



# Annual General Meeting

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## President – Andrew Drago

The term 2023/2024 has been a challenging yet rewarding year for GhSL's public image and identity. Despite facing challenges, GhSL has experienced growth in public outreach and has made significant contributions to rule of law activism. It has been a year marked by continuity in past projects, including advocacy for the Judicial Review Bill, issuing statements, and campaigning against undue pressure on the judiciary. GhSL has actively participated in events organised by the Chamber of Advocates and the Office of the Ombudsman, supported book launches and initiatives, published the family law handbook, and released an annual policy paper on a public law/criminal law-related topic.

### Internal Student Representation and Initiatives

GhSL has remained steadfast in its commitment to student-centered principles within the University community. Despite facing resistance, GhSL has continued to oppose the Campus Hub project and maintained its boycott of its facilities and services from the previous year. While GhSL spearheaded opposition to Campus Hub alongside other major University organisations last year, it has found itself without student support this year. Despite this, GhSL has chosen to remain rooted on the University Campus, abstaining from expanding to Campus Hub, and has actively encouraged other University organisations to do the same. Moving forward, I urge the incoming executive to uphold their commitment to opposing corporate exploitation of students and resisting compromising GhSL's values for the convenience of Campus Hub or the complacency of other student organisations. This year, GhSL had the privilege of having Andrew Sciberras on Faculty Board and Senate, and Michael Spiteri on Council, advocating effectively for the interests of Law Students. Moreover, GhSL has advocated for an undergraduate seat at Faculty board, which was previously limited to postgrad students, through filing a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman, a complaint that was upheld.

GhSL has also launched an Anonymous feedback form on the website, where a considerable number of law students have submitted their anonymous feedback. Laura Chetcuti Dimech gathered these anonymous complaints, categorized them according to their year of study, and organised meetings with the Dean at the Faculty wherein the feedback was handed over to the faculty. This is a significant step towards reaching out to students and addressing their concerns in a private manner. I am confident that this momentum will propel the next executive board to advocate for a better law course in a reasoned and intelligent way. I am pleased to hear that the office of Student Support Officer has been created. I am sure that this will be a worthwhile office, and I applaud the upcoming executive for taking the initiative to create this office.

This year, GhSL and the Chamber of Advocates collaborated to research ways to improve the law course by creating a committee. The committee's first task was to compile reports on different top-ranking Universities and their law courses. This research

will be gathered in a final report and presented to the Faculty of Laws, which is currently undergoing a quality assurance process. In this regard, GhSL organised a talk on the Fit and Proper test, which was well attended and provided insights into how the test is conducted and what to expect.

Freshers' Week was well attended, leading to the creation of the Exclusive GhSL members newsletter, which was sent via email to all consenting members. The newsletter consisted of updates on various events and projects planned by GhSL, as well as any available job opportunities. It may be wise for the upcoming executive to consider having a regular schedule for the distribution of the newsletter and assigning newsletter duties to several executive board members.

A well-accepted notes pack for first years, termed 'freshers' pack,' was sold at the stand. The Pack consisted of various essentials required for starting the law course, such as the Mamo Notes and a copy of the Constitution. An item in the Freshers Pack that was beneficial to the organisation was the collection of individual 'Id-Dritt' articles useful for the first year study. This aimed to increase awareness of our Law Journal and reach a wider readership of 'Id-Dritt'. The next executive board should strive to continue this push of the Law Journal by targeting those articles that may assist students in their particular year.

An event created this year was 'Law the Next Step,' an induction event to introduce upcoming Master of Advocacy and master in notarial studies students to the components they will have in their final year. This was well received, particularly by Master of Advocacy Students, due to the particularities of the Law Clinic. This was a successful initiative along with the usual 'law the first step' aimed at first year Bachelor of Law Students.

These were, in my view, the events and student outreach initiatives that were very beneficial for the organisation and which should become customary to our organisation. Moreover, an agreement was reached between the three different law organisations to organise the student representative election together to avoid conflicts between potential student representative candidates and to prevent politicising the student representative elections. This means that from next term onwards, GhSL will not organise the class representative elections alone as it is now a joint venture.

## External Representation

The Publications and Resources department of GhSL were responsible for preparing:

- Id-Dritt XXXIV.
- Republication of old and out-of-print Id-Dritt publications.
- Interview projects with key and veteran legal thinkers, conducted and verbalized for publication in the next term.
- Selected Topics in Family Law.

- Succession Law Handbook

This is very significant for GhSL as it upholds the academic values of the Organisation through a substantial number of quality publications. This is an impressive achievement for the Organisation, and I applaud Kim Tabone, Andrew Sciberras, Michael Spiteri, Miguel Mallia, David Chetcuti Dimech, Elena Sissons, Ella Micallef Darmania, Matthew Charles Zammit, and the various committees involved in bringing these publications to life.

The project that marked my year as GhSL president was presenting the Judicial Review Bill to parliament. This was a significant step for our organisation as it was the first time a bill was drafted by GhSL (or any student organisation) and presented in Parliament. Motion 194 of the House of Representatives. Timeline:

11th of January 2023 – A drafting conference was held at the Chamber of Advocates. Lecturers, academics, and advocates contributed to drafting the bill.

21st April 2023 – The policy paper ‘Judicial Review Act – A proposed Bill to amend a fragmented and improper law’ was published and launched at the Chamber of Advocates.

10th of May 2023 – a meeting was held with the leader of the Opposition and the Shadow minister for Justice to explain the bill.

From May onwards, emails were sent to various lawyers, jurists, and advocates for consultation.

2nd of October 2023 – The Ombudsplan was published wherein the Ombudsman agreed and publicly endorsed the suspension of the prescription procedure.

8th of November 2023 – GhSL was invited within the PN parliamentary group to present and explain the bill. The Parliamentary group agreed with GhSL and went on to present the bill on the 20th of November 2023.

On the 23 of November 2023, a podcast was published by Fenech and Fenech Advocates. I discussed the bill with Dr. Jake Desira. Moreover, interviews were held with the Malta Independent, Times of Malta to explain the bill and an article was written on il-Mument. An online interview with NGO Repubblica was held and published on YouTube and Facebook.

On the 4th of December 2023, a Conference was organised by GhSL to discuss the judicial review bill. Dr. Karol Aquilina, Dr. Ivan Mifsud, Profs. Tonio Borg, and Dr. Robert Musumeci were invited as speakers, and interesting discussions ensued.

Following this conference, a meeting with the Office of the Voluntary Commissioner was held in January where the commissioner endorsed the Bill. Moreover, GhSL together with the Daphne Foundation applied for the SOS Malta Professional fund where experts in the

area were appointed to review the bill and produce a report on its validity and any potential amendments. The expenses for these professional expenses will be funded by SOS Malta. The Daphne foundation is still preparing this report, which will likely be published in the next GhSL executive term.

It must be highlighted that I have repeatedly tried contacting the Minister for Justice, government officials, and the media stations of the political party in Government various times to discuss the judicial review project with them, but this to no avail.

The book 'Judicial Review Act' is being sold to second-year law students sitting for their Administrative Law exam and, from what I have been told, has been subject to debate during lectures. This is significant as it shows that GhSL is a front and key-player in academic debate.

I sincerely hope that GhSL's efforts throughout these two years in creating, drafting, and lobbying a reform in the institute of Judicial Review in Malta bring about positive legislative change and at least spark further University discussion about the method which courts may annul government decisions and the significance of judicial review in terms of the rule of law. This year's policy paper written by Laura Chetcuti Dimech furthers GhSL's initiative in this area of law. After thoroughly reading, reviewing, and composing a brief preface for this year's policy paper, I must thank Laura for writing such a well-researched paper and for proposing such reforms. This has further maintained GhSL's position as a key player in the field of justice reforms.

