B 2810

L.N. 246 of 2014

EDUCATION ACT
(CAP. 327)

STATUTE FOR THE INSTITUTE OF SPACE SCIENCE AND ASTRONOMY

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon him by articles 74(5) and 75(6) of the Education Act, the Chancellor of the University of Malta has promulgated the following statute made by the Council of the University of Malta in virtue of the powers conferred upon it by articles 72(h), 75(2) and 77(c) of the said Act:

Citation

1. This statute may be cited as the Statute for the Institute of Space Science and Astronomy.

Applicability

2. This statute shall be applicable from 8 February 2014 onwards.

Definition and Interpretation

3. In this Statute, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Space Science and Astronomy" shall refer to the classical definition of space science and astronomy, that is, the theoretical study of celestial bodies and their distribution throughout the universe and the design, development, implementation and deployment of both earth-based and space-based astronomical observation instruments and associated computational software and hardware. The term also encompasses in it the science that is derived from earth observation from both ground and space-based instruments, the engineering of such instruments including the application of such instruments in different fields. The term shall also refer to the design, development and potential deployment of space-based technology, to include payload delivery systems. It will also involve the technology-agnostic study of space-based and earth-based astronomical systems and signals including: theoretical modelling, studies of alternative theories of gravity, instrumentation theory, analysis, modelling, behaviour and control; data, signal and image acquisition, analysis and processing; study and extraction of information, pattern and intelligence; understanding of

knowledge-directed processes; decision-making processes; and the design and development of devices to achieve the above. The term shall also refer to the transfer of spin-off digital technologies, acquired in the course of research, to medicine, health-care and wellbeing;

"the Board" shall mean the Board of the Institute for Space Science and Astronomy;

"the Institute" shall mean the Institute for Space Science and Astronomy.

Establishment

4. The Institute for Space Science and Astronomy is hereby established as an institution within the University of Malta.

Objectives and functions

5. The aims of the Institute shall be:

(a) to promote and organise multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research, development and services in the fields of space science and astronomy;

(b) to organise and run training programmes, study-units, certificate, diploma, degree and postgraduate courses as well as public lectures and professional courses related to astronomy, informatics, cosmology, space technology, in collaboration with other University institutions, as necessary;

(c) to collaborate with other University institutions and with governmental and non-governmental organisations in projects and services of mutual benefit and interest;

(d) to network and liaise with centres and organisations related to astronomy, cosmology and associated ground-based and spaced-based technologies, both local and overseas; and

(e) to serve as a resource Institute and offer consultative services in the field of space science to stakeholders, such as space technology contractors and policy makers.

Governance

6. The Institute shall be governed by a Board that shall consist of the following:

(i) Chairman: the Rector of the University or his delegate;
(ii) Vice-Chairman: the Director of the Institute;
(iii) a person appointed by the Council of the University;

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(iv) a Resident Academic from the Faculty of Engineering appointed by Senate;
(v) a Resident Academic from the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology appointed by Senate;
(vi) a Resident Academic from the Faculty of Science appointed by Senate;
(vii) up to two representatives of the academic staff lecturing or conducting research within the Institute;
(viii) up to two representatives of the students registered with the Institute; and
(ix) up to two scholars of repute to be recommended by the Board and approved by Senate.

The Registrar or his/her delegate shall act as Secretary to the Board.

7. All members of the Board, other than those appointed *ex officio*; the two representatives of the academic staff and the two representatives of the students shall be appointed for a period of one year, renewable for up to four years. A retiring member will be eligible for re-appointment.

8. The functions of the Board shall be:

(a) to govern the affairs of the Institute subject to the provisions of this statute and of such regulations, policies or directions as may from time to time be approved by the Council and the Senate;

(b) to formulate the policy of the Institute, to supervise its activities and administration, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Board may:

(i) approve business plans and annual estimates of revenue and expenditure of the Institute for consideration and approval by the Council;

(ii) with the written concurrence of the Rector enter into agreements with third parties for funding of the Institute or of particular activities;

(iii) publish an annual report;

(iv) enrol the Institute in associations or institutions sharing its aims and interests;

(v) propose Regulations and Bye-Laws to the Senate;

(vi) require staff members of the Institute to produce reports on academic matters, including the curricula of courses of study, qualifications for admission to courses, examinations and certificates of attendance or qualification, as well as project proposals for external funding, and scientific publications;

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(vii)recommend to the Council the creation or abolition of academic and non-academic posts in the Institute;

(viii) propose for approval to the Senate, Boards of Studies and Boards of Examiners for undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Appointment of Director and Staff

9. The Institute shall have a Director and Staff as follows:

(a) the Director of the Institute shall be appointed according to the procedure for the appointment of Directors of Institutes and Centres as approved by the Council of the University for a duration of one year, with the possibility of renewal annually subject to established performance criteria, the needs of the Institute and the needs of the University, for a total period not exceeding four (4) years; and

(b) the staff of the Institute shall be appointed by the University according to usual practice.

