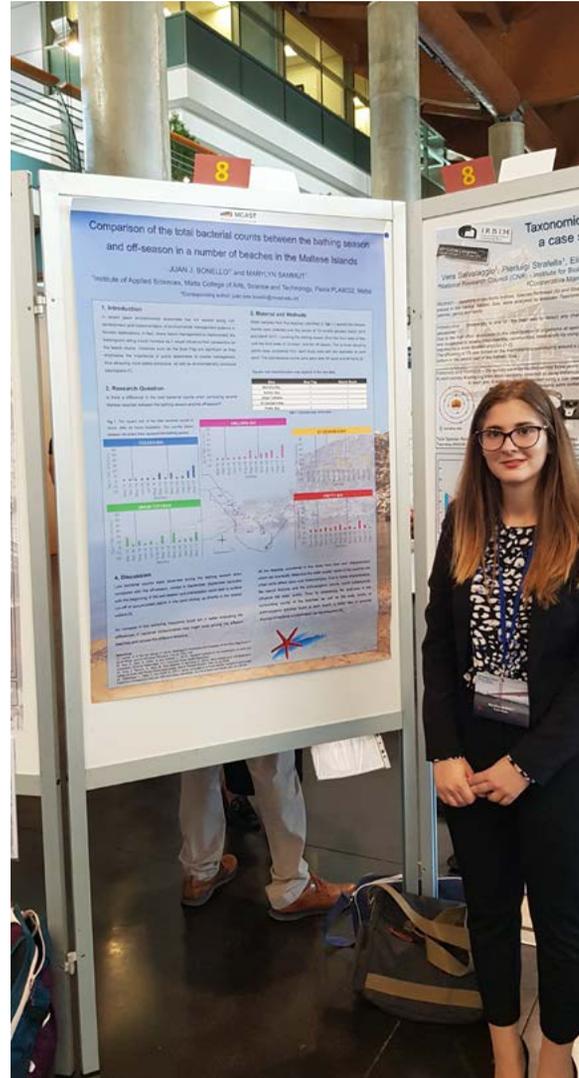
The first representation of MCAST at CIESM

The Mediterranean Science Commission, or the *Commission Internationale pour l'Exploration Scientifique de la Méditerranée (CIESM)*, covers a broad spectrum of marine disciplines. The organisation was founded by countries that border the sea to undertake multilateral international research on marine science in the Mediterranean Sea, however, it is now open to all countries engaged in scientific research in the sea so as to develop scientific cooperation through promoting international use of national research stations.

CIESM is considered to be the largest association of Mediterranean marine scientists and provides the possibility for several thousands of marine researchers to exchange information and publish studies. One example of such possibilities is the organisation of a congress every three years. This congress aims to bring together scientists and provides a platform in which constructive arguments are presented and ideas are exchanged.

Marylyn Sammut, a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Engineering graduate, and her dissertation supervisor, Mr Juan J Bonello, participated in the 42nd CIESM Congress in Cascais, Portugal, between 7th and 11th October 2019.

The subject of her study, entitled "Comparison of the total bacterial counts between the bathing season and off season in a number of beaches in the Maltese Islands", was the possible variation of total bacterial counts between the bathing season and the off season in a number of local beaches. Ms Sammut's findings proved to be fruitful since this study opened a window on opportunities for further



Marylyn Sammut at the Congress

research within the field.

The work, which was presented in the form of a presentation, a poster and an extended abstract (which will eventually be published in the Congress Proceedings), showcased parts of Ms Sammut's final year project and provided her with the opportunity to present her work and discuss her findings with experts in the field. The congress provided an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the research capabilities of MCAST's graduates when presenting their work to such a prestigious audience.

Farm the City

Farm the City is an EU funded project with the main objective of increasing the knowledge, skills and awareness of students aged between 11-14 years of age on how to cultivate basic crops and carry out other basic agricultural tasks inside their own homes.



Prisms Malta has joined forces with the MCAST Centre for Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences and Maria Regina College together with three other foreign partners. Prisms Malta is offering expert non-formal education and knowledge on how to develop this project into a website which will reach a wider audience. The Centre for Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences of the MCAST Institute of Applied Sciences is using its expertise to teach students how to grow their own crops and to share other knowledge related to the area. This project is being implemented as a pilot project at Maria Regina College.

The project is planned over fifteen months, with the main objectives being:

- To strengthen the connection communities have with food and its production on a local level
- To reintroduce knowledge about farming with students
- To reconnect students with nature and increase their appreciation of fresh food
- To participate in activities which will teach students more about food, health and nutrition
- To install small gardens in schools and other public areas where students engage in hands-on activities.

The project is divided in two parts. The first part is the creation of a number of videos that explain step by step how one can make use of their urban space and grow some basic crops. In these videos one will also find other videos like how to control pests, how to realise that crops have nutrients deficiency and also some videos on urban chicken rearing and urban bee keeping. One can find the whole series of videos on Prisms Malta youtube channel. In this part of the project we are also developing an app and a website which will give the information needed with videos and animated instructions which the general public can use. This will be of benefit to the public as clear instructions will be given on how to start your own crop garden. The mobile app and website will also include information on different crops and recipes.

The second part of the project will involve the actual growing of the crops by students at their own homes with the help of videos and other information found on the website and mobile app. The students will also be given starter packs so as to be able to plant their vegetables in their own backyard and balconies. Therefore, the impact is not limited just to schools but this project is planned to go beyond schools and also reach individual families.

Students showcase table top game designs in Leicester



Two BA Interactive Media MCAST students, Daniel Cutajar and Andrew Tanti showcased their table top game 'Congratulations you destroyed the world' at the Playful learning conference in Leicester.

The game was designed by a team of five students, namely Daniel Cutajar, Andrew Tanti, Michela Mifsud, Maria Camilleri and Leo Debono, as part of a 'game design' module. Students had to design a critical game revolving around the theme of climate change. The two students, sponsored by HSBC, were accompanied by their lecturer Josef Florian Micallef. Mr Micallef delivered a lecture and the board game acted as a practical application to the paper presented by him at the conference.