GhSL has also published several statements condemning undue pressure on the Judiciary and has closely supported the movement for the Public Inquiry into the death of Jean Paul Sofia. Moreover, GhSL endorsed the inclusion of the right to a healthy environment in the Constitution of Malta. On the 25th of July of this year, a meeting was held with Dr. Darren Carabott where notwithstanding GhSL's agreement with the bill, GhSL submitted that the provision of interim measures should be extended to all potential violations of human rights, and not just violations against the right to a healthy environment. This builds on the various consultation meetings attended by GhSL, namely the media reform consultation and the 'Rinvijji' reform consultation. Moreover, an SLAPP suit training session was organised by GhSL and Aditus foundation. I must, however, express that the attendance was something to be desired.

## Sponsorships

In September 2023, GhSL renewed its year-long sponsorship deal with Grant Thornton, proving to be mutually advantageous. This partnership facilitated broader audience reach through event promotion on a billboard overlooking the Msida Skate Park. Financial support from Grant Thornton further bolstered GhSL's academic initiatives, including the trip to Ireland. Additionally, on April 2, 2024, GhSL entered into another year-long sponsorship agreement with Ganado Advocates. This collaboration holds significance as the late Profs Ganado was also the founder of GhSL, establishing a historical connection

between the two entities. I anticipate that this agreement will yield fruitful outcomes for both GhSL and the firm.

# Vice-President – Laura Chetcuti Dimech

The Office of the Vice President, like most administrative roles, is not characterised by a set amount of duties and goals, rather it must adapt and change to the exigencies required at the time.

## 1. General Administration

The Vice President is obviously heavily involved in the internal workings of the organisation. I will not delve into the role played in every event organised by the Executive.

## 2. Marketing, Planning and Implementation of Funding Schemes

This year GhSL applied for various grants, such as the A4U and BeActive Schemes organised by Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ. Together with the Marketing Officer, we drafted the applications for those schemes, and both applications were accepted with the full amount requested.

The Vice President was also involved with finding new sponsors, setting up the digital membership card, the Member Newsletter and Academic Feedback forms, which I believe ultimately play an important step in getting closer to the student body.

Furthermore, the Vice President, played an active role in periodical meetings held with sponsors, drafting of our Financial plan, which in turn helped the Executive in finding a new academic partner.

## 3. Policy

The Vice President played an important role in the drafting and execution of various policy positions taken by GhSL this year.

Furthermore, due to the fluid nature of my role and the particular circumstances required, The Vice President had the honour of writing this year's Policy Paper on '*The Rights of Victims and Society in the In Genere Inquiry.*'

I believe that this Policy Paper not only demonstrates the level of academia GhSL is capable of offering, but that we are not an organisation that is out of touch with the realities faced by citizens on a daily basis. It took up a substantial amount of time and constrained me to take a step back from general administration. Special thank you to Drago, Scibby and Kim for helping me with the content, Elena and Charlie for the design and PR.

## 4. Moot Court Practice Elective

Together with the ex-President of GhSL, Mr. Matthew Charles Zammit, the Vice President drew up a document for a student unit proposal, a Moot Court Practice Elective, which was presented to the Faculty Board on the 19th of April. The main aim of this proposal is

to help students fill what we believe is a substantial gap in our law course, and bridge the academic studies with practice, whilst offering Maltese students the opportunity to compete in international moot court competitions.

## 5. Young Commonwealth Lawyer Association

The Vice President, out of her own initiative, successfully applied for a position with the Young Commonwealth Lawyer Association (YCLA). It is a branch of the Commonwealth Lawyer Association. Meetings are held monthly, wherein I take an active role in voting for projects that should be taken on. Together with the Indian Representative, who is also the Chair of the YCLA, I also wrote a small Article entitled '*Malta: A Commonwealth Nation without the Common Law – an Overview of the Power of the Maltese Judicial System to Declare Laws as Unconstitutional.*'

There are other projects in the pipelines, most notably the 2025 CLA Conference which will be held in Malta. I look forward to assisting GhSL to participate in such Conference.

## Conclusion

GhSL has taken up a substantial amount of the past two calendar years. Whilst I wished to extend my stay for slightly more, the future had other plans. Lessons were learnt. Events experienced. Opportunities opened. University life without student activism will be a bland one indeed. But I have the utmost faith in those coming after us.

Thank you to those who made my time in GhSL memorable.



## Secretary General – Andrew Sciberras

Although I completed my term as President last year, after Andrew Drago asked me to stay on as Secretary General, after a lot of contemplation I decided to accept and finish off my time within GhSL as I felt that I still had a lot to give to GhSL.

### Meeting attendance

Meeting Number	Date	Andrew Drago	Laura Chetcuti Dimech	Andrew Sciberras	Elena Sissons	Michaela Giorgio	Ella Micallef Darmania	Michael Spiteri	Chantal Borg	Kim Tabone	Laila Mangion	Leon Bartolo	Lara Portelli	Thomas Cilia	Matthew Tabone	Miguel Mallia	Michela Busuttil
1	1/7/2023	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	S	X	S	X		
2	18/7/2023	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	S	X	X	X		
3	19/8/2023	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	S	S	X		
4	17/9/2023	X	X	X	X	X	S	X	X	S	X	S	X	X	S		
5	26/9/2023	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A		
6	12/10/2023	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	A		
7	4/11/2023	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	S		
8	8/12/2023	X	X	X	X	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	A				
9	6/1/2024	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	A	X				
10	25/1/2024	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	A			X	X
11	14/3/2024	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
12	13/4/2024	X	X	X	X	X	S	X	S	X	X	A	A			X	A

This term attendance was on the whole very positive, however there were some members who missed more meetings than others. While it is difficult to accommodate all members to find a date and time where they all can attend, effort must be made to ensure attendance. On the other hand, decisions are made by those that show up and therefore the functions of the Board are exercised by those members who consistently attend.

Minutes were taken of every meeting and circulated internally shortly after. This year it was a priority for me to improve the quality of the meetings, and the minutes thereof, which I believe has been a success.

### Resignation of Thomas Cilia and Matthew Tabone

During this term we had two resignations, that of Thomas Cilia from Policy Officer, and Matthew Tabone from Leisure Officer. This brought certain challenges which required the election of two new officers. Luckily however, these two resignations were not in bad blood as sometimes has happened in the past, and in fact members of the Board have remained in contact with them on a friendly basis.

Instead of seeking replacements for these two officers directly, we made use of a new procedure which was installed in the statute during the last AGM, which allowed Chantal Borg and Michael Spiteri to take on the offices of Leisure Officer and Policy Officer respectively. Therefore the Board had to co-opt two members for the offices of Legal Aid

and Resources. This was done, having three applicants for Resources and one for Legal Aid. Following interviews with the applicants, as well as the submission of Plans of Action for the consideration of the Board, Miguel Mallia and Michela Busuttill were co-opted and joined the Board, attending their first meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2024.

## Law the Next Step

As a parallel to our annual *Law the First Step* event, together with Chantal Borg, we launched for the first time a similar event for Master in Advocacy and Master in Notarial Studies Students. This was a great success as we got the lecturers of both Master courses and managed to demystify some of the fears and uncertainty which the incoming Master students typically face.

## Succession Law Handbook

Dr Peter Borg Costanzi, lecturer in the Law of Succession, had reached out to us so that his notes get published with GħSL for the benefit of students. I aided our Resources Officer Michael Spiteri, who later handed over the project to Miguel Mallia when he took over the Office. Kim Tabone, who liaised members of the Publications Committee, aided in the editing of the text, while a number of practitioners reviewed the text from a legal point of view. Due to the scope of this project, this will not be completed in one publication, and will therefore need to be published in a number of volumes. The first volume is scheduled to be published in the coming weeks.

