

SECTION 4

# ORGANISATION AND STAFF



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# Board of the Centre

## CHAIRPERSON

Professor Godfrey Baldacchino

## VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Dr Luke Fiorini (Director, Centre for Labour Studies)

## MEMBERS

### *Appointed by Council*

Mr James Pearsall

### *Appointed by Senate*

Dr Joseph Gravina

### *Representatives of the Academic Staff*

Professor Manwel Debono

Professor Anna Borg

### *Representatives of the Students*

Mr Kevin Agius

Mr Daniel Grima

### *Appointed by the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy*

Professor Peter J. Baldacchino

*Appointed by the Confederation of Malta Trade Unions  
(of whom one is by the Union Faddiema Magħqudin)*

Mr William Portelli

Ms Antoinette Aquilina

*Appointed by the Forum Unions Maltin*

Mr Marco Bonnici

*Appointed by the General Workers' Union*

Mr Josef Bugeja

Mr Kevin Camilleri

*Appointed by the Malta Employers' Association*

Mr Joseph Farrugia

*Appointed by the Ministry responsible for Labour Relations*

Ms Diane Vella Muscat

*Secretary to the Board*

Ms Josephine Agius (November 2023)

## HONOURARY MEMBERS

Professor Gerard Kester

Dr Francis La Ferla

Mr Saviour Rizzo

Professor Edward L. Zammit

Correct as of December 2024

## Staff Members

### FULL-TIME LECTURING STAFF



**DR LUKE A. FIORINI** Ph.D. (Nottingham), M.Sc. (Derby), P.G.Dip., B.Sc (Hons), S.R.P. is a senior lecturer in labour studies and holds degrees in health science, ergonomics, occupational health psychology and management. He is the Director of the Centre for Labour Studies and coordinates the Bachelor in Occupational Health and Safety (Hons) and the Master of Science in Work and Organisational Behaviour. Dr Fiorini lectures in areas related to occupational health and safety, human resource management and ergonomics. He is involved in a number of the Centre's projects and coordinates the Centre's contract with Eurofound. Dr Fiorini represents Malta on the European Trade Union Institute's (ETUI) Worker Participation Network, is the country ambassador of the European Network Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health (ENETOSH), and represents the European Network of Safety and Health Professional Organisations (ENSHPO) on the Health and Safety Committee of the International Ergonomics Association (IEA).



**PROFESSOR MANWEL DEBONO** Ph.D., M.Sc. (Hull), B.Psy.(Hons), C.Psychol is an Occupational Psychologist and has worked as an academic at the Centre since 2003, where he also served as Director (2009-2014). He coordinates the Master in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development. Prof. Debono lectures in organisational psychology, human resource management, the labour market, career guidance, and research methods.



**PROFESSOR ANNA BORG** Ph.D. (MDX), M.Sc. (Manchester Met.), Dip. Soc.St.(Melit.) is an Associate Professor and former Director of the Centre. She lectures in the area of equality and diversity in the labour market, HR-related topics, work-life issues and qualitative research methods. She coordinates the Diploma in Gender, Work and Society and the Bachelor in Work and Human Resources.

## RESEARCH STAFF



**PROFESSOR KRISTA BONELLO RUTTER GIAPPONE**

Ph.D.(Kent), M.Adv(Melit.), MA(Birmingham), MA Higher Ed.(Kent), Dip.Not.Pub.(Melit.) has been a Research Support Officer at the Centre for Labour Studies since February 2023. She is also a casual and visiting associate professor with the Faculty of Arts. She has been a research assistant with the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology; a visiting professor with the Jagiellonian University; and has also lectured at the University of Kent, University of Lincoln, and San Francisco State University. She is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and a research fellow at the University of Kent.



**MR SAVIOUR RIZZO** M.Ed.(Melit.), B.A.General has

been active in the Centre since its inception in 1981. He lectured in Sociology of Work, Education and the Labour Market and Gender in Sociology. He took an active part in the organization of seminars, courses and conferences organized by the centre. He was also one of the contributors to the publications of the centre. Between the years 2003 and 2009 he occupied the post of Director of the Centre. At present, he occasionally works as a research officer at the centre.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF



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**MS JOSEPHINE AGIUS** has been employed at the University of Malta since 1995 and joined the Centre's staff in January 2000. She works as an Administration Specialist and provides administrative support to the Diploma in Gender, Work and Society, Bachelor in Work and Human Resources Cohorts 2020-2025 and 2022-2027. In October 2023, Ms Agius was appointed Secretary to the CLS Board.



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**MS STEPHANIE MUSCAT** Cert. Lang. Pr.(Melit.), Dip. Soc. St.(Melit.), B.A. (Hons) (Melit.), Ms Muscat joined the University of Malta in 1995 and the Centre for Labour Studies in March 2011. She worked as an Administration Specialist up until November 2023 and provided administrative support to the Bachelor in Work and Human Resources cohort (2020-2025), as well as assisting with the Bachelor in Occupational Health and Safety (2018-2023). She served as Secretary of the CLS Board between October 2022 and October 2023.