Games designed by MCAST students displayed at the Malta International Games Festival



A variety of table top games designed by BA Interactive Media & BA Game graphics and visual design students were showcased and playtested at the Malta International Games Festival between the 23rd and 24th November 2019 in Valletta. The games were considered to be of very good quality and were accepted to be exhibited along other international table top games. Students had the opportunity to have their games played by table top enthusiasts, game designers and executives.

Learning by Doing

The Importance of Experiential Learning in Science

by Cassandra Sturgeon Delia



The Science key skill unit at MCAST is adopting an experiential learning approach to enable learners to gain knowledge from different site visits.



Science is taught from MQF Level 1 to Level 3 to all MCAST students and at Level 4 as an adapted unit at the Institute for the Creative Arts. The holistic method adopted enables learners to gain perspective and helps them overcome learning difficulties associated with traditional methods of learning.

Learning outcomes can be reached more effectively when students have the opportunity to reflect on site visits. By working with organisations such as BirdLife Malta, The Malta National Aquarium and Explora, MCAST students are gaining first-hand experience in science and environmental issues which they may relate to when working on their assignments.

Such experiential learning also enhances transversal skills such as team building, creativity, social interactions, communication, leadership, responsibility and proactivity amongst others, which are beneficial to prepare students for work and life.

By embedding other units such as Individual Social Responsibility and Pastoral Care, the experience may be enhanced further, as students will also gain reflective and intrapersonal skills. Student mentors have an important role in this experiential experience also by creating



group-oriented tasks and aiding lecturers make the most of a visit.

This mode of delivery is practical in science and is appreciated by students. BirdLife Malta has given training to MCAST lecturers on how and where to coordinate field training, in order to address sustainability and understand first-hand environmental issues. In the academic year 2018/19, the Malta National Aquarium received several MCAST students to address marine issues and discuss their research and collaboration with NGOs such as SharkLab, BirdLife Malta, EU LIFE+ project Migrate amongst others. Through both initiatives students experienced how invasive species may disrupt biodiversity and how problems such as microplastics and antibiotics enter the food chain.

The Explora Interactive Centre includes multiple halls that stimulate all senses allowing the students to learn regardless of their learning style. Here students may visit the main exhibition halls making science relevant to everyday life. Moreover, the Planetarium, a full-dome show with a live presenter, features films on multiple topics on a 4K theatre system, making this experience memorable when linking this show to habitats, cells or many other topics.

Science should be fun, and experiential learning helps to achieve this by including site visits, field trips and hands-on activities related to the content delivered.

Students participate in a Robotics Competition in Dubai

On Tuesday 22nd October 2019, First Global Team Malta 2019 participated in a robotics competition in Dubai. The team was made up of students Amy Ann Debono, Katia Cassar, Miraine Galea, Alexander Fiott and Mandy Farrugia, all following the Advanced Diploma in IT (Software Development) and chosen as a result of their outstanding performance in the Embedded Systems Unit.





With the help of team mentor Thomas Gatt and team manager, Conrad Vassallo, Director of Institute, the team met twice a week during the summer holidays in order to resume the development of the robot. The students were tasked with building the robot and rendering the robot functional through coding in the Blockly programming language. The team come a long way despite issues pertaining to work schedules and other commitments.

Whilst addressing contemporary issues regarding ocean pollution, the team wanted to showcase the fusion of hardware and software and its benefits. Moreover, they encouraged the public to pursue a career in the fields of technology as, within the last two decades, this phenomenon has taken the world by storm, changing the way humans live, communicate and satisfy their daily needs.

The competition commenced on Thursday 24th October 2019. The team participated in practice matches during which they improved the design and functionality of the robot. The following day the team took part in ranking matches and ranked at #35. Whilst competing, they had the opportunity to meet teams from other countries and collaborate with them during the matches.

Although the team was not eligible to participate in the final matches, all five students were awarded the Safety Award and still believed that this experience was very fruitful. Not only did the team members bond with each other throughout the meeting sessions but they also had the opportunity to expand their horizons, as well as come out of their comfort zone with the aid of the mentor's words of advice and positive attitude.

The robot was showcased in events such as Science in the City in Valletta, Delta Summit and Playcon, and the MCAST Freshers' Week.

Nicholas Attard Montalto

Advanced Diploma in Fish Management

Nicholas Attard Montalto travelled to Sweden from the 2nd September to 20th September 2019 as part of an Erasmus+ Mobility.

Nicholas travelled from Malta to Gothenburg by plane and then from Gothenburg to Lysekil by public bus. Throughout the placement he stayed at a self-catering hostel in Lysekil.

Nicholas's placement was a salt-water public aquarium where the water was pumped in from the sea and recycled back into the sea. There were about 50 tanks, from small to very large. These contained mostly local fish for example wolf fish, sharks, cod, rays, lobsters and haddock. There were separate specialist tanks for jellyfish, octopi, pipefish and wrasse. The aquarium ran a breeding programme for Lesser Spotted Dogfish Sharks. The tanks were landscaped to match the natural shore scape and were populated with local anemones, seaweed and algae as well as sea cucumbers, sea stars, sea urchins and crabs.

One of Nicholas's tasks was to check for any catch in traps which were in the sea next to the aquarium. These were required to stock the tanks on a daily basis. The traps were re-baited and put back in the sea. All the catch was transferred on a trolley back to the aquarium and transferred to various tanks, as instructed. Daily tasks included cleaning glass, feeding the fish with



frozen shrimp, mussels and herring, and every two days catching new jellyfish for the jellyfish tank as the jellyfish only lasted two days. Nicholas also welcomed the visitors every day on the microphone. He helped to set up an infrared camera over a shark egg to have a live stream of the egg developing. This can be seen on line. He went into the sea to observe the natural habitat and gathered bottom dwelling organisms, such as hermit crabs, crabs and bottom fish, such as flat fish.

Nicholas enjoyed his placement, which he found very interesting, and he also enjoyed being in a different country and experiencing a different culture.