## Family Law Handbook

The Family Law Handbook project, which has since been renamed '*Selected Essays in Family Law*', has been in the works for almost three years. Unfortunately, a series of struggles, some the fault of GħSL and some out of our control, resulted in the great delay in publishing this work. Miguel Mallia, when he took over the Resources Office, brought the energy needed to see this project through, which is at the final stages and will be launched in the coming weeks.

## Id-Dritt Republication Project

When I joined GħSL in 2020, I was very interested in the previous editions of Id-Dritt. Not all were available, and not even the Law Society had copies of these editions. Myself and the Publications Officer of the time, Danielle Gauci, embarked on a project to track down the previous Publications Officers and receive soft-copies of the respective editions.

Editions prior to Volume XX were then published on OAR, while XX onwards are available for sale by GħSL. This year however we endeavoured to republish them in written form. Since the older editions were much shorter than current editions, we have decided to combine the older editions into eight Volumes, to be published together. Unfortunately it has not been possible to complete this project within this term, however with the collaboration of the incoming team, I would be willing to complete the project over the summer and publish it towards the end of the calendar year. This project would not have been possible without the assistance of Matthew Charles Zammit and David Chetcuti

Dimech, who accepted to take on this project this past year with me, to avoid burdening other members of the Board, and to allow them to work on their own projects.

## Interviews Project

Over the past three years, myself and David Chetcuti Dimech had a plan to interview a number of prominent legal minds, in order to publish them, inspired by the interviews published in the 1989, 1990, 1991, where Chief Justice Professor Hugh Harding, Judge Professor Wallace Ph. Gulia, and Professor Rene Cremona were interviewed by GhSL members.

David and I interviewed Judge Victor Caruana Colombo, retired CJEU Judge Anthony Borg Barthet, Judge Carmel Agius, retired ECtHR Judge Giovanni Bonello, current CJEU Judge Professor Peter G. Xuereb, Professor Emeritus Ian Refalo, Chancellor of the University, Professor David Attard, and finally we interviewed Chief Justice Emeritus, and GhSL Honorary President, Vincent A. De Gaetano. Some of these have yet to be fully transcribed, and similarly with the Id-Dritt Republication Project, it is my hope that it is finalised over Summer, with the cooperation of the new team.

## Reflections

Over the past four years in GhSL, I can safely say that I have given my contribution, and while I am sure there are many mistakes I have made along the way, I believe that as I conclude my time at University as a law student, I am certain that whoever takes on the mantle from myself and my colleagues will be well equipped to tackle whatever is thrown at them.

This will not be the end of my contribution to GhSL, as I join the legal profession, I know for a fact that I will remain in contact with the Law Society and help out, instead of from the student side, from the professional side.

*Ad multos annos GhSL!*

## Financial Officer – Michaela Giorgio

For the 2023 to 2024 term, I was honoured to serve as GhSL's Financial Officer. The Finance Office is crucial for GhSL to be able to function and hold all the events throughout the year. This year, many significant events were held that allowed for the organization to prosper and generate a great amount of income.

The funds provided through sponsorships are vital for the organization to be able to start holding events, especially after exam season, where events are not held. Together with the Marketing Officer, GhSL was able to negotiate and renew their sponsorship contract with Grant Thornton. Furthermore, GhSL has signed with a new academic sponsor for the coming year, Ganado Advocates, which should provide GhSL with hands on help from legal professionals when conducting educational events. Both sponsorships show GhSL's commitment to maintaining a strong relationship with legal professionals and law students alike, along with gaining financial stability to ensure that all events are of a high standard.

Once again, through the help of the Vice President and Marketing Officer, GhSL has received funding from Aġenzija Żagħżagħ's A4U and BeActive Schemes, which also aided in increasing the ability to purchase necessary equipment and subsidize prices for the international exchanges. These funds proved extremely useful throughout the whole year, especially due to the prices of products and venues increasing.

This year, there were many significant financial successes. Income was generated through the sale of the Freshers Packs; an extremely great initiative created by our now Policy officer. This, along with the sale of our other publications, has pushed GhSL's income greatly. Additionally, events like the Trinity College Dublin Exchange and fresher's week, has boosted GhSL's positive reputation amongst students as well as our income.

The greatest outcome of this year was the relationships I have built with everyone in the executive committee. Apart from working with all these people, I am lucky enough to call each officer my friend, and without their impeccable hard work, GhSL would not be what it is; a successful, supportive, and prestigious student organization. This year's teamwork allowed for GhSL's successful year, where everyone did their utmost to ensure GhSL's events were as successful as possible. Hence, I would like to thank the executive for being so committed and for making this year such a pleasant one.

Although this is my last year in the executive, I am sure that this organization will continue to prosper. I wish the future executive all the best for the coming year, and I am sure that they will keep GhSL's success going.

## Public Relations Officer – Elena Sissons

The Public Relations Office as per the GhSL Statute is responsible for 'the image of GhSL' through the promotion of events, media coordination, intellectual property organisation and adherence to the GhSL Branding Guidelines, amongst other responsibilities. This year despite the statutory amendment put into place in the year 2023 at the last Annual General Meeting for the 'Media Officer' a role which I was meant to fill, the PRO like the years' before also carried the responsibility of creating all media, management of social accounts, and the creation of the Branding Guidelines of the organisation.

### Aesthetics of Media and Graphic Design

This year the Public Relations Office focused on the implementation and integration of the 2021 Branding Guidelines and Logo Revamp introduced, in which the office attempted to coordinate the colourings of the specific logos of every office's design to the media created for the particular office.

The style taken on by the Public Relations Office this year sought to be a mixture of a professional chic style of design while still attempting to appeal to the younger more quirky/edgy generation of university students. It is through such design which allowed GhSL to uphold relations with both the general public and the legal profession through more discrete and serious styles of design while balancing such with the fun, colourful and approachable graphic design when appealing to the student body.

### Freshers' Week and Pre-University

Before the academic year of 2023/2024 in which this executive board was revving to come to a start, the Academic Office under the aid of our Secretary General, and the now Leisure Officer, created the events of Law The First Step and Law the Next Step. During these events the Public Relations Office aided in the creation of the guideline booklet for the new law students starting in September, as well as the PowerPoint presentations used for Law the Next Step for the continuing students joining the Masters courses.

At the start of the academic year, the Public Relations Office, along with the Marketing Office and Academic Office held the front for the infamous 'Freshers' Week'. In which the Public Relations Officer and Marketing Officer created and prepared the design for the Freshers' Week Stand which we attended for all 4 days of the week-long event. Furthermore, a plethora of graphics were released during the week, including Instagram and Facebook posts as well as the use of stories for walk-throughs to event venues and images taken on the day.

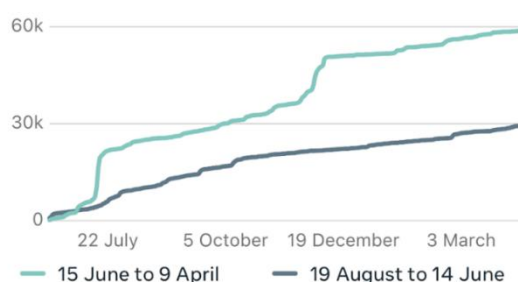
## Facebook Logistics

GhSL's Facebook Page is our largest audience of followers with the page having around 5.35k followers. The Public Relations Office has posted around 300 different images, posts, and statements throughout this year's tenure on our Facebook page. Our most successful post is one of our first, the 'Stqarrija rigward il-ftuh ta inkjesta pubblika' posted on the 16th of July 2023, with over 15,000 impressions on said post. My only remark for the office in this regard would be to continue to post and interact with our audience via this social media platform, as well as a pointer in increasing awareness of specific student interaction via our Member's Only Group, which I myself despite creating said group, did not use said audience to the fullest of its potential.

