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Edition

Faculty of Laws Newsletter

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Participation at Junior College Careers Fair

In mid-January Dr Ilona Schembri and Prof. Ivan Mifsud represented the Faculty of Laws at the Junior College Careers Expo, taking the opportunity to answer questions by prospective students, which questions ranged from entry requirements, to possible career options and what possibilities are open to people who read for a law degree.



The expo event included a specific talk to prospective students, which talk attracted such a large number of students that the organisers had to change the venue to a much larger room, in order to be able to house all attendees.

In the meantime Prof. Patricia Vella de Fremaux addressed students at St Aloysius College 6th Form, while Dr Tiziana Filletti attended a similar event at St Augustine's College and Gozo Campus sixth formers visited our Faculty premises. All outreach initiative were well received by the organisers and students.

Meeting regarding possibility of reintroducing languages as LLB Hons study programme requirements

The possibility of re-introducing language requirements for prospective LLB Hons students (French or Italian at intermediate level) was discussed at a recent meeting organised by Pro Rector (Student & Staff Affairs) Prof. Carmen Sammut, with Dr Vella Briffa from Junior College and Laws Dean Ivan Mifsud in attendance. Given the importance of language skills, and the fact that the Faculty was already discussing the possibility of introducing languages in the new law course currently under internal discussion, the possibility and its implications, is being placed on the next Faculty Board meeting agenda.

Board of Studies meetings

Being January, a number of Board of Studies meetings were held, as is the norm. A first however was that of the new Board of Studies which covers the LLB (Hons), M.Not and M.Adv studies together, this being part of the plans to reform and amalgamate our studies. The Board of Studies met, and managed to complete the agenda in two hours, thanks to the collaboration of all attendees and also the diligence of the study unit coordinators and administrator. Items discussed included how the M.Adv Students' 'Day in Court' worked out and how it can be improved on during next academic year; the need in certain cases to restrict numbers of students attending particular elective study units was also discussed, as was the M.Not study programme and certain difficulties currently being experienced and possible solutions to the same.

Proposed new LLB, M.Adv and M.Not study programme under discussion

In September 2025 permission was sought and obtained from the UM Rector and Academic Registrar, to work on plans to reconsider our main products namely the LLB, M.Adv and M.Not study programmes; once this was granted a document was drafted, intended to outline the skills which a Maltese *avukat* and *nutar* require, and what knowledge too, what their roles are in today's world, and what our role is in helping them acquire the needed skills, and what subjects we should teach them too. The general proposal is to create a first 'initiation' year, followed by two in which 'basic' subjects are taught, followed by a final two years of more specialised study. At time of writing a repeat of the meeting held on 28th January is set for 13th February for those who could not attend first time. This will be held at 2pm in Room 317. Further meetings will be held to discuss the 'initiation' year's finer details, after which we hope to move to the second and third parts of the envisioned study programme. There is also an undertaking to

involve the Legal Procurators' study programme in a similar initiative, but due to time constraints this has yet to actually take off.

Interesting times beckon, with everything being put under scrutiny, including a reconsideration of how we lecture, how we find a balance between lectures and tutorials, how we engage our students, what our students' needs are in this day and age and whether this has changed, how we assess, students' real requirements in this Information Age, etc.

Support from UM Human Resources

The Faculty of Laws is also very pleased to announce that in recent months a series of meetings were held, in which the personnel requirements of the Faculty of Laws were discussed. There is now a general undertaking to beef up our administrative staff at various levels, given the numbers of students, the size of our faculty and the need to correct the impression out there that the Faculty of Laws is not a place where one would want to work. This undertaking in our favour is truly welcome and appreciated even if we will now have an additional problem to solve this being restricted office space.

Resignation from UM Academia

With regret we announce the resignation of Dr Mary Muscat. We are of course very happy for her having found a new, more favourable career opportunity, and grateful for the fifteen years of service which she gave us, but we will miss her collegiality, hard work and dedication.