Andrew Brockdorff

Bachelor in Manufacturing (BSc Hons)



Andrew Brockdorff travelled to Austria from the 20th July to the 21st September 2019 as part of an Erasmus+ Mobility.

This Erasmus+ mobility took place in Graz, at the company Knapp AG. Knapp makes intelligent automated solutions for production and distribution from a single source. As an intern, Andrew had the opportunity to work in the following departments: assembly, production, machine building and the learning workshop.

During these two months, Andrew was able to learn skills relevant to his profession whilst adopting a better mindset towards work. These skills were acquired within the workplace and outside the workplace through the people that he met.

This experience has given Andrew a unique perspective towards work, education and life in general. He has also had a taste of what life abroad can offer in terms of lifestyle.

Andrew encourages fellow students to participate in an Erasmus+ experience. The challenge of living abroad opens the mind and instills a sense of independence due to the challenges that one has to face. It is also a great opportunity to go beyond one's comfort zone and make new friends as well as experience new things. He felt as though he was able to get more out of the experience because he went with two of his friends and colleagues. They were able to assist each other and this made the experience more enjoyable. Andrew is grateful for this opportunity.

MCAST welcomes German Early Childhood Education students



On the 21st November 2019, MCAST welcomed visitors from BBS Wissen, a vocational school in Germany. The school is located in Wissen, a village in the North of the German state Rhineland-Palatinate.

The visitors included two teachers and 25 Early Childhood Education students who were on a school trip to Malta. Besides cultural visits to Mdina and Valletta, the group wanted to spend a day at MCAST. They saw this as an opportunity for a cultural exchange.

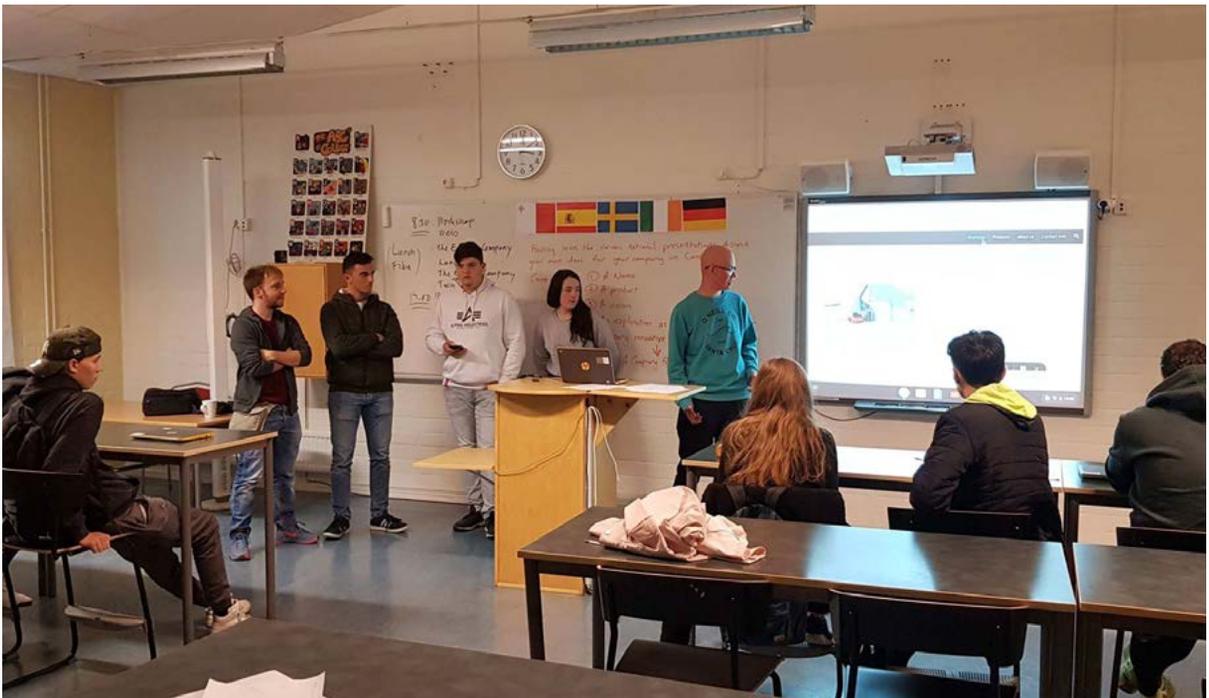
Ing. Louis Aquilina, Director of the Partnerships Office, delivered a presentation. He spoke of MCAST's history and the strategies employed to provide a holistic and inclusive

education that equips students with the adequate social, professional and personal skills for employment, and more so for their future.

Ms. Ann Marie Cassar and Ms. Rose Piccinino graciously accepted including the students in an Early Childhood Education lecture, so as they could meet MCAST students and experience the differences and similarities in the way the subject they study is taught in Malta.

The German students and teachers were thrilled by the experience, and pleased that a partnership between MCAST and BBS Wissen will lead to excellent opportunities for staff and students from both institutions.

Construction placement in Sweden



Third year Civil Engineering students Mahmoud, Justin, Ismael and Miguel had the opportunity to participate in an Erasmus programme on Construction in Nyköping, Sweden.

Master of Vocational Education Applied Research 4.0... one year on



MCAST's Centre for Professional Development organised the third and final weekend school of the first year of the Master of Vocational Education Applied Research 4.0. The overarching theme of this weekend school, which was held at the Cavalieri Hotel, St Julians, was Vocational Learning Experiences: Teaching and Learning in Industrial Contexts and was attended by 44 participants from MCAST and ITS.

This masters offers focused training for future specialists and leaders in Further and Higher Vocational Education and proposes innovative practices of Team Teaching, Team Learning and Team Assessment

incorporating action research and industry work experience.

Using an innovative blended learning approach including weekend schools, this programme aims to equip participants with the necessary competences to address a series of andragogic, social, political, cultural and economic issues that will unfold in current and future Labour Market environments.

The Centre for Professional Development is already working on the second intake for this masters. Further information on this qualification can be obtained by sending an email to cpd@mcast.edu.mt.

