

On Reaching Fifteen

Professor Alfred J. Vella

Pro-Rector, University of Malta

On reaching fifteen, a human being would be on the threshold of adulthood, possibly more so for a woman than a man. I am not sure whether the University Gozo Centre is a he or a she, but I can say for sure that it has now reached adulthood. In fifteen years the Centre has done much more than was expected of it.

Many would have thought that the Centre would just offer a few evening lectures, with some possibly leading to a certificate or a diploma. In reality the Centre has done much more than this. Many degree courses have been offered in Gozo, including post-graduate ones. The Centre, as its mission obliges it to do, has logistically assisted University Departments in offering these courses in Gozo and has also offered its own short courses.

Between 1992 and 2007, the Centre has run an impressive number of degree or diploma courses. These are the Master of Arts in Islands and Small States Studies (2 courses), Master of Arts Qualifying course in History, Master of Arts in History, Master in Education, Bachelor of Arts (two courses), Bachelor of Commerce (4 courses), Diploma in Commerce (6 courses), Diploma in Lace Studies, Diploma in Education - Administration and Management (2 courses), Diploma in Information Technology, and Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education.

The Centre has made a very important contribution to higher education in Gozo. So far, about 300 students have graduated after having following courses in Gozo, and many more (running into almost a thousand) have followed short courses at the Centre.



Professor Alfred J. Vella, Pro-Rector, University of Malta.

At present there are about 162 students attending University courses. The following is a breakdown of such courses:

Course	Course Group	No. of Students
Bachelor of Commerce	2004-2007	12
Diploma in Commerce	2005-2007	14
Diploma in Lace Studies	2005-2007	12
Master of Arts in ISSS	2005-2007	5
Bachelor of Commerce	2005-2008	4
Diploma in Commerce	2006-2008	11
Diploma in Education (Administration & Management)	2006-2008	27
Master of Arts in History	2006-2009	3
Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education	2007-2009	74

I am particularly pleased to note that the Centre also involves itself in publications.

Its publications include:

- *The Gozo Observer*, issued periodically (available at: http://home.um.edu.mt/ugc/gozo_observer);
- *From Vision to Reality*, edited by Professor Maurice Cauchi (2002). A booklet issued on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the University Gozo Centre. (available at: <http://home.um.edu.mt/ugc/booklet.pdf>);
- *Gozo Past and Present*, by Professor Maurice Cauchi (2002). A book about the history of Gozo;
- *Let's Go To Wied il-Lunzjata*, by Sylvia Haslam and Joseph Borg (2001). A book about the environs of Wied il-Lunzjata;
- *The Impact of EU Membership on the Island Region of Gozo*, edited by Prof Lino Briguglio (2000);

The Centre is administered by Mr Joseph Calleja (left), ably assisted by Mr Marvin Grech.



Four issues of 'The Gozo Observer', published by the University Gozo Centre.

- *A Focus on Gozo*, edited by Revd Dr Joseph Farrugia and Prof Lino Briguglio (1996);
- *Gozo and its Culture*, edited by Prof Lino Briguglio and Rev Dr J Bezzina (1995);
- *Tourism in Gozo*, edited by Prof Lino Briguglio (1994).

The Centre has considerable potential as a University Unit offering University courses in Gozo. It can also serve as a conference centre, but this potential is yet to be realized. The Centre offers part-time courses only, but there is potential for full-time courses in areas related to Business. The Centre is also equipped with a video conference system and sometimes this is used for the offering of lectures from the UOM campus in Malta, while students attend classes at the Centre in Gozo.

I wish to take the opportunity to congratulate Professor Lino Briguglio, who directs the Centre and Mr Joseph Calleja, who with Mr Marvin Grech, administer the Centre on a day to day basis, for their sterling work in promoting higher education in Gozo.