Furthermore, I am happy to provide some statistics on the increase in reach of the GhSL Facebook Audience for this year. Last year, the GhSL Facebook Page estimated a reach of 29.1K, a commendable increase from the year before. This year we are proud to announce another increase in reach due to consistent posting via our social media platforms to a very attractive number of 58.8K reach, double what it was the year before.

Facebook reach ⓘ

**58.8k** ↑ 101%



Instagram reach ⓘ

**8.0k** ↑ 29.4%



## Instagram Logistics

In regard to GhSL's Instagram Account, which is more popular with our university student target audience, we have a following of 1,335 followers. From the Instagram account, the Public Relations Office has posted around 90 different posts, some with multiple media, around 200 different story posts, and 8 Instagram Reels. In terms of reach, last year the Instagram Account amounted to around 4.6k reach, while this year boasted around 8.0k reach from our Instagram page.

## Event Photography and Photoshoots

During my tenure as Public Relations Officer, I was also tasked with the job of event photography and executive board photographer. I have provided event photography for events such as:

- (a) Lanca Legali 2023
- (b) Planning Weekend 2023
- (c) Law the First Step
- (d) Law the Next Step
- (e) Freshers Week
- (f) Advocatus Diaboli
- (g) Legal Aid Clean Up
- (h) St Vincent De Paul Volunteering
- (i) Live in Legali Event Promo
- (j) The Judicial Review Act Conference
- (k) The Last Resort
- (l) Legal Aid Week

To name a few of these events. Furthermore, when it came to Executive Board photoshoots the Public Relations Office also had its hands quite full. The first photoshoot taken was for the introduction of the Executive Board 2023/2024 taken in Mdina. The second photoshoot was taken before Freshers Week to introduce our Board Members to the new batch of students entering their first year, this photoshoot also included merchandise photography for our Membership Tote Bag (#IAMALAWSTUDENT). Finally, to mark the introduction of our two newest members of this Executive Board, we organised a final photoshoot to introduce them to our members which was taken on campus, with a more casual style than the organisation would usually execute.

## News Article Mentions

GhSL has also been at the forefront of many policy opinions and statements throughout this academic year. Such statements and policy positions allowed the Malta Law Students' Society to further make their mark upon the general public through mentions in articles produced by various newshouses around the island. Such newshouses include; The Times of Malta, Malta Today, Newsbook, The Shift, and TVM News. The Public Relations Office applauds the efforts of the Policy Office in this regard and expresses that in the future, GhSL should also attempt to create ties with student news providers to increase student outreach for their appreciated efforts.

## Publication Design

In terms of publication design, this year the Public Relations Office is honoured to have aided the Publications Office, the Moot Court Office, and the Policy Office. First and foremost, I am extremely proud to have been considered in creating and formulating along with our Publications Officer the front cover design for 'Id-Dritt XXXIV', the cornerstone of this very organisation. The design hopes to be an amalgamation of the conventional style of publication design with a twist, with changes in font and publication navigation style which are quite different from that which we have seen in the past.

In regard to the Moot Court Office, I am happy to have aided in the design and creation of the Moot Court Rules and Case Books presented in all three moot courts organised by GhSL this academic year. The Public Relations Office believes that the clean-cut design of these case books and documents provided to moot court participants do provide a more professional tinge to GhSL Moot Courts allowing for a more well-rounded experience in the moot court's organised.

In light of the Policy Office, I am happy to have assisted our previous Policy Officer in the design of the Law Tracker, which unfortunately only saw one edition last October before closing off for the season. The Public Relations Office sees the publication and creation of the Law Tracker as an extremely commendable initiative by the Policy Office which saw an abrupt end. I hope that the following Policy Officers and Executive Board will consider reviving this initiative which bridges the gap between the student and the legal profession. Finally, I am extremely grateful to also be given the opportunity to aid the Policy Office with the creation of the front cover design for this year's Policy Paper yet to be released.

### Travel with GhSL (International Office Branding)

This year, the Public Relations Office in collaboration with the Marketing Office and the International Office, have created the newest addition to GhSL's Branding and Marketing journey, the 'Travel with GhSL' area of the International Office. This initiative aims to create a specific brand within the Malta Law Students' Society which facilitates and organises international trips and exchanges for law students across the board.

The Public Relations Office aided in the creation of such internal brand through the creation of designs for the 'Travel with GhSL' Tote Bags sponsored by our corporate sponsor Grant Thornton and the International Trip Hoodies sponsored by the BeActive Scheme of Agenzija Zghazagh. The hoodie design which is specific to each and every trip depending on the year, aims to create a common element for the students attending the trip or exchange while pushing advertisement of the GhSL exchange programme through wearable and timeless merchandise which may be easily altered from one year to the next.

### Assistance in Other Events

Finally, apart from my responsibilities as Public Relations Officer, I was throughout the year honoured to further assist at some point or another every single office within the organisation. With some of my main participation being in:

- (a) Aiding the Leisure Officer in the Planning and Execution of Live-In-Legali in collaboration with the Junior Chamber of Advocates;
- (b) Assisting in the execution of Lanca Legali 2023 with the President and Secretary General;



- (c) Collaborating with the Policy Office and helping with the execution of the Law Tracker;
- (d) Assisting the Moot Court Office and International Office, in hosting the students from the University of Blackhall participating in 'The Last Resort'
- (e) Aiding the Resources Office with the creation of the renowned Freshers Packs.
- (f) Helping the International Office and Marketing Office with logistics of GhSL International Trips.
- (g) Aiding the Publications Office in the proofreading and editing of some of the many OLJ publications published this year.

## Kokka Awards Participation and Future Work

In the coming months, the Public Relations Office in the name of GhSL aims to participate in the Annual Kokka Awards Ceremony organised by KSU, in which we will submit our nominations for multiple Kokka Awards. The Public Relations Office will deal with the content and design of this submission along with necessary offices within GhSL, to ensure another Kokka Award for this organisation.

Furthermore, the Office will continue at its normal pace throughout the months to come before admitting the newest executive board member to the position.

## Self-Assessment of Office

The Public Relations Office in itself is an extremely particular type of animal, a different breed if you will. The work submitted is in itself dependant on the work of those around you. As an office it touches bases with each office and can sometimes prove to be quite a tedious task. However, being able to make the vision of those around you come to life with a graphic, statement, or post really allows for this office to shine. Some things that I would tell the future Public Relations Officers to include in their vision would be:

- (1) Exploring other online platforms; this year we started stemming into LinkedIn a bit more and I hope that one day we will also be able to break our way through to Tiktok (I believe it can be an extremely good platform for getting your message across to students)
- (2) Public relations events; An increase in public relation events, such as participating in the Organisations Day, creating a Whats on Quad event, as well as increase in relations between the organisation and sixth form schools, for pre-law students.

## Closing Statement

Among other things, I would like to take the end of this report to thank this year's Executive Board for the brilliant work which we managed to put forth in such a short time. Everything we do is to better the student experience, be it through the creation of publications, organising events, or fixing air conditioners in STZ. I like to think that we left our mark and that we made a difference, no matter how big or small. Lastly, good luck to our successors

to come and thank you to our predecessors who created an organisation worth being part of.

Thank you for your time and attention!