Erasmus+ OPENSEL Project



The MCAST Curriculum Department is constantly on the lookout for opportunities to participate in Erasmus+ projects which can make a difference in the students' learning experience.

In September 2019 MCAST started working on the OPENSEL project which aims to develop Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on Presentation Skills, Teamwork and Stress Management. The themes of the MOOCs were chosen following feedback from employers who identified the lack of important transversal skills as a key issue, even though recruits may have completed further or higher education.

Once developed, these MOOCs will be available for students attending the partner organisations of the project, as well as the general public.

During the third week of November 2019 a team from the Curriculum Department attended a transnational meeting and training event in Budapest, Hungary. Both

activities were hosted by Obuda University.

In the coming months MCAST will be taking the lead in the development of the first MOOC on Presentation Skills. The first stage is to conduct a research study whereby literature on presentation skills will be reviewed and students, staff and experts will be interviewed on the challenges faced. Following the analysis of the data collected, MCAST will be developing engaging material for the MOOC. Partner organisations who will be providing feedback along the way to ensure that the outcome is of a high quality.

MCAST Partners on this project include Obuda University and KEPES Foundation from Hungary, and VISTA College from the Netherlands.

Ibqa' Attiv Magħna

A Journey of Lifelong Learning



The need for MCAST to engage with the community helps to strengthen its social responsibility and contributes to society by encouraging lifelong learning. According to the National Statistics Office (2018), by the end of 2017 persons over the age of sixty-five years accounted for 18.8% of the Maltese population; moreover the ageing population in Malta is on a steady rise.

Ibqa' Attiv Magħna was designed by Ms Cassandra Sturgeon Delia, Senior Lecturer at MCAST, to promote lifelong learning among the elderly. The course promotes active ageing to reinforce well-being by enhancing independent living and reducing isolation.

The first session of this course was held on 16th October 2019, when the President Emeritus Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici discussed the origins and constitutions of the Maltese Parliament. The attendees found this session highly enjoyable and participated actively in the group discussions. The course, which is free of charge, is nine weeks long and each week the subject varies to reach

as many people as possible. Topics covered include art, politics, language, IT skills, cooking, photography, health and well-being, legal issues and plant care.

The course was marketed on social media, mainly Facebook and on the MCAST website, and for the first intake twenty-five elderly persons showed interest and attended regularly. A certificate of attendance was presented to those that attended a minimum of 80% of the sessions.

This course, offered by the Learning Support Unit (LSU) within the Curriculum Department at MCAST, will surely inspire elderly persons to seek other courses leading to lifelong learning.

NEW INITIATIVE OFFERING SUPPORT TO STUDENTS



MCAST Student to Student Support Programme

FLEEK is designed for active students who wish to offer support to other students and to build a better community amongst each other.

Volunteer students giving their time to be part of this programme are guaranteed strong support and training. The time and effort they commit is recognized through an accredited certificate which can also be added to their portfolio and final transcript.

The number of hours in training and voluntary work can be presented as the Corporate & Social Responsibility (CSR) component in their programme of studies.

Literature has clearly shown that peer support contributes positively to students' college life. Research also suggests that the use of peer support programmes increases students' resilience towards academic work. With this in mind and with the support of Dr Nadia Maria Vassallo, Deputy Principal Curriculum and Student Affairs, action was taken to develop a new initiative that enhances student empowerment. FLEEK (Forming Leaders in Emotional Energy and Kindness) is designed to train students to be able to form part of a network offering support from students to students. Activities vary from ones offering basic befriending support, to others comprising of a buddy system.

Although FLEEK training does not prepare students to help others in personal and emotional problems, it still equips them with enough helping skills and knowledge to be able to identify the need of a referral to the appropriate MCAST services. They will develop the basic attributes and skills, contributing to a better college community, and will eventually also transfer these skills to the workplace.

Topics covered consist mainly of self-awareness, communication and leadership skills. Participants also familiarize themselves with the college procedures and how to go about getting further, necessary information. The training is delivered in an experiential mode instilling a sense of team-building and good leadership between the participants.

Finally, participating students who successfully complete the training, are awarded an MCAST accredited certificate which can also be presented as part of their Corporate and Social Responsibility component in their programme of studies.

How it works

As a FLEEK student you will participate in the following activities to help others:

- Classroom visits to let students know about the support available at MCAST
- Help-desk assistance for students with queries
- Facilitated ice-breakers
- Guided tours of campuses if necessary

Full Training is provided

- You may join as a volunteer and start off with some training while helping other students straight away
- You will acquire an excellent experience in leadership, team work and initiative-taking
- Your logged activities will act as guaranteed references
- You will be regularly supported by your trainer
- You will become a better leader in groups, at home, with friends, at work and in life
- You grasp the opportunity to do something positive and rewarding

Be a Leader

- receive training which consists of 25 hours spread over a maximum period of 12 weeks
- contribute a minimum of 45 minutes per week for the rest of the year
- help students with general queries

Address:
Student House, Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola PLA9032, Malta

Email us on:
student2student@mcast.edu.mt

Freshers' Week celebra



MCAST Freshers'Week, held between 7th – 11th October 2019, gave new students (and old) the opportunity to get to know each other and to familiarize themselves with the services offered by various departments of the College. It seemed like MCAST's festive season, with colourful decorations, events, music, games, the smell of food and curious faces everywhere! Students could also benefit from discounts and incentives offered by commercial outlets.

We, the team of librarians got equally excited and ready! The library has been of service to students and staff since its very beginning and participates in the Fresher's Week informing students of the library services. We decided to highlight our services differently this year. As a team, we discussed and came up with many ideas to outreach the students community through a series of activities during Freshers'Week. We decided to decorate the library. One of the librarians selected the decorations; another one dedicated his family time to make a 12 metres long festive garland; another librarian designed the poster to distribute everywhere on the campus; another one brought antique glass jar from her home. We were all in a celebration mood and participated enthusiastically in decorating the library and organizing the event. A series of meetings were held in the library to finalize our ideas regarding the exhibitions.

