

NATIONAL

MCAST principal confirms contract not renewed

GIULIA MAGRI

MCAST principal Joachim James Calleja has confirmed his contract was not renewed by the education ministry, amid reports he was sacked yesterday.

This comes as the post-secondary institution continues to be overshadowed by ongoing industrial action, with the college remaining locked in a dispute with the Malta Union of Teachers over a long-lapsed collective agreement.

Calleja told *Times of Malta* some three weeks ago the ministry informed him in writing his contract, which was up for renewal, was not going to be renewed.

He said that, since he turned 65, it was practice for his contract to be renewed on a yearly basis. Now 67, Calleja insisted he was not made aware of any decision

by the ministry to fire him and that he was set to complete his contract until the end of the academic year in August.

"Now, all of a sudden, they publish this, that I am fired because of the disputes. I have evidence of e-mails from students trying to help them. I have no problem with this but I am not stifling the issue," Calleja said.

"I knew nothing about the decision, I was not informed about it," he continued.

"I received a call informing me about the media report, otherwise I knew nothing about it. I have nothing to do with the ongoing discussions. While I attend the discussions, this is between the union and the government."

Calleja said he has been in discussion on ways to mitigate the hardships students have been experiencing due to the ongoing dispute.



Joachim James Calleja has been principal and CEO of MCAST since 2018.
FILE PHOTO: *TIMES OF MALTA*

MaltaToday said yesterday that sources close to the institute said the ministry informed the MCAST board that Calleja's services "were no longer required". It said a public call will be issued to find a replacement.

An MCAST representative said they found out about the decision to remove Calleja from media reports.

Responding to questions, an education ministry spokesperson said the decision to

remove Calleja was taken weeks ago and there had been communication between the ministry and Calleja.

"The ministry thanks professor Calleja, who is the longest principal who served in the MCAST management and under whom progress has been made on various aspects related to the college," the spokesperson said.

Calleja was appointed MCAST principal and CEO in June 2018.



Successful completion of SIGEF Women Summit 2024

Importance of women empowerment in shaping a better world

The Social Innovation and Global Ethics Forum (SIGEF) organising committee is proud to announce the successful completion of the SIGEF Women Summit 2024, held on June 17-18 in Malta.

This special edition echoed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, bringing together a distinguished assembly of thought leaders, experts, and change-makers from around the world.

These influential figures shared their insights and experiences, inspiring the global audience with their commitment to social good and sustainable development with insightful discussions, inspir-

ing stories and valuable networking opportunities, enabling our international audience to take a moment to reflect on the importance of women empowerment in shaping a better world.

Some of the concluding remarks included that empowering women is not just a moral imperative – it is a catalyst for social and economic progress, echoing the studies that articulate that increasing women's participation in the workforce could boost global GDP by \$28 trillion by 2025.

Furthermore, testimonials indicate that companies with greater gender diversity on executive teams are outper-

forming their peers on profitability. When women thrive, communities prosper, economies grow and societies become more inclusive and resilient.

The SIGEF organising committee extends heartfelt thanks to the HORYOU Foundation and HORYOU, the social network for social good, for organising this impactful event. Special gratitude goes to our strategic partners, Invest Capital Group, for their valuable support. We also thank our other sponsors including HORYOU Alphaverse, Kathryn's Luxury Flowers, and RC Manpower, for their generous contributions, our media



partners SFS and Elledgy Magazine, and our local partners for their commitment and trust.

The SIGEF Women Summit continues to be a leading

force in promoting social good, sustainability, and the UN 2030 Agenda, driving forward the advocacy for gender equality and inclusive development.