Elena Sissons

## Academic Officer – Leon Bartolo

As we gather to reflect on the past year, I am honoured to present an overview of our collective journey. Serving as your Academic Officer has been a privilege, and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to our organisation's mission of academic excellence and community engagement.

Our academic endeavours began with the highly anticipated "Law the First Step", an event held on September 6th, which served as a pivotal moment in welcoming incoming first-year law students. Hosted at the Valletta Volunteer Centre, this event provided a comprehensive introduction to the law course, encompassing an array of topics from electives to academic support services. We also engaged in insightful discussions on resources like the Online Law Journal (OLJ), Id-Dritt and strategies for academic success, setting a strong foundation for our members' academic journey.

During Fresher's Week, held between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> October, we curated a series of engaging events aimed to familiarise students with the University academic landscape. These events included informative sessions on getting to know our lecturers, understanding electives, the progression from freshers to lawyers and navigating assignments effectively. Our collaboration with esteemed guests including but not limited to Dr Tonio Borg, Dr Stefano Filletti and Dr Tiziana Filletti enriched our discussions and broadened our perspectives on the legal practice. I can proudly state that Fresher's resounding success is merited to the team's unwavering dedication, paired with the warm reception and enthusiasm of the first years who eagerly attended most of our academic events.

Throughout the academic year, we continued to organise informative talks, including sessions aimed at prospective law students (currently studying at college) clarifying GhSL's role in University as well as explaining how the law course works in a realistic manner. Other events were also held including inspiring discussions like "Legal Legacies" featuring Chief Justice Emeritus Vincent A. De Gaetano and Dr. Ann Fenech, two pioneers in the Maltese and international legal sphere which contributed to the event's success. These events not only educated but also inspired our members, showcasing the rich and vast experiences and opportunities within the legal profession.

Additionally throughout the year, we also collaborated with other student organisations, such as SHS – Studenti Harsien Soċjali and MaltaUM, in joint initiatives aimed at fostering unity and connectivity within the University landscape. These collaborations delved into crucial topics such as family law and security, enriching our academic discourse and instigating meaningful connections within the broader legal community.

Furthermore, we had the privilege of organising a visit to both the Parliament and the Court, offering our members unique insights into the workings of these institutions. These visits provided invaluable opportunities for firsthand observation and engagement with

the legal and legislative processes, further enriching our understanding of the legal system.

Supplementing to these initiatives, we made significant strides in planning the Shipping Course, aimed at expanding our academic offerings and providing valuable learning opportunities for all law students.

Looking ahead, I am filled with optimism and enthusiasm for the future of our organisation. Together, we will continue to prioritise academic excellence, foster collaboration, and create a supportive learning environment for all members.

I extend my deepest gratitude to each member of our committee for their unfaltering dedication, creativity, and tireless efforts throughout the year. Your commitment to serving our community, organising impactful events, and nourishing meaningful connections has been truly commendable. Together, we have made a lasting influence on the academic and professional journey of our members.

As we look forward to the future, let us continue to uphold our values of excellence, collaboration, and inclusivity. Let us embrace new challenges with courage and determination, knowing that our collective efforts will lead to continued growth and success.

Thank you once again for an incredible year filled with learning, growth, and camaraderie. Here's to a future filled with endless possibilities and shared successes.

Warm Regards,

Leon Bartolo

## International Officer – Lara Portelli

I would firstly like to extend my gratitude for the friendships that have blossomed throughout the year, and to also thank every member for welcoming me and for supporting the International Office in any way.

This academic year, the International Office continued in its mission to expose law students studying at the University of Malta to opportunities outside our small frontier. Last December, we received a total of eighty applicants who showed their interest in taking part in an international trip to Trinity College Dublin. Out of these applicants, twenty-one students were chosen to visit the College with GhSL from the 13th to the 18th of February. Three of these students were GhSL executive members, namely Ella Micallef Darmania, Andrew Sciberras and Michaela Georgio. I thank them for helping in managing things while there and for making this trip possible. Although the Trinity College Law Society regrettably could not make the trip back to us, the positive feedback received from the participants' demonstrated that our trip to Ireland was a success.

Another event which transpired from the International Office this year was the Law Society of Ireland's visit, which saw two students from such Society visiting Malta to take part in the second edition of 'The Last Resort' Moot Court Competition, this year planned by our Moot Court Officer, Laia Mangion.

Admittedly, planning international trips and exchanges involves a lot of logistical planning and is a long process. This year, this led to a number of plans being either cancelled, moved or altered. This being said, the succeeding International Officer should not in any way take this sentiment in a discouraging light, especially since I can confidently say that solid connections have been made, and plans have commenced with a number of international law student societies. Of course, I will leave the new International Officer his discretion on any future events and wish them the same fruitful experience I had during this term.

# Legal Aid Officer – Chantal Borg/Michela Busuttil

Chantal Borg

## September – World Cleanup Day

In collaboration with numerous student organisations, environmental clean-ups were organised within multiple locations including: Ramla Bay, Ġħar Lapsi, Ħad-Dingli, Kalkara and San Pawl il-Bahar. These cleanups took place on two consecutive days mid-September. Numerous persons attended and a substantial amount of waste was collected, and later correctly disposed of.

## December – St Vincent De Paul Volunteering

In December the legal aid office organised a volunteering event at St Vincent De Paul which consisted of a couple of rounds of bingo. Wanting to provide some sort of gifts in time for Christmas, I reached out to LOOP Parish Djakonija Volunteers. They kindly contributed to the event by supplying us with around 150 clothing pieces, which I then wrapped in Christmas wrapping paper for the occasion. The event was extremely successful with over 100 St Vincent De Paul residents attending. Everyone enjoyed the event, the residents were quite grateful for the gifts and the bingo games, and the staff thanked us for our initiative.

## Michela Busuttil

As the current Legal Aid Officer, it has been my privilege to build upon the impactful initiatives implemented by my predecessor, Chantal Borg. This past year has been one of substantial engagement and development in our activities, which were designed not only to continue our existing services but also to expand our reach and effectiveness within the community.

## Legal Aid Week 2024

Legal Aid Week 2024 was a centerpiece of our office this year, carefully crafted to educate, engage, and foster community spirit. The week was structured around two main educational talks, complemented by a community fundraising event:

1. Legal Aid Lawyers in Malta: This session provided an in-depth look at the role and challenges faced by legal aid lawyers in our country. Speakers included seasoned legal aid professionals: Dr. Mary Muscat, Dr. Joseph P Bonnici, and Dr. Julia Micallef Stafrace, who shared their experiences and insights, enhancing public understanding of the legal aid system's critical role in ensuring justice for all, regardless of economic status.
2. Cyber Tech in Malta: Recognising the growing importance of technology in legal frameworks, this talk focused on the intersection of technology and law, particularly cybersecurity and data privacy issues in Malta to enhance advocacy. Leading experts in cyber law: Dr. Ian Gauci and Dr. Antonio Ghio, alongside Inspectors Duncan Schembri and Claire Borg, provided attendees with an overview of current trends, challenges, and

regulatory frameworks, equipping them with knowledge crucial for navigating today's digital landscape.

3. The week concluded with a novel arcade and bake sale event, with all proceeds donated to Puttinu Cares. This event not only served as a fun and engaging way to conclude the week but also demonstrated our commitment to community welfare and social responsibility.

### Collaboration with MKSA

We undertook a collaborative clean-up project at Għar Lapsi with MKSA, alongside 9 other Student Organisations. This initiative was part of our broader goals to engage with environmental stewardship and community service. The event was well-received, with numerous volunteers from both organisations participating. This collaboration not only helped in beautifying the area but also strengthened our ties with MKSA, laying the groundwork for future joint endeavours.