For the entire week, the library building was decorated in a festive mood, with balloons, festive wreaths, banners and bunting flags. The event was planned with various activities both in the library building and with a stall at the Student House manned by the library team.

Three beautiful and interesting exhibitions were held on the ground floor of the library, whilst a membership lottery and a Candy Jar Competition (with prizes) were run throughout the week. The exhibitions consisted of:

- A collection of beautiful and rare seashells, from all over the world, together with artworks made of wood, belonging to Mr. Alex Wright;
- A display of football T-shirts, worn by international and local players (eg. Ronaldo, Platini, etc.) – some also signed. This collection was brought together with the assistance of Mr. Victor Vella;

ation at MCAST Library



- A selection of petting rabbits, thanks to the Malta Rabbit Club (since 1963) and its President, Mr. Felix Farrugia. This proved to be a popular attraction.

The visitors were amazed by the colourful seashells and intricate woodwork. The expensive Football T-shirts attracted boys mainly and we could hear the sparks while they discussed the players. The rabbits were the centre of attraction as students found patting the rabbits quite relaxing. We are grateful to Mr. Wright, Mr. Vella and Mr. Farrugia for their immense support and for bringing the exhibits to the library.

During the days of Freshers' Week we had distinguished guests visiting either the stall at the Student House and/or the exhibitions in the Library.

Hon. Joseph Muscat and MEP Miriam Dalli were the first who visited our Library stall at the Student house. In the afternoon, MCAST Principal and CEO, Prof. James Calleja paid a visit to the library. He admired the exhibition and prepared us for the President's visit to the library the next day. We made sure that everything was intact before the visit.

On Tuesday morning, our distinguished guest, His Excellency The President of Malta, Dr. George Vella, along with the Principal, the President and members of the

Board of Governors visited the library. Deputy Principal, Dr. Alex Rizzo, and our Library Director, Ms Liza Franco, welcomed H.E. the President to the library. It was a proud moment when Ms. Franco introduced each one of us to the President. Dr. Vella enjoyed the exhibition thoroughly and spent time in the library curiously enquiring about the exhibits. A group photo was taken in the library and the President signed the visitor's book.

The leader of the opposition, the Hon. Dr. Adrian Delia, who was our next guest, showed appreciation for our efforts. The last guest, on Friday, was Mr. Mario Cutajar, Principal Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Cabinet.

Guests who visited the library expressed appreciation and encouraged us with positive comments. The library also received very positive feedback from students and staff.

All in all, it was a great experience which was both enriching and enjoyable at the same time. This event also helped us spread awareness regarding the library resources and services available to the MCAST community. As an exercise in outreach, we can say that we all learned a lot from this new experience and hope that in the coming months, we will be building on what we learned during this week. Our gratitude goes to all our supporters and well-wishers. This event indeed motivates for us to do more.

Ensuring Quality for Work Based Learning

By Martin Borg

Work-Based Learning is at the heart of vocational and professional education and training. As part of the MCAST Strategic Plan 2019-2021, Work-Based Learning is being strengthened further by means of a number of strategic actions which include:

- Integrating aspects of work-based learning at all levels, in all VET programmes, also through work placements, internships and job-shadowing experiences.
- Increasing the possibility of industry placements abroad through MoUs with foreign employers.
- Providing CPD Pedagogy for all teaching professionals to integrate more real-world experiences in classroom teaching and to explore innovative ways of taking the learning beyond the classroom walls.
- Setting up emulative training centres as a means of providing students with added practical work options within an environment similar to the place of work.
- Introducing apprenticeship degrees with multiple exit points and working with industry partners for quality placements.
- Developing working relationships with industry representatives and social partners to create a channel of communication on WBL.
- Widening the network and increasing collaboration with industry partners to strengthen WBL.
- Building capacity of industry-based mentors as a means of providing more valuable work experiences.
- Developing a competency framework for WBL.
- Establishing and strengthening closer ties with industrial and business partners in Gozo to increase WBL opportunities.

Work-Based Learning at MCAST

Apprenticeship schemes are the flagship of work-based learning at MCAST. Such schemes are governed by a tripartite contract defining the rights and obligations of apprentices, employers and MCAST as a VET provider. Through apprenticeship, students are placed directly in industry within a sector that is directly related to their programme of study.

This dual system allows apprentices to apply the theoretical and underpinning principles learned at the College at the place of work. In addition, learners are equipped with the essential competencies that are aligned with their future career prospects. Needless to state, the

workplace also provides for individuals to learn and practice other essential competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and teamwork. Last year alone, 950 apprentices were placed in a workplace enabling college learners to learn by doing.

MCAST also provides its students with other WBL schemes such as Internships and Work Placements in several industrial settings. Indeed, it is MCAST's strategic objective to continue to lead within this domain by integrating aspects of Work-Based Learning at all levels.

Governing Structures

In alignment with the Apprenticeship and Work-Based



Martin Borg

Learning Act, MCAST is in the process of setting up the needed governing structures. Such structures are essential for VET providers, not only to comply with regulatory requirements, but also to enhance the overall quality of work-based learning.

To this end, a Work-Based Learning Operational Board has been set up with the objective of ensuring that the rights and obligations as set in the tripartite contract (Training Agreement) are adhered to.

An important mechanism for Work-Based Learning is defined by the supervisory and mentoring functions for apprentices. This vital mechanism ensures that apprentices develop their vocational and professional competencies as defined by the training plan. MCAST is currently conducting a reform of this mechanism to further improve the quality of Work-Based Learning.

Finally, a Board of Examiners will be set with the objective of assuring the acquired competencies at the place of work by apprentices. Apprentices will be assessed through various formats which may include practical tasks, projects, portfolios, interviews and/or examinations.