Duties of the Director

10. The duties of the Vice-Chairman/Director of the Institute shall include:

(a) promoting the development and implementation of the Institute's curricula and research programmes;

(b) compiling and submitting to the Registrar of the University by not later than January of each academic year, an updated comprehensive prospectus of the content descriptions of all current and projected study-units offered by members of the Institute as per guidelines established by the Programme Validation Committee;

(c) ensuring that the study-units offered by the staff members of the Institute are delivered in accordance with the advertised programme of studies; the Director of the Institute must ensure that lecturing staff under his remit deliver all lectures, seminars, tutorials and laboratory sessions assigned to them respectively, at the time and venue advertised in the official timetable, and that any deviations thereof are formally registered, and the students duly notified in good time;

(d) delivering and implementing the strategic plan of the Institute;

(e) administering the Institute in full consultation with the members; monitoring and approving requests for leave of absence of members of the Institute; the Director of the Institute are expected to maintain records of all leave taken by members and to pass on these records to the Director of Human Resources Management and Development upon request;

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(f) promoting students' academic and personal welfare, providing first-line support to students with any difficulties they may encounter during their studies related to the activities of the Institute;

(g) monitoring the running of tests and examinations in the Institute and ensuring that all assessment and examination results are submitted to the Registrar's Office as follows:

- January session – by the end of March;
- May/June session – final year results by not later than two working days prior to the final year degree classification board but in any case not later than the end of July; other results as early as possible but not later than the end of July;
- September session – by the end of September.

(h) encouraging and facilitating co-operation with other universities and other institutions;

(i) chairing meetings of the Board in the absence and with the permission of the Chairman;

(j) ensuring and facilitating the further development and training of academic and non-academic staff;

(k) participating at any meeting of the University congruent with the post;

(l) representing the Institute during official functions of the University;

(m) compiling and submitting to the Secretary of the University by the end of September of each academic year, an annual report outlining the activities of the Institute for the outgoing year, which should include, amongst others, information that may be requested by the Secretary: a comprehensive list of recent publications of all members of the Institute; a synopsis of all projects involving members of the Institute which are wholly or partially externally funded; a list of all conferences/seminars/meetings attended abroad by members of the Institute during term time; and an outline of the Institute's collaboration with third parties including local industry, Government or civil society at large;

(n) compiling and submitting to the Director of Finance of the University by not later than the end of May of each academic year budgetary estimates for the following year including a manpower plan for the Institute, to cover the projected teaching, research and administration workload of the Institute, and based on the projected workload for each Resident Academic member of the Institute and Visiting Teaching Staff;

(o) monitoring the performance of the non-academic staff attached to the Institute;

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(p) authorising the Institute's procurement of equipment; ensuring that the resources assigned to the Institute – whether human or other – are utilized fully and efficiently; and

(q) performing other duties which may be assigned by the University from time to time.

11. The Director of the Institute moreover:

(a) is to report directly to the Chairman of the Board governing the Institute and shall collaborate with all senior administrative officers of the University;

(b) shall normally be Resident Academic engaged with the University on a full-time basis for the duration of his tenure as Director of the Institute. If the Institute is engaged in undergraduate or postgraduate taught programmes of study then the Director of the Institute must be engaged with the University as Resident Academic on a full-time basis;

(c) should not be engaged in any other activity outside the University which may be in conflict with, or distract him from, his duties at the University;

(d) are expected to be present on campus or any designated University of Malta site at least during normal office hours from Monday to Friday throughout the year subject to the exigencies of an academic in accordance with the University's practices and needs and subject to normal leave entitlement and public holidays as provided for at law; should his absence be necessary and justified they must ensure that he is immediately contactable through the secretarial staff of the Institute;

(e) shall not give access to any information to any third party that is not associated with the University of Malta, about any work or data that relates to tasks conducted at the University of Malta without the prior approval of the University of Malta; all work carried out within the Institute must be treated according to Maltese data protection legislation; and

(f) is to abide with the statutes, regulations and policies of the University of Malta, which are in force now or will become effective in the duration of his tenure.

The Treasurer

12. The Director of Finance of the University shall be the Treasurer of the Institute.

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