### Conclusion

Reflecting on the past office year, I am proud of what we have accomplished in the Legal Aid office. Our activities during Legal Aid Week and our collaborative efforts with MKSA are testaments to our commitment to justice, education, and community service. Moving forward, I am enthusiastic about the opportunities to further enhance our offerings and to continue making a significant impact in the lives of those we serve. Thank you to everyone who has supported our initiatives and contributed to our successes this year.

## Leisure Officer – Chantal Borg

### November – Live In Legali & In Absentia Open Bar

The annual legal live-in event was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> till the 12<sup>th</sup> of November at the Paradise Bay Hotel. Per usual, the stay included breakfast. This event was in collaboration with JCA. On Friday a musical bingo night was held – nothing but positive feedback was given as the event was well received and everyone enjoyed it. Gifts were supplied by both JCA and GhSL. During Saturday morning our moot courts officer held a criminal law moot court workshop. The Saturday evening event was a four-hour open bar party named In Absentia, which was held at Ivy House, Pembroke.

### December – St Ivo Drinks

In collaboration with ELSA and JCA a drinks event was organised and held at Sailors' Paradise, Valletta. The aim of this event was to unite law students in celebration of St Ivo. A good number of persons attended with positive remarks.

### April – ASCS x GhSL Music Bingo

In collaboration with ASCS, a music bingo event is being organised at the KSU Common Room. The event is entirely sponsored by Grant Thornton, which is both of our organisations' sponsor. During the event a round of bingo will be played with the twist that instead of numbers being drawn, songs will be played which one must recognise. The event will consist of free pizza and drinks for those attending, and gifts will also be awarded to the winners.

### June – Lanċa Legali

This event is still being organised.



## Marketing Officer – Ella Micallef Darmenia

It has been an honour to serve as the Marketing Officer for this historic society for the term of 2023/2024. As a fresher, I admired the society and definitely could not imagine the amount of work that went into it.

The opportunity to visit the University of Cambridge last year was the start of my journey with GhSL, a journey which I don't believe will be ending anytime soon. A fantastic project which helped me to open my mind to legal education abroad and allowed me to begin analysing best practices from across Europe to bring back to Malta to improve our society for it to be the best it can be in service of the students we represent.

The rest is history. Since our first executive meeting on 1st July 2023, we have done things which, at that point, had only been passing thoughts.

The Marketing Office is unique because its function is to aid the other officers in communicating their projects with the student body. It's a role which has allowed me to collaborate with every single member of the board individually, and I believe that puts me in a position to say that we truly did have a one-of-a-kind team this year, the chemistry and friendship we have only empowered us to better fulfil our functions!

We had a successful Freshers' Week with the landmark Freshers' Pack having done particularly well, laying the foundation for advertising it further and expanding the product to facilitate even more students with many very well-attended events. From here I thank Michael, the former resources officer for his innovative ideas and Leon, our academic officer for always prioritising the student.

It was an exciting year for GhSL's sponsors with two new Sponsorship Packages being signed. I thank Grant Thornton, our corporate sponsor, for having supported us throughout the year on a number of events, international, charitable and leisure alike. Their reliability and openness to creativity is truly appreciated and I sincerely look forward to working with them during the upcoming scholastic year! I would also like to thank Fenech and Fenech for their support in our academic matters throughout the year from which we've been able to bridge the gap between theory and practice by bringing professionals to university to speak on the practicality of the law as well as giving opportunities to students to experience the work of a law firm.

Ganado Advocates, our new academic sponsor, who I'm looking forward to working with to facilitate GhSL in maintaining its momentum of growth. It's a firm which continues to be at the forefront of modern legal developments including Financial Services, International Trade and Renewable Energy. I await the flourishing of this collaboration which is surely to greatly benefit our students, offering chances to explore these avant-garde areas of the law.

Another project I undertook during this term was the application and implementation of the BeActive and A4U Schemes which provided us with over €6,000 to go towards

improving our infrastructure as an organisation as well as to set up a framework for international relations and trips with our foreign counterparts.

From the BeActive fund we were able to organise a very successful trip to Trinity College in Dublin where we took up 21 law students from every year of the course to experience a university in a more common law system!

Apart from these landmark events from my term as marketing officer, the highlight was truly the consistent interaction with the other GhSL officers on projects like academic talks, panels on current affairs and leisure event collaborations with other organisations, where I had the opportunity to portray to the law student community the stellar work that these inspiringly dedicated individuals were doing in order to enhance the law student experience at the University of Malta.

I look forward to serving on the GhSL executive board for another year and I can assure everyone that I will continue to be at the service of the board and the students it serves for as long as I retain the faculties to do so!

## Moot Court Officer – Laia Mangion

The Moot Court Office is an extremely important office within GhSL as it gives students in the law course the opportunity to take on a more practical approach to law, something which is lacking in our course. This Office has been highly successful this term with numerous events organised as listed below:

### Ultra Vires: An Administrative Law Moot Court:

This was not only the first moot court of the year but also the first of its kind. The case was created by the previous Moot Court Officer, Laura Chetcuti Dimech, and it related to the sinking of two ships in a Natura 2000 site. After the landmark Ramblers judgement in 2021 and 2022, this moot court aimed to continue pushing the boundaries of NGOs acquiring the *locus standi* required to present a claim in court.

Four teams applied to take part, including two teams of second years who were brave enough to take on this case without any prior knowledge of Administrative Law. Prior to the moot court itself, a talk was held by Prof. Tonio Borg in order to aid the students, answer their questions and provide them with tips on how to tackle the case.

The students were tasked to draw up written submissions which amounted to 40% of their grade. The remaining 60% was allocated to oral submissions. The panel of judges consisted of two eminent lawyers within this field, Dr Ian Stafrace and Dr Tanya Sciberras Camilleri and the brilliant Chief Justice Emeritus Vincent De Gaetano. The winners were awarded with a set of Prof. Tonio Borg's newest publications: 'The Blue Sister Saga', 'Maltese Administrative Law' and 'Judicial Review of Administrative Action', which were sponsored by Fenech & Fenech and Kite Group.

Overall, this was a successful moot court whereby the judges were impressed by the level of professionalism as well as the arguments brought forward in the battle to win.

### Misconstrued: A Criminal Law Moot Court Workshop:

This took place during Live-In Legali in collaboration with Junior Chamber of Advocates. Together with two other JCA members, numerous work shops were designed for the students as well as a talk given by two brilliant lawyers within the criminal law field: Dr Francesco Refalo and Dr Roberto Montalto. To finish off the activities, the students were divided into teams; one representing the prosecution and the other the defence. They then were given the case created and had some time to work on it. Subsequently, a small and informal moot court took place in order to help the students, who were mainly first years, grasp a better understanding of how a criminal court case actually takes place.

### Advocatus Diaboli:

Our classic annual criminal moot court once again took place, retaining last year's competitive style comprising of three elimination rounds. There was an excellent turn out of teams whereby these were narrowed down to eight teams who went up against each other with the aim of landing themselves in the final round. Many students also applied to be jurors to come and spectate the competition.

Prior to the competition itself, a booklet was drafted and distributed to the students, providing them with definitions, the roles of the prosecution and the defence as well as with the procedure of a trial by jury. Furthermore, a talk was held at the Valletta Campus by Dr Chris Soler and Dr Francesco Refalo who recounted their experiences as criminal lawyers as well as aided the students with tips on the procedure and how to tackle the cases. Moreover, last year's *Advocatus Diaboli* winner, Thomas Cilia, also recounted his experience and gave the students advice on how they should tackle the moot court itself and what helped him make his way up the ladder board to win the competition.

