



MCU²⁰²⁰

**Student Essay
Competition**

Webinar

4 May 2023

15.00 - 16.30 CEST

Students Leading University Community Engagement

**What more can be done
and how should it be
recognised?**

Agenda

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1. How to join the webinar

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In order to join the zoom meeting, we kindly ask you to download the zoom app (link for your convenience <https://zoom.us/download>).

The web browser client will download automatically when you join your first zoom meeting, but in order to avoid technical problems, we kindly ask you to do it in advance.

There are 3 ways to join the Zoom meeting:

1. From the Zoom app on your desktop
2. Through the link via your email invitation
3. From the Zoom website

Once you have signed in with your username and password, you will have to enter

the meeting ID: 814 9011 7988

the password: 674056

PLEASE, DON'T SHARE THESE INFORMATION WITH ANYBODY. Only registered participants are allowed to enter.

Please, keep your audio and video off.

You will first be placed in a waiting room. Following authorisation you will be placed in the virtual meeting room.

IMPORTANT: Please, **rename** your profile. Your name that appears under your picture has to be the same as you used to register for the webinar, so that we can recognize you. Thank you.

In case you would like to submit questions, please, write them on the Chat.

2. Introduction to the webinar

Students Leading University Community Engagement.

What more can be done and how should it be recognised?

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The Magna Charta Universitatum 2020 speaks about the responsibility of universities to engage with their communities and recognises the role of students as key stakeholders in universities.

To help to give more substance to this in practice the MCO is working with the Global Student Forum (GSF) and the European Students' Union (ESU) to deliver a webinar and organise an essay competition to identify ways in which students might play a greater part in enabling their universities to fulfil their responsibilities to society. A key question is how might students' role in this be recognised in a way that adds value to their university experience and communicates their achievements.

The webinar will include student and university perspectives and examples of successful practice from around the globe.

At this event an essay competition will be launched with prizes that include travel to a potentially career enhancing influential international conference in the autumn of 2023.

Also at this event an essay competition will be launched to encourage students to share their experience and ideas. The essay competition will be global. It is designed to enable successful practice to be showcased and the winners to be funded to join the MCO's international conference from 23 - 25 October 2023 in Poland where they will present their essays in the presence of university leaders from around the globe and receive awards.

3. Programme

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14.55 Opening access to participants at Zoom

15.00 Introduction by the moderator

Martina Darmanin, Member of MCO Governing Council and former President European Students Union (ESU)

15.10 Schools: the New Training Group for Servant Leadership and Community Engagement

by Christina Williams, Head of Advocacy and Partnerships, Commonwealth Students' Association

15.25 Enhancing Student Community Engagement from the All-Africa Students' Union Perspective

by Bismark Amefianu Kudoafor, Programs Officer (Capacity Building), All-Africa Students Union (AASU)

15.40 A Rector's Perspective

by Ahmet Öztaş, Rector of Epoka University, Albania

15.55 From Performance to Practice: Preserving Student Community Building in Qualifications and Student Experience Globally

by Ellen Dixon, Steering Committee Member of the Global Student Forum

16.10 Introduction to the MCO Student Essay Competition

by David J. Lock, Secretary General, Magna Charta Observatory

16.20 Q&A

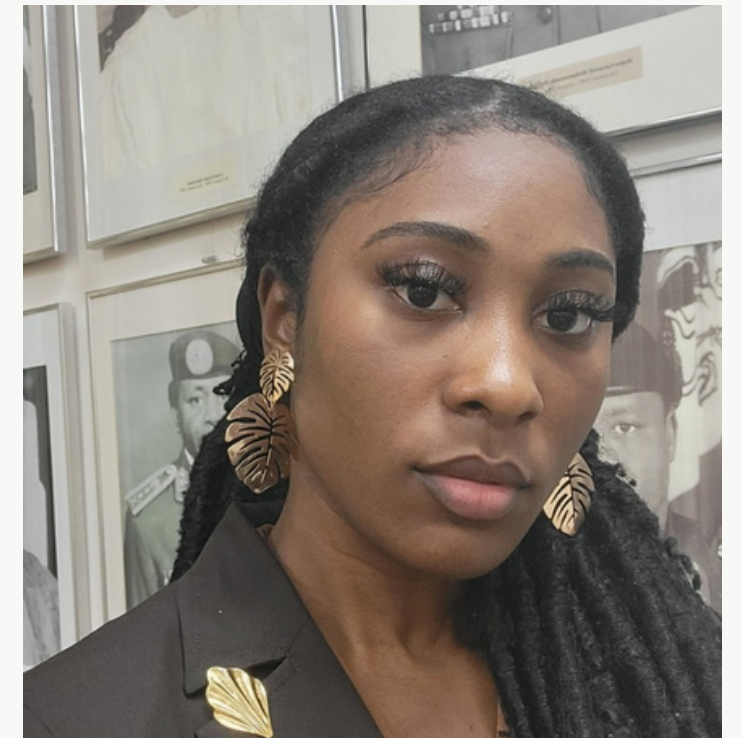
16.30 End of the webinar

4. Speakers' bios

Christina Williams is one of the longest serving national student leaders in the Caribbean having started her advocacy since eleven years of age. Using her platform on the National Secondary Students' Council she prioritized the reduction of punitive suspension policies in schools, advanced the enforcement of legislation which mandates an elected student representative on school boards and helped in passing a, landmark policy which dictates the reintegration of teen mothers in public high schools. At the tertiary level she successfully lobbied for a revision of a 70+ year old policy which now allows students to access healthcare island-wide, reduction in de-registration by 99.9% and was instrumental in successful covid interventions within the regional education sector such as the zero-rating of over 100 online learning platforms, student fees concessions and academic leniency schemes.

Christina Williams brings a unique perspective to the panel as she is a current student leader within her capacity as the first female President of the National Students Union and as a practitioner of sorts through her role on numerous education policy committees and taskforces to include her position as the youngest chair for a committee of the Council of Colleges. Within the scope of practitioner, she is working on the country's first higher education, character education and safe schools policies as she contributes to a more 'for students by students' approach to education.

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Christina
Williams

4. Speakers' bios

Bismark is currently the Programs Officer (Capacity Building) at the All-Africa Students Union (AASU), where he was formally the Research and Communications Officer for two years. Bismark has experience in student leadership at the local, regional and global level. He was a member of the Interim Secretariat formed to provide dedicated capacity for the start-up phase of the Global Student Forum, and was a member of the select team from Africa that joined the cross - continental group of students for the Global Meeting on Refugee Education to formulate the Global Students' Demand on Refugee and Migrants' Education policy document. Bismark has a strong interest in student leadership, developed from leading students from high school to the university through to the regional and global level. Bismark exemplifies an individual with strong passion for students and youth skill development, and is an ardent advocate for lifelong learning opportunities and capacity building for students and youths. Bismark has sat on various student's committees to develop strategic plans to ensure the welfare of the students at the tertiary level, and has also been a