

## *A Word from the Rector*

Over the past few years, the University of Malta has reviewed its structures and intensified its recruitment drive for international students in order to be at the cutting edge and in line with the Bologna process which envisages the establishment of the *European Higher Education Area* by 2010. The University of Malta will be fully compliant with the *European Credit Transfer System* (ECTS - 60 credits per academic year) with effect from October 2003. In an attempt to harmonise the organisational structure of its courses, the Senate has been considering a new set of General Regulations while all course programmes approved or amended recently, have been structured or revised to ensure a smooth change over.

The year has seen the formulation of a Strategic Plan for the University for the period 2002-2006, which emphasises the University's primary role in providing quality education and excellence in research while enhancing the quality of life within an environment that is functional and aesthetically pleasing. It also stresses the need to strengthen the links already forged with the World of Work.

In this issue of the *Annual Report*, Dr. Carmel Borg and Brian Bonnici highlight the facilities offered at *It-Tajra* Child Care Facility which is fast emerging as one of the University's most essential services provided to staff and students. In his article entitled: *Meeting Industrial and Environmental Needs through Research in Engineering*, Dr. Joseph Cilia shows how research carried out by the Department of Electrical Power and Control Engineering into alternative sources of energy and better energy utilization techniques can serve to enhance the Maltese quality of life by providing a cost effective and environmentally friendly solution for Malta. Gordon Cordina in *The Role of the University in National Economic Development: Some Strategic Considerations* presents some thoughts on the need for proactive intervention and cooperation to sustain national development and on the University's efforts in this respect. Dr. Janet Mifsud discusses *The Relevance of Academic Research: Demolishing the Ivory Tower* by which she reveals how university academic staff due to the very nature of their research, reach out to the community and are very heavily involved at many levels of Maltese society. Dr. Nicholas C. Vella in his article entitled: *Whose Past? The Public and Archaeology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* outlines the development of Archaeology as a degree subject at the University, its relevance in educational programmes and the interest that the public, young and old, can derive from involvement in the subject. In *Sketching Pen-Portraits of Faceless, Anonymous Mandarins*, Dr. Edward Warrington sets out to demonstrate in an at once entertaining but scholarly manner, that the lives of eminent public servants are worthy of study because such biographical research would provide patterns and models of effective leadership in public affairs.

The University is a bee-hive of intellectual and cultural activity even after hours. The *Work-in-Progress Seminar Series* is now into its fourth year; regular meetings of *The Linguistics Circle*, *The Philosophy Society*, *the Malta Mathematical Society* and the *Geography Society* are held. The Faculty of Education holds Research Seminars while the Faculty of Medicine & Surgery's *Continuing Medical Education Committee* organises lectures on various topics. Innumerable public lectures in various fields are given by Visiting as well as Maltese academics. The Precincts Office in conjunction with the *Koperattiva Kulturali Universitarja* (KKU) organises an ongoing cultural programme including the annual summer *Evenings on Campus* programme, now into its 9th year.



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