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**MS ALESSIA ZAHRA** B.Sc. (Hons) HE(Melit.) Ms. Zahra joined the Centre for Labour Studies in September 2022 and works as an Administrator. She provides administrative support to the Bachelor in Occupational Health and Safety cohorts (2022–2027 and 2020–2025). Additionally, she manages the Centre’s website, handles design-related tasks, and posts content on the Centre’s social media platforms. Ms. Zahra also assists the Director in compiling the biennial report.



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**MS ELISA CARUANA** joined the Centre in December 2023 as an Administrator and handles general administrative work when required by the Centre.



**PROFESSOR  
MANWEL DEBONO**

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## A personal reflection on Ronald Sultana's connections with the Centre for Labour Studies and his impact on local career guidance

Ronald taught me sociology in the 1990s. Several years later, in 2002, he interviewed me as part of an international review of national career guidance policies commissioned by the European Training Foundation. At the time, I was coordinating the University's Students Advisory Services. Ronald's work on this review and similar others, formed an integral part of the most exhaustive



career guidance database ever compiled, propelling him to international recognition in the field. Unaware of the significance of the work that he was carrying out, I was struck by Ronald's unassuming demeanour, his skill of putting people at ease, and his insightful questioning.

A couple of years later, Ronald contacted the Centre for Labour Studies where I had recently started working as an academic. Having learnt of our Diploma in Occupational Guidance and Career Counselling, he proposed collaborating on a Postgraduate Diploma in the same area. We embarked on developing this new course, drawing from the existing

diploma and enriching it through an examination of similar European and international courses. By then, Ronald had already accumulated extensive global insights into career guidance, born from his international reviews and experiences. His contribution to the development of the Postgraduate Diploma in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development was crucial.

First of all, he insisted on the rather lengthy name to emphasise its broad scope, covering career development across one's lifespan. It needed to be made clear that the course was not just meant for practitioners within compulsory schooling and students faced with early career choices.

While 'lifelong orientation' was one pillar of the new course, another important pillar was Ronald's focus on the three notions of 'savoir', 'savoir faire', and 'savoir etre'. He believed in nurturing career advisors into 'reflective practitioners' who balanced theoretical knowledge with practical skills, alongside personal and professional growth. He maintained that one's personality and outlook needs to be appropriate for career guidance work. This philosophy underpinned the course's structure and its units, including those taught by Ronald himself, like professional ethics. 'Interdisciplinarity' was another important pillar that Ronald emphasised as part of the new course. In the 2000s, it was uncommon for the University to offer joint courses by multiple entities, and we had to defend this approach before a sub-senate committee. Ronald's reasoning was sound: to address the lifelong career needs of individuals, the course should leverage expertise from both educational and labour market perspectives. As time passed, the concept of shared courses gained wider acceptance and became a more common practice.

During the late 2000s, Ronald focused on the international career guidance scene. Nonetheless, he remained deeply invested in Malta's career guidance development, often contributing behind the scenes. Following his recommendation to the then Minister of Education, I was appointed as chair of a working group that wrote a national career guidance policy for schools, published in 2007. Ronald was critical of the fragmented and inconsistent career services in Malta and advocated for a 'community of practice' to unify and enhance local services. He encouraged the formation of the Malta Career Guidance Association in 2009, actively supporting its endeavours. His efforts to foster networks among career guidance stakeholders in Malta also led him to set up a



Guidance Forum, take part in national conferences and continuous professional development events for practitioners, and continually disseminate career guidance information to enhance practitioner skills.

Ronald was a prolific author, covering topics such as history of education, sociology of education, teacher education, comparative education, and career guidance. He commanded respect among international scholars and students. Equally compelling as a speaker, his engaging presentations, peppered with his characteristic cheeky wit, were as renowned as his writings, leading to keynote speeches worldwide. Ronald's extensive networking enriched our career guidance course, bringing many esteemed international figures to contribute their expertise. He also coordinated with the Malta Career Guidance Association to facilitate these experts' involvement in professionalising local practitioners.

Our career guidance course eventually evolved into a Master's degree and gained international recognition as an example of good practice. This was particularly notable as many countries, much larger than Malta, had not managed to develop and sustain something similar. In 2019, we assisted Helwan University in Egypt to develop their career guidance

course, drawing on Ronald's global knowledge and our experience in Malta. Just a week before his sudden passing, we were in the Faroe Islands, discussing our course in view of the specific needs of the practitioners there.

Ronald was both a visionary and a realist, always juggling various projects. While some innovative initiatives, like an online Master's degree in career guidance for the MENA region, didn't materialise, many others, like the 2019 '6th European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC) International Doctoral Summer School', that Ronald organised with the collaboration of Centre for Labour Studies, were resounding successes.

Ronald's exceptional intellect, charm, dedication, life enthusiasm, and humanitarian spirit have left an enduring mark on those who met him. His legacy, particularly through his written work in promoting social justice through career guidance, will continue inspiring the field for generations. On a personal level, Ronald not only helped me to discover more about myself but also inspired me to set more challenging goals. His mentorship was pivotal in my academic journey. I am profoundly grateful for the time spent with him and will forever treasure the influence he had on my life.