Fresh calls are being prepared, not only to replace Dr Muscat but also for another resident academic to lecture the Master Notarial students as well as to contribute to the lecturing at the Faculty in general. It is hoped that these calls will be published very soon. Owing to tenure track requirements it is hoped that these will attract people who either already have their Ph.D., or have nearly completed it.

A modern way of conducting law examinations.

In the last two examination sessions (June 2025 and January 2026) the ECL Department began migrating its final examinations to the online platform Wiseflow. The shift began with post graduate small cohorts, where numerous scenarios were tested, including take-home exams and open- and closed-book exams on campus. Finally, in January 2026, a cohort of 160 students took a closed-book exam on campus. While a shift is always challenging, the experiment proved very successful. The biggest advantage is that the system allows simultaneous marking and eliminates handwriting, which can sometimes prove difficult to read. The exam platform also reduces costs and supports multiple exam formats, including multiple-choice questions, enabling automated marking and speeding up marking. It was concluded that the advantages of using Wiseflow far outweigh the disadvantages. Similar platforms have been used in European and North America Universities for over a decade. In recent years, other faculties at the University of Malta have increasingly been using these online exam platforms. It is time the Faculty of Laws caught up with modern practice and began using these platforms more frequently, to the benefit of everyone involved. Other departments are observing progress and considering following suite.

Graduation dates

As in the past, academics are reminded about the need to make a present at graduation ceremonies (to be held in Valletta, given that they are post-graduate).

Ceremony 9 - Friday 6 March 2026 at 13:00

Faculty of Laws

- Master of Advocacy (Surnames A - F)
- Master of Arts in Financial Services
- Master of Arts in Human Rights Law and Practice
- Master of Arts in Law
- Master of Notarial Studies
- Doctor of Philosophy

Ceremony 10 - Friday 6 March 2026 at 16:00

Faculty of Laws

- Master of Advocacy (Surnames G - Z)
- Master of Laws (European Business Law, European & Comparative Law, International Law)

This year our post-graduate students will graduate on 6th March 2026, when owing to our numbers, two ceremonies will be held, one at 13.00, the other at 16.00. **The Faculty requires our academics to register their interest in attending one or both of these ceremonies** and for this purpose urge you to write to the Dean and to the Faculty Manager.

MJLS further progress

Thanks to the hard work of a number of people, not least Dr Ioannis Revolidis and our partners at Brill, the journal has progressed further, as can be seen from the website, which now includes a proper dashboard through which to submit a manuscript for review:

The screenshot shows the Editorial Manager interface for the Malta Journal of Legal Studies. The header includes the journal logo, navigation links (Home, Submit a Manuscript, About, Help), and user options (Login, Register). The main content area features a login form with fields for Username and Password, and buttons for Author Login, Reviewer Login, Editor Login, and Publisher Login. A sidebar on the right lists various resources such as Instructions for Authors, Author's Manual, and Open Access Options. At the bottom, a statement reads: "This is a full Open Access journal, which means that all articles are freely available, ensuring maximum, worldwide dissemination of content."

The Faculty Editorial Board is indeed very happy with progress made and with the manner in which things are falling into place, including receiving of manuscripts and their peer review processes undertaken.

International Law Association upcoming event

A Lectio Magistralis to be delivered by Mr Steven Hill, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs. The event will take place on 3 March from 11.00 am to 12.00 pm in Sir Temi Zammit Hall, University of Malta, Msida Campus.

Series on the Practice of International Law

Lectio Magistralis

International Law at the United Nations



Mr. Steven Hill

United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs

3 March 2026 | 11:00am to 12:00pm

Sir Temi Zammit Hall
University of Malta, Msida Campus

Register your attendance by emailing intlawmalta@gmail.com

Have you got any news to share? If you have any item of relevance to this newsletter, feel free to inform us about it. You may contact any member of the editorial board, these being Prof. Tonio Borg, Prof. Ivan Sammut, Ms Rowena Leontijevic and Prof. Ivan Mifsud. The Board reserves the right to refuse to publish an item submitted to it for its consideration.