



Science unchained

Lucia Farrugia

I am proud to be part of the Faculty of Science during its centenary year. Despite past struggles, the faculty has managed to grow at a steady rate. Its centenary is a cause for celebration but also an opportunity to shine a critical light from an undergraduate's perspective.

This faculty offers joint courses between departments that allows students to excel in two scientific streams—double the employment opportunities upon graduation. Despite

this benefit, communication between departments is lacking for these degrees. Taking a joint course equates to taking two separate degrees. While useful for those undecided students, it is somewhat counterproductive. Undergraduate students who are strong in both streams should be given unique opportunities that need knowledge of both disciplines. Such benefits are only possible with more effective communication between departments. An idea would be to



eLeadership—Are we getting it right?

Matthew Gatt, eSkills Malta Foundation

To secure adequate growth and quality jobs, Europe needs eLeaders; people who are capable of driving innovation to capitalise on ICT advances. To identify these opportunities requires good eLeadership skills. Such skills enable people to lead their team towards identifying business models and exploiting key opportunities. This makes the best use of ICT that delivers the objectives of organisations.

eLeaders must be both business and ICT savvy. Good eLeadership skills include an ability to guide ICT-related innovation at all business levels, from start-ups to large corporations—private and publicly owned.


The study of eLeadership is a recent discipline. A study published in March

2015 on eLeadership skills for SMEs (<http://leadership2015.eu>) explains the required skills and competences. This study includes a scoreboard that allows comparisons across EU Member States. Malta ranked ninth place because of a strong policy and initiatives on digital entrepreneurship skills.

Future technologies will be ICT driven. Today's strong demand for software engineers, information security specialists, enterprise architects, and other specialised disciplines reflect the ICT sector's professionalism. A good professional needs comprehensive up-to-date knowledge through a continuous commitment to professional development via qualifications,

certifications, work experience, non-formal and/or informal education. Such professionals need an agreed code of ethics while adhering to regulatory practices to deliver value products and services.

As part of the European Union's e-skills strategy, the European Commission has supported a European Foundational ICT Body of Knowledge (BOK). BOK defines the foundational knowledge needed from ICT professionals.

ELeaders need to adapt leadership skills to the digital age. A good eLeader convinces others that technology is beneficial and understands its benefits. Good eLeadership skills involve empower others. 




hold meetings across departments for overlapping areas of study. Students should not be held back.

Even though there exist joint courses for students from both faculties, these are treated as though they belong to one faculty, or the other. Also, students are not encouraged to follow a final year project that encapsulates both disciplines. Most final year projects are completed with one faculty, which essentially does not maximise the students' potential. Final year

projects across subjects are already possible yet rare since the student would need to push the idea and it is simpler to work on a given title.

In addition to internal, cross-faculty communication, communication is also lacking between the University of Malta and foreign universities. University needs more research collaborations to overcome a lack of resources. The true wealth of the Faculty of Science is intellectual. The lecturing staff is excellent and students excel when they pursue

postgraduate degrees abroad. It would benefit everyone to support students visiting other universities to perform research earlier in their careers.

And finally, we must not forget that the sciences transcend all barriers. The Faculty of Science should represent this by further uniting departments. After 100 years, pursuing such unity would be a great achievement. 

Lucia Farrugia is the vice-president of S-Cubed, the science student society (University of Malta).



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