The competition took place over three weekends in November and December, with the quarter-final and the semi final being judged by Hon. Mr Justice Giovanni Grixti while the final was judged by Hon. Madam Justice Edwina Grima. Each round consisted of a new case, modelled on real life cases progressing in difficulty to promote legal prowess. The winners received a two day stay at Valentina Hotel as well as two beautiful trophies of Lady Justice, sponsored by Fenech & Fenech.

All teams performed exceptionally well, especially considering the time constraints and therefore, I would like to congratulate everyone who took part! Hopefully it was a fruitful experience for all!

### The Last Resort: A European Court of Human Rights Moot Court:

The second edition of *The Last Resort* took place in March in collaboration with the Law Student Society of Ireland. The case emphasised the current sad reality around Europe and specifically in Malta; that of immigrants being subject to cruel and degrading treatment. In this case, Faven Haile left Eritrea and came to Malta where she was subject to harsh and cruel treatment, even miscarrying her baby. The applicant pleaded her right from prohibition of torture (Article 3 ECHR) as well as her right to liberty and security (Article 5 ECHR).

Students from both Ireland as well as from Malta could apply whereby they went head-to-head against each other. Teams consisted of two to five students and the structure of the moot was composed of 50% written submissions and 50% oral submissions. The students were judged by former judge to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) Chief Justice Emeritus Vincent De Gaetano, the current judge to the ECtHR Madam Justice Lorraine Schembri Orland and Director of Aditus Dr Neil Falzon. The winners of the competition took home with them a marvellous glass trophy together with three editions of 'Id-Dritt.'

This moot will hopefully serve as a stepping stone to more international competition collaboration. Furthermore, it will hopefully help students learn from their foreign colleagues who may have a different university system as well as may have more experience when it comes to the practical side of law.

### Nuremberg Moot Court:

The Nuremberg Moot Court is an international competition, held in English in Nuremberg, Germany. University teams from all over the world participate and argue a case before

the "International Criminal Court" during the competition. A group of four students were gathered to participate and work together on this year's case. Furthermore, Magistrate Carol Peralta accepted to be the team coach.

Firstly, a motivation letter had to be written in order to determine the team's acceptance. The team successfully got accepted and headed to the first round which consisted of written submissions, representing both the prosecution and defence positions. The team is currently awaiting the results of these written submissions that determine whether they will be going up to Nuremberg this summer to participate in the final oral round held at the historic Courtroom 600 of the Nuremberg Palace of Justice.

This is a prestigious and fruitful opportunity which aims at helping the students in their international law study as well as helps them learn from their foreign colleagues.

### Conclusion:

This year's Moot Court Office has offered numerous opportunities to students to take the leap and take on the practical side of their law studies. I am a firm believer that students should be offered more opportunities in the practical sense. Moot courts help students learn more and help them grasp a better understanding of the theories and law that they study. Hence, it is of utmost importance that students take advantage of these initiatives being organised by Students Organisations and participate. Moreover, international moot courts are crucial for students to learn from their foreign colleagues and the academic system adopted abroad.

## Policy Officer – Michael Spiteri

As one of the most outspoken student organisations, GhSL's Policy Office this year has had another strong showing.

GhSL's policy for 2023–2024 can be, in an oversimplistic manner, divided into two strands. One which faced inwards, and one which faced outwards. For each, we have discussed our views in long and sometimes difficult conversations so as to reach consensus between the board about what we viewed were concerns to student and country respectively.

Through such a strategy we have achieved tangible results. We have established GhSL as an important stakeholder and a voice to be considered in both university-wide and nation-wide conversations. We have advocated for the student interests and provided a space for the discussion of important topics. Moreover, we have sparked important investigations and conversations as to topical subjects ourselves, and this always for the benefit of those we represent.

Our success rests on two particular pillars.

The first is being brave in the face of tough situations. By not shying away from the difficult conversations we have been able to make inroads where we otherwise would not. While just a couple of years ago people lamented at the apathy of students, particularly law students, today the GhSL executive of 2023–2024 can stand proudly before anyone and boast a successful year of activism on all fronts, including public policy.

The second, is cooperation. This Policy officer has sought to set up the infrastructure necessary for continued success in the realm of policy. One of the most important ways to do this is by reaching out to both other student societies, particularly the two other law student societies as well as to legal professionals and politicians on both sides of the isle. GhSL remains political but never partisan and most importantly GhSL remains available to all those who would like to work with us. Our open-door policy extends to everyone looking to advance good governance practices and the good of the students. It is this Policy Officer's hope that this will never change.

Diving deeper into the first of our two strands of Policy, on behalf of law students GhSL has made our voices heard regarding any concerns regarding the rule of law and the state of democracy in our country at large, particularly those revolving around the encroachment on the independence of the judiciary. It is important to know that GhSL critiqued with no agenda except to keep those elected accountable to the people they serve in line with the laws of this country. The student, we feel, like every other citizen has a duty to speak out, and GhSL is particularly encumbered with ensuring that all the pillars of our democracy remain intact. This extends to the judiciary, which has been under

particular fire from many angles, yet which remain an integral part of the proper functioning of society.

The second strand is that in favour of the student's direct interests themselves. GhSL prides itself on its student first position, advocating for the betterment of the student condition at every level, by all offices and through all means. We have remained in contact with Faculty, supported motions meant to improve the student's day to day life and been particularly vocal in all talks revolving around the law course, both at the Bachelor and Master level at university.

The above was achieved via consistent effort through a variety of mediums. Below is a list of the most notable:

1. Round the year participation in University's Commission, where the policy of the collective student organisations is discussed and advanced. Of particular note was that here, GhSL reached out for the approval of the Judicial Review Bill from other Student' societies. We also kept questioning Commission's policies diligently, increasingly working in tandem with other student organizations in order to refine the students' organizations policy.
2. Statements throughout the year. These statements, posted through our social media, included carefully crafted, informed opinions on topical happenings such as the UHM's Industrial action earlier in the year and the comments of the Prime Minister in respect of the judiciary. The latter included that on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January where the Prime minister publicly questioned if a magistrate was wilfully attempting to time the conclusion of her inquiry at a point where it could deal the government the most political damage.
3. The 'Tahdita Legali rigward il-Fit and Proper Test'. This very well attended event, organised by the Policy Office, was a talk centred around the infamous 'Fit and Proper Test', which is a requisite for law students to obtain their warrant.

The invited speakers were:

- Onor. Dr Jonathan Attard (The Minister for Justice and the Reform of The Construction Sector)
- Onor. Dr Karol Aquilina (Shadow Minister for Justice)
- Dr Louis Degabrielele (Member on the Committee for Advocates and Legal Procurators), and;
- Dr Peter Fenech (President of the Chamber of Advocates)

The talk was moderated by this Policy Officer and served to alleviate student fears regarding the Test and chart the expected future of the Test. Additionally, the connected theme of the Master's Law course at university was discussed.

Last but not least, it is important to also mention that the previous Policy Officer had embarked on a project called the 'Law Tracker' which aimed to summarise the most important legislative changes which occurred on a month-by-month basis. The project was discontinued due to extraneous circumstances, but this officer advises its reintroduction in the future. Also, one notes that while the first of the Standards Complaints by GhSL to the Standards Commission for Public Life has been concluded, the second one is still pending.

I end this report by thanking the incredible group of people who I had the honour of being a colleague. Without them nothing would have been possible. From this experience I take with me incredible memories, but even more importantly an amazing group of people who I will always view as friends.



## Publications Officer – Kim Tabone

This term, the Publications Office was responsible for the editing and publication of the 34<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Id-Dritt' as well as the articles for publication on the 'Online Law Journal'.