Degree Apprenticeships

MCAST is aiming to strategically position work-based learning at the heart of all professional and vocational training programmes. Building on the success of

work-based learning (WBL) schemes as a guarantee for employment and employability, MCAST has, from this academic year, introducing apprenticeships at degree level (with multiple exit points) in the fields of engineering, information technology and the creative arts. More specifically, this academic year, 152 students are following six degree apprenticeships in the following programmes:

- BSc Biomedical Engineering
- BSc Construction Engineering
- BSc Software Development
- BSc Multimedia Software Development
- BSc Computer Systems and Networks
- BA (Hons) in Fashion

Quality

In times of constant change, VET providers are required to remain agile so that they adapt their provision as quickly as possible to labour market demands. It is within this context that MCAST has embarked on a €7 million European Social Fund Project funded by EU. The ESF Project, titled "Achieving Vocational Excellence" aims to:

- Develop the human capital of mentors and supervisors
- Identify and analyse labour market trends
- Formulate a competency framework for Work-Based Learning
- Build emulative centres at MCAST.

Participation of the MEC in the Malta Trade FAIR 2019 at MFCC



For the second consecutive year the MCAST Entrepreneurship Centre participated in the MFCC Trade Fair. The Entrepreneurship Centre encourages all its tenants to participate in public fairs and expos both locally and internationally. So far the Centre has participated in “Kwalità Malta”, at the Naxxar MFCC Fair as in well as other various village fairs. The Entrepreneurship Centre strongly believes and promotes marketing activities and events, exhibitions and trade fairs as they offer a wide platform for the students to showcase their products and services while communicating their key message. This year the MEC also invited all future tenants to participate in order for them to also have the opportunity to showcase their products.



€0.8M EU H2020 NEEMO Project on Electric Mobility Operations launched

In January 2019 an MCAST-led EU H2020 project worth €0.8 million was launched at the MCAST Main Campus. The Minister for Education and Employment, Hon. Evarist Bartolo, was present for the launch.



A key objective of the project is to upgrade the scientific, engineering and research performance and innovation capacity in the field of electric mobility research, related integration of technologies, modes and operations, as part of the ongoing effort of the MCAST Energy Research Group (MCAST Energy) within the Institute of Engineering and Transport to enhance its scientific excellence and increase its innovation capacity.

The Networking for Excellence in Electric Mobility Operations (NEEMO) Project focuses on five research themes:

- i** driving habits and the island's drive cycles;
- ii** electric vehicles as distributed energy sources;
- iii** multi-modal full electric mobility;
- iv** market strategies and tourism in electric mobility;
- v** examining transport energy pathways in the Mediterranean.

MCAST Energy has distinguished itself following the development of the first campus-wide micro-grid training and research facility in Malta. This effort has been supported by other structural funds for new campus development, an on-site testing laboratory, and the scaling-up of devices. The group is also leading another H2020 project JUMP2Excel and participating as partner in ERANETMED projects EDGEWISE and 3DMGrid supported by the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and in seven COST Action Projects.

The project, which is open to MCAST students, academics and staff as well as local and regional participants, has launched its full programme of actions including workshops, schools, internships, exchanges, training, mentoring sessions, public lectures, conferences and stakeholders' engagement. It is supported by two world-leading research centres: the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology (Austria) and the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) together with another urban community member from a Widening Country ANEL Nicosia Development Agency in Cyprus, providing access to an extensive network of facilities and speakers.

The project coordinator Dr Ing. Brian Azzopardi addressed the press conference.

The Hon Minister Evarist Bartolo congratulated MCAST, and Dr Ing. Azzopardi and the MCAST Energy team and emphasised the importance of energy research in transport for our present and future Maltese community.

MCAST Principal and CEO, Prof. James Calleja highlighted the significant contributions MCAST is making in its strategic plan research endeavour and stressed the importance of a national participation in these projects.

Dr Ing. Azzopardi highlighted the challenges and opportunities of electric mobility in Malta, looking at the vehicle population, current use of fuel in transport, impacts on the electric utility grid, targets and typical journey distances.

The press conference was the introduction of a public event that included the first NEEMO Public Lecture and Stakeholders' Discussion. The event was recorded and

live streamed via NEEMO Facebook page. The public lecture was delivered by Dr Matthias Prandstetter from AIT Austrian Institute of Technology on corporate e-mobility. The public lecture was followed by a stakeholders' meeting with representatives from the Malta Energy and Water Agency and the Ministry for Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change together with project partners. All participants also had the opportunity to experience a full electric drive in a London cab kindly provided by Gasan-Zammit Motors.

The half-day event was part of the first series of actions by the NEEMO project which also included during the week a week-long mentoring training sessions by AIT to MCAST Energy, staff and students and kick-off consortium meeting.

H2020 TWINNING Calls consist of Coordination and Support Action Projects aimed at significantly strengthening a defined field of research in a university or research organisation from a Widening Country, like Malta, by linking it with internationally leading research institutions from different EU Member States or Associated Countries. Twinning will enhance the scientific and technological capacity of the linked institutions with a principal focus on the university or research organisation from the Widening Country.

The breadth of energy research at MCAST Energy includes Device Fabrication and On-site Testing, Energy Economics and Policy, Efficient Buildings, Power Systems, Renewables, Electrical Energy Informatics and Transportation. The group specialises in applied research techniques including optimisation, decision-making and life cycle analysis. MCAST Energy offers executive courses, Masters by Research (MRes) and split-site PhD programmes with the University of Manchester.

Expressions of interest for participation from interested researchers, stakeholders and the public are to reach MCAST Energy project manager, Renata Mikalauskiene on renata.mikalauskiene@mcast.edu.mt, by subscribing to the projects mailing list on the web portal.

The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 857484.

MCAST Energy successfully organises the first School: Solutions for Photovoltaic Systems Integration



JUMP2Excel project, short for “Joint Universal Activities for Mediterranean PV Integration Excellence”, has recently completed the first School focusing on the topic of Photovoltaics (PV) integration solutions, hosted by the MCAST. Throughout the School the importance of performance, reliability, high penetration, electricity grid impacts and mitigations and energy storage were highlighted by 14 key international speakers.

