

The First EU funded UOM course in Gozo

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Introduction

The Ministry for Gozo in collaboration with the University of Malta – Gozo Campus has organised the first EU funded University course in Gozo.

The course leading to a Diploma in Commerce is the result of the project entitled ‘Higher Education Courses to Address Skill Mismatches in Gozo,’ of Operational Programme II (ESF), Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, the main priority of which is to improve education and skills in Gozo.

The diploma is aimed at improving skills in three key, high value-added sectors for Gozo, namely ICT, tourism and financial services.

Organisation

The aim of the organisers was to deliver all the study units over one calendar year as against the

usual two academic years needed to obtain this diploma on a part-time basis.

Preparations for the course were extensive and started in 2009. Brochures were prepared, applications were processed, lecturers, mostly residing in Malta, willing to travel to and from Gozo, were engaged. Books were ordered for the Gozo Campus library and timetables were painstakingly drawn up to accommodate the busy schedules of the lecturers.

Structure

During the first semester six study units, each one worth four ECTS (European Credit Transfer System), were offered. These were:

- EU Institutions
- Accounting and Financial Control
- Human Resource Management
- Introductory Micro Economics
- Fundamentals of Information Systems
- Introduction to Programming



Diploma in Commerce students attending a lecture being delivered by Professor Lino Briguglio.



Professor Roderick Pace delivering a lecture to the Diploma in Commerce students.

During the second semester the following study units were offered:

- Introductory Macro Economics
- Cost Accounting
- Mathematics
- Introduction to Marketing
- Introduction to Tourism Studies
- Introduction to Management

During the summer months the following study units will be offered:

- Quantitative Techniques
- Foundations of Finance
- Tourism Practices and Principles

Most lectures are offered on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings and afternoons.

Student Work

Nineteen students are following the course. From the feedback obtained so far, it appears that students are finding the course interesting and fruitful. The work involved for students is very demanding. Most study units are accompanied by assignments, which students have to prepare during semester time. In addition students have to sit for examinations in connection with the respective study units at the end of every semester. These assignments and examinations require considerable effort from students especially as being mature students they

have to juggle a variety of commitments including full time jobs and parenthood.

The Bachelor of Commerce Course

Students who complete the Diploma in Commerce will be eligible to join the Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) course where three major areas of study will be offered, Finance, IT and Tourism studies, of which students will choose two.

The B.Com course will also be funded by the EU, and will be spread over three years on a part-time basis.

Unique Opportunity

Mature students, who are employed in Gozo or are raising a family, cannot normally follow courses in Malta, even those offered on a part-time basis, so the University Gozo Campus offers the Gozitan Community a unique opportunity to follow University courses in Gozo. The DipCom and the B.Com courses funded by the EU go a step further in making them more attractive for Gozitan students as the student fees are waived.

Caroline Camilleri Rolls possesses a Master of Arts Degree in Islands and Small States Studies and currently assists in the administration as Academic Coordinator at the University Gozo Campus.