

Recent Faculty Board decisions

At Faculty Board meeting held on 28th April, it was confirmed that members of boards of examiners of dissertations and long essays were to assess the version of the dissertation / long essay uploaded by the Student on Turnitin. The current system, whereby Examiners receive a soft copy of the dissertation / long essay by email is being discontinued, after it resulted that at least one student had uploaded one version on Turnitin and sent another version to the Faculty.

At the same Faculty Board meeting, the draft M.A. Preparatory programme was approved. This M.A. Preparatory programme has been designed as part of a change which the Faculty of Laws has proposed to, and discussed with, the UM Rector and Academic Registrar. The idea is to amend the M.Adv. and M.Not. regulations introducing a new requirement whereby students must obtain an average of 65% in the LL.B. Hons course the UM offer, to be eligible to join the M.Adv. or M.Not. Those who do not manage to obtain this average grade in the LL.B Hons offered by our Faculty, will be offered opportunity to undergo the M.A. Preparatory programme, which is essentially a revision of the main aspects of our LL.B Hons core subjects. If they sit for this programme and obtain an average of 65% they will be eligible to join the M.Adv. and M.Not. Studies courses.

Some reminders

With exams just round the corner and exam papers in preparation, the Dean thought it best to send out a reminder, that it is imperative that the BOE creates a marking scheme and model answer together with the exam paper, and to follow protocol when circulating the draft exam paper etc., (password protected documents, password sent separately and not via email, password should be a good combination of characters and not predictable words). When it comes to correcting, avoid 43s and 44s; the BOE must also have evidence that it has applied the assessment criteria (the Dean has been informed that audits will be conducted ie. Random spot checks to seek proof that we have actually applied our marking criteria, and we must not be caught unawares or on the wrong foot). BOEs must also keep a trail of meetings, decisions taken (i.e. minutes must be kept of these).

Teambuilding Event

On Friday 14th April Faculty of Laws' Admin Staff held a teambuilding event in Gozo. They crossed on an early ferry and had breakfast in Rabat, after which they went on a tour of the area including the Cittadella.

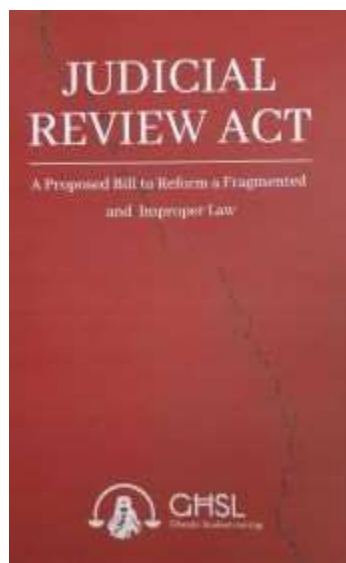


Lunch was followed by more sightseeing which included a visit to Għar il-Mixtla in Nadur. They then caught the 5pm ferry back to Malta.

The Faculty of Laws would like to express its gratitude towards UM Human Resources and the Office of the Academic Registrar, for making such events possible.

GħSL Launch

On 21st April Għaqda Studenti tal-Liġi launched the finalised version of their *Judicial Review Act – A Proposed Bill to Reform a Fragmented and Improper Law*. GħSL, under the guidance of Prof. Tonio Borg, and with input from other academics including Prof. Kevin Aquilina, are proposing a new bill, to be called the Judicial Review Act, to replace article 469A COCP and to bring judicial review of administrative and legislative acts under one comprehensive law.



Apart from giving out copies and making the same publication available online, copies of their work have been sent to both the Government and Opposition, urging them to give the bill, which is drafted in both English and Maltese, the serious consideration which it deserves.

The launch was organised at the Chamber of Advocates premises in Valletta.

Parliamentary Ombudsman presentation

On 26th April the new Parliamentary Ombudsman, Judge Joseph Zammit McKeon, at the invitation of the Faculty of Laws, delivered a presentation about his institution, its function and purpose. Judge Zammit McKeon also took questions from the audience including explaining the million dollar question this being why should anybody resort to the Ombudsman's services instead of going to court, given that the Ombudsman can only make a recommendation to the Government. Judge Zammit McKeon explained in detail the circumstances under which a person may indeed decide not to resort to court action e.g. because of costs involved, and also went into the steps his office takes to put pressure on the Government to ensure that his recommendations are implemented.



Judge Zammit McKeon also announced that from next academic year his Office will be offering a prize to the student who writes the best dissertation in an ombudsman-related subject.

This presentation was attended by practicing advocates, current law students and even by some senior public officers. It was held at the Chamber of Advocates premises in Valletta.

Member of the Department of International Law lectures at the University of London

Dr. Felicity G. Attard was invited by Malgosia Fitzmaurice, Professor of International Law at Queen Mary University of London to lecture to postgraduate students reading for their LL.M in International Law.



Prof. Fitzmaurice introduced Dr. Attard as an internationally recognised expert on the legal obligations which the shipmaster has with respect to rendering assistance to persons in distress at sea. In her presentation, Dr. Attard reviewed developments in international treaty law since the duty to render assistance at sea was codified in early maritime treaties at the beginning of the last century, including the 1910 International Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules of Law relating to Assistance and Salvage at Sea, the 1910 International Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules of Law with respect to Collisions between Vessels and the 1914 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea. Despite decades of practice, the legal formulae adopted in these treaties formed the basis of the contemporary treaty regime regulating the duty as reflected in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and legal instruments adopted by the International Maritime Organization.

Dr. Attard's lecturing was well-received and she has been invited to teach in the course next year.

News

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 Dr Ivan Mifsud. The Board reserves the right to refuse to publish an item submitted to it for its consideration.