The School which is accredited to 9 ECTS at MQF level 7 included site visits to Enemalta plc and SBE International Conference, participation in both participants’ presentations and a round table forum with a six local and international stakeholders’ panel on “The Future of Photovoltaics in the Mediterranean.”

More than thirty researchers, students and other trainees had the opportunity to learn about key topics for state-of-the-art solutions from JUMP2Excel members and external experts through multiple expert lectures, interactive seminars, and practical courses including conference experience and site visits.

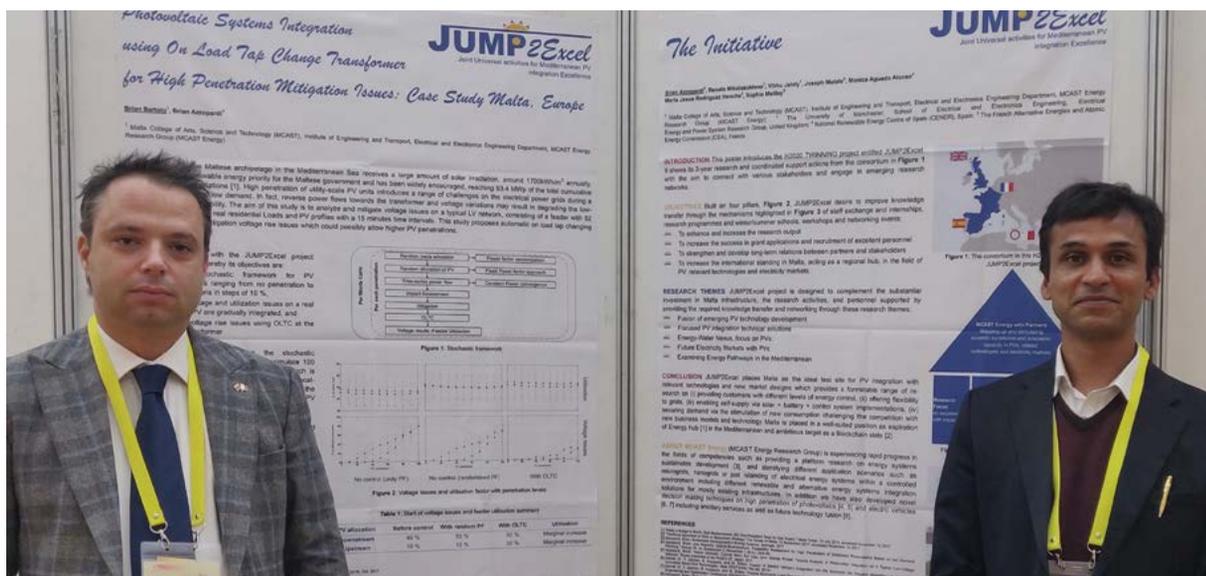
The JUMP2Excel: Joint Universal Activities for Mediterranean PV Integration Excellence project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant

agreement No 810809. JUMP2Excel aims to step up and stimulate the scientific excellence and innovation capacity of Malta in the field of PV integration including related technologies such as energy storage and ancillary services and electricity markets. JUMP2Excel activities may be also open to the Maltese research community and the public, free of charge. The next JUMP2Excel Schools are on 23-27 March 2020 and 23-27 November 2020. For further developments, activities and results of the ongoing work of the JUMP2Excel, you may access JUMP2Excel.eu or follow JUMP2Excel on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Research Gate.

The hosting of JUMP2Excel School was supported also by Conventions Malta and in collaboration with SBE19 Malta International Conference.

MCAST Energy presents two papers at the 29th International PV Science and Engineering Conference (Asia PVSEC-29) in Xi'an, China

Recently MCAST Energy Research Group Principal Investigator and JUMP2Excel coordinator Dr Eur. Ing. Brian Azzopardi together with Dr Vibhu Jately from MCAST Energy Research Group and JUMP2Excel Task Leader presented two papers at the 29th International Photovoltaics Science and Engineering Conference (PVSEC-29) in Xi'an, China.



From right: Dr Eur. Ing. Brian Azzopardi together and Dr Vibhu Jately

The contributions included the dissemination of the JUMP2Excel project with its five research themes (i) fusion of emerging PV technology development, (ii) focused PV integration technical solutions, (iii) energy-water nexus, focus on PVs, (iv) future electricity markets with PVs and (v) examining energy pathways in the Mediterranean and proposed electricity grid mitigation techniques for higher penetration of PVs using existing substation level transformers assets.

JUMP2Excel project: Joint Universal Activities for Mediterranean PV Integration Excellence is funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 810809.

A full version of the papers is available via pvsec-29.com and JUMP2Excel.eu.



Dr Eur. Ing. Brian Azzopardi at the EU Commission Agency, Brussels, Belgium

New Multi-Faith and Contemplation Room

On Tuesday 3rd December 2019 MCAST officially opened the Multi-Faith and Contemplation Room. This room is a dedicated space for prayer and reflection and aims to improve the social and spiritual well-being of all the MCAST population. It is located at the MCAST Student House, MCAST Main Campus and will be accessible at all times.



The College embraces diversity and has therefore adopted religious diversity by accommodating the spiritual needs of students not only through its staff and its activities, but also through a space that accommodates a variety of religious, spiritual and ethical practices. It also brings together religiously diverse students and values the spiritual practices of the varied student population. It also welcomes non-religious students who do not identify with a particular religion to find time and space to reflect.

The launch speeches were delivered by Prof James Calleja, MCAST Principal and CEO, and Mr Frederick Schembri MCAST President of the MCAST Board of Governors.



571 students graduate

during the MCAST Graduation Ceremonies

Five hundred seventy-one students graduated during the MCAST Graduation Ceremonies held during November and December 2019. Three quarters of them obtained a first Degree. The Institute with the highest number of graduates was the Institute of Business Management and Commerce with 117 students, followed by the Institute of Community Services with 93 students, and the Institute for the Creative Arts with 89 students. The ceremonies, held at the MCAST Main Campus, were conducted by the MCAST Principal and CEO, Professor James Calleja, together with the former Education Minister, the Hon. Evarist Bartolo.

