



IR-REF. TAGHNA:

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OUR REF.:

YOUR REF.:

3 October 2011

Dear Freshers,

Welcome to the Department of Pharmacy, at the University of Malta, a department that is proud of its internationally recognised excellence in both teaching and research.

In 1676, the Council of the Order of the Knights approved the Grandmaster's decision for the foundation of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery at the Sacra Infermeria in Valletta. The Department of Pharmacy was established within the Faculty at the same time. The Department of Pharmacy today has a very high reputation for excellence in pharmacy education and as a research-intensive department.

Curriculum changes to reflect contemporary changes in the practice of the profession and in pharmacy education have been ongoing. The latest development, which you are experiencing is the restructuring as from this academic year of the course leading to a degree in pharmacy into a two-cycle education system. Graduates in possession of the two degrees (Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Pharmaceutical Science and Master of Pharmacy) would be eligible for a warrant to practice pharmacy in Malta and in the EU.

The vision for the Department of Pharmacy is "to nurture the environment that fosters collaborative relationships with healthcare practitioners, the pharmaceutical industry and partners in pharmacy education that result in the advancement of educational programmes, research and in an increased focus on student needs". Last week, the Rector, Professor Juanito Camilleri signed a three-year collaborative agreement between the Department of Pharmacy and Actavis. This is an example of the collaboration with stakeholders that the Department has developed in support of its teaching and research programmes. We have a very strong Erasmus mobility programme where over 50% of our fourth year students take up their first semester in one of the schools of pharmacy in Europe with whom the Department has a collaborative agreement. Students are an essential element of the *raison d'être* for the department. We have an excellent communication network between staff and students.

I look forward to meet you and augur that all of you will participate in the student body and give constructive feedback to contribute towards the continuous development of pharmacy education at the University of Malta. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any information or to discuss any queries.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to the Presentation of the Historical Pharmacy Bench next Thursday 6 October at 11:00 am at the Department's upper floor Foyer.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lilian M. Azzopardi', is written over a light blue grid background.

**Lilian M. Azzopardi**

Associate Professor and Head of Department