### Id-Dritt

This year's edition comprises 14 articles in total; all edited by the members of the sub-committee and peer-reviewed by members of the legal profession who are independent from GhSL. The articles cover a variety of fields of law such as administrative law, civil law, criminal law, constitutional law, procedural law, and corporate law, to name a few. Together with members of the administrative branch, several design changes have been made to this edition, including different font, text alignment, borders, and other minute details which will improve the overall presentation.

Currently, 'Id-Dritt XXXIV' is in its final stages of design and is set for publication in a few weeks' time.

### Revisiting Id-Dritt

This year also marks 80 years since the very first edition of Id-Dritt's predecessor, the 'Law Journal', was published back in 1944, a year following the foundation of the society. It has been a pleasure to continue this esteemed law journal's enduring legacy and to be but a small part of its longstanding history.

The Publications Office also inherited the 'Revisiting Id-Dritt' project that was started last term and involves the republication of previous editions of 'Id-Dritt' and the 'Law Journal' into 8 volumes. An *ad hoc* sub-committee was created to undertake the editing as well as the copying of the text into word documents in order to facilitate the formatting process. While significant progress has been made, unfortunately, I was not able to see it finalised as it requires more time for formatting and design, but I trust that my successor in office will see it through.

### Online Law Journal

This term, our Online Law Journal has seen a significant boost in articles submitted for publication. There has been a total of 20 submissions so far with 11 articles already published and 9 that are awaiting their turn. The topics tackled include *inter alia* constitutional law, tax law, environmental law, and human rights law. This augurs well for the future of the OLJ and hopefully encourages more academic legal writing by students and legal professionals alike.

### Additional Work

Moreover, as the Publications Officer, I had the opportunity to help my fellow officers by proofreading their work, namely the booklet prepared for 'Law: The First Step', the 'Law

Tracker' upload, certain articles from the 'Family Law Handbook', as well as this year's policy paper.

# Resources Officer – Michael Spiteri/Miguel Mallia

## Michael Spiteri

Perhaps no office within GhSL is more important on a day-to-day basis than the Resources office. As resources officer for the period of July 2023–January 2024 this officer sought to fill in certain lacunas which had developed within the arsenal of student resources provided by GhSL.

Ingenuity in finding market niches and subsequently filling said niches through high quality resources, providing choice to the student as to which resources suit them best and making use of existing resources to create staple products for GhSL defined the strategy for this Resources Officer during his tenure.

The target audience for much of the tenure were first year and second year students who, unlike students in later years, were recognized to be those students most likely to seek out GhSL for resources to help them in their studies.

For first years this officer:

1. Created Fresher's Packs consisting of:

- i. Three relevant handbooks for First Years.
- ii. A collection of id-Dritt Articles curated for First Year students from among the different editions of the Legal Publication throughout the last 13 years.
- iii. A copy of the Constitution.
- iv. A copy of the first year Mamo Notes

The Fresher's pack was a large success generating around 1000 euros in profit. An offer which included the Fresher's pack and the GhSL membership also doubtlessly boosted Membership sales.

2. Created a collection of notes on Constitutional Law cases for consultation by First Years which were sent by email to around 100 first years who showed interest.

3. Created two study guides for EU law and Constitutional law with recommended resources, descriptions of relevant legal articles, alternative resources such as videos and articles, relevant past paper questions and a list of the topics for examination.

For Second years:

4. Revamped the Passed down notes on the GhSL drive. Providing notes on all topics by different authors who utilise different styles in order to provide students with choice as to which notes to Consult. These notes, coming from high graded students should encompass all the material in second year. While their marketing and general format

could admittedly have been better, this officer recommends such diversification in order to try and accommodate all students.

Of note also was the fact that work on the Succession Handbook, kindly proposed and written by Dr. Peter Borg Costanzi began in this period. This officer contacted several possible peer reviewers, eventually finding Mr. Justice Mark Simiana.

I would like to thank all the people who helped make the above project possible: My colleagues and friends at GhSL, especially Elena Sissons and Ella Micallef Darmania for their help in marketing all the project and those who contributed their notes, Dr. Borg Costanzi, Mr. Justice Simiana and my successor Miguel Mallia for continuing those unfinished projects to the highest of standards.

## Miguel Mallia

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Resources Officer is generally responsible for the issuance of updated passed down notes and additional publications such as the family law handbook, not falling within the remit of the publications officer. In addition, the supplementary roles of such an office are to ensure that past papers are issued in favour of the student on an annual basis and the sale of all the aforementioned if they are given a price.

### Introducing the term of 2023/2024

The term of 2023/2024, or rather the term of the year 2024, with the resources officer joining GhSL just for the last 4 months of the scholastic year, in virtue of a vacancy arising within the organisation, saw great milestones being achieved within the office. Such milestones include the finalization and compilation of projects which were pending for years to come, the selected essays in family law and the succession law handbook.

### The Selected Essays in Family Law

The Selected Essays in Family Law was originally a project aimed at covering all topics on family law, hence the prior title of a family law handbook. However, due to the project having multiple deadline extensions throughout multiple years, it was decided by the resources officer and the board that since sufficient contributions were issued by esteemed authors to produce a publication, then it should be printed as such. The office throughout this term dealt with last minute contributions and the peer review of such contributions, all with the aim of piecing together an additional source of information, hopefully with updated perspectives, from which students gain an additional insight into the topic.

The topics covered throughout this publication were the following;

- 1) Child Abduction Cases
- 2) Cohabitation in Malta
- 3) Divorce in Malta

- 4) The Matrimonial Regimes of the Community of Acquests, the Separation of Estates and the Community of Residue under Separate Administration
- 5) Mediation
- 6) Of Personal Separation – A Brief Overview
- 7) Parental Authority
- 8) Setting the Stage: Petition Preparation for a Canonical Marriage Nullity Case
- 9) The Matrimonial Home

### The Succession Law Handbook

The Succession Law Handbook was also a project endeavour spanning across years, seeing its first volume being published throughout this academic term. Rigorous hours of editing and reviewing were undertaken from my end, but it is nothing compared to the academic endeavour conducted solely by Dr. Borg Costanzi, bringing a much-needed publication on the topic of succession law, comparable to the likes of the notes of Prof F. Cremona and Prof V. Caruana Galizia, to light. The handbook will be prospectively split up into 2 or 3 volumes in its finality, however the first volume published within this academic year shall include the following topics;

- 1) Testate Successions
- 2) Wills
- 3) Capacity of Disposing or Receiving by Will
- 4) Property which may be Disposed of by Will
- 5) Of the Reserved Portion and Disherison
- 6) Of the Rights of the Surviving Spouse
- 7) Of the Abatement of Testamentary Dispositions exceeding the Disposable Portion

### Conclusion

In conclusion, despite only being within the organisation for a couple of months, success within the resource's office was still greatly achieved. Overseeing and finalizing the mentioned publications does not only render great internal satisfaction, but also brings to fruition the hard work produced by my predecessors within the organisation, authors and peer reviewers alike. The publications in themselves bring to light the true purpose of the organisation, 'for the student, by the student', especially in aligning such purpose with the University's in the achievement of academic success. Apart from the mentioned publications, great success was also achieved in selling the organisation's already established and reliable publications and initializing a project of compiling passed down notes of all the years of the law course, in which hopefully the latter project will come into fruition in the upcoming term.

I would like to thank the executive board of 2023/2024 for making the organisation a worthwhile experience through the output of work issued within the term. The organisation's true purpose is one which embodies the student life, and the executive board of this term embodied such terminology, embracing and fighting for the student in all of its endeavours to which the next executive board will surely follow suit.