Photos by Jonathan Borg





Institute of Community Services

HIGHER DIPLOMA IN ADVANCED STUDIES IN THE EARLY YEARS

Abela Kimberly, Fenech Nicolette, Attard Abigail, Galea Alison, Borg Kirsty, Gatt Francesca, Borg Rachel, Grech Nicole Marie, Bugeja Louise Victoria, Grima Ashley Maria, Bugeja Maxine, Grima Miriana Charlotte, Busuttil Maria, Grima Wendy, Busuttil Raiza, Hussain Cumbo Graziella, Busuttil Stephanie, Kind Maria, Buttigieg Kimberley, Lia Kim, Cachia Chanise Marie, Mallia Martina, Calleja Kirstie, Mangion Leanne, Caruana Karine, Meli Diana, Caruana Marika, Mizzi Dinah-Lee, Caruana Naomi, Moore Kaylee, Caruana Rachel, Psaila Emily Jude, Chetcuti Chiara, Refalo Natalia, Chetcuti Rhea, Salerno Brandon, Coleiro Leanne, Salerno Krista, Cossai Jenise, Sant Cassia Marie Louise, Cutajar Graziella, Selvatico Ruth, Debono Carol, Seychell Martina, Duca Bethany, Spiteri Greta, Farrugia Bernice, Tabone Chiara, Farrugia Nicole, Tanti Desiree, Fenech Emma, Vella Stephanie, Fenech Jade, Zammit Kristina.



HIGHER DIPLOMA IN FACILITATING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Fenech Doreen Maria.

HIGHER DIPLOMA IN SPORT EXERCISE AND HEALTH

Caruana Roderick, Gauci Ismael.

BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONOURS) IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Grech Abigail, Caruana Kimberly, Bonello Maria Ann, Schembri Donalise, Bugeja Roxanne,

BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONOURS) IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (MANAGEMENT)

Borg Daniel, Farrugia Rachel, Buhagiar Juanita, Fenech Therese, Calleja Jake Nicholas, Livori Bonici Mompalao Analise, Camilleri Marija, Micallef Raisa, Cassar Rebecca, Sammut Anthea, Chetcuti Gayle Marie, Spiteri Luana, Ciantar Luana, Spiteri Mariah, Ellul Ilona, Vassallo Rebecca, Farrugia Mandy, Yussuf Adekunle Lukmon.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN SPORT EXERCISE AND HEALTH

Camilleri Rodianne, Schembri Joseph, Attard Michelle, Sciberras Dean, Camilleri Clayton, Taliana Luke, Ekezie Kenneth Chibuike, Winters Joel, Ellul Maria, Zammit Anthony, Farrugia Emerson, Zouari Adem, Muscat Nikolai.



Institute of Engineering and Transport Building and Construction Engineering

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

Camilleri Mark, Grima Stephanie, Borg Justine, Mackay Warren, Camenzuli Nigel, Micallef Daniel, Cassar Andrew, Piscopo Bjorn, Cassar Nicholai, Sciberras Ryan, Cutajar Mirhea, Tabone Robert, Dimech Samuel, Zahra Kirsten.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING (CIVIL ENGINEERING)

Agius Kurt.



Institute of Engineering and Transport Electrical and Electronics Engineering

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING (HONOURS) IN ELECTRONICS AND CONTROL ENGINEERING

Cutajar Wayne, Micallef Bernard, Agius Terence, Muscat Justin, Borg Tiziana, Pisani Andre Carl, Bugeja Kieran, Scicluna Andrew, Cardona Mills Shelley, Vella Duncan, Magri Kadeen, Bonanno Christian Aron, Meli Joseph.

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING (HONOURS) IN ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

Buhagiar Steve, Mizzi Stefan, Grima Matthew, Sultana Maria Lara.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING

Abdulhadi Alias, Fenech Mark, Castillo Andreas, Mizzi Daniel.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

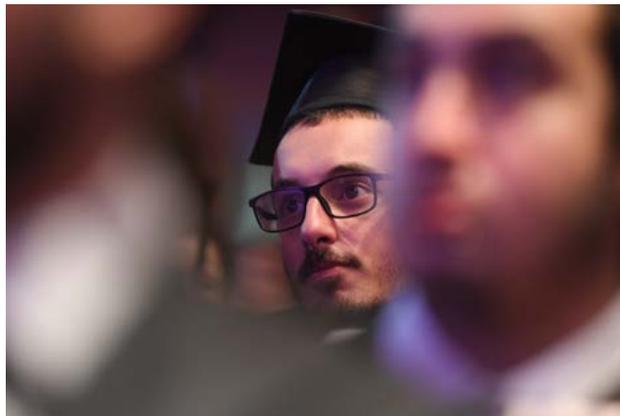
Sciortino Ryan.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

Vella Kirsten, Zammit Matthias George.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN POWER GENERATION AND RENEWABLES

Bartolo Brian, Pizzuto Timo, Falzon Victor, Sant Eric, Kerimbekov Adil, Scicluna Julian.



Institute of Engineering and Transport Mechanical Engineering

HIGHER DIPLOMA IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING (PLANT)

Buttigieg Joshua.

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING (HONOURS) IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING (MANUFACTURING)

Saliba Charlton, Caruana Jessica, Cacciottolo Adam, Debattista Sheldon.

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING (HONOURS) IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING (PLANT)

Caruana Clint, Schembri Noel, Galea Andrew, Tanti Nicolo', Said Ann-Marie, Zahra Adrian.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN MARINE ENGINEERING

Cremona Andrea, Vella William John, Demajo James, Zammit Stephen, Farrugia Adrian.

Institute of Applied Sciences

HIGHER DIPLOMA IN CHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY

Cascun Ryan, Piscopo Nicole Ann.



ZERO TOLERANCE FOR POSSESSION OF HARMFUL ITEMS

SEE IT, REPORT IT_79464636

11:00

MCAST
TALENT SHOW
MCAST MAIN HALL PAOLA

18TH
MARCH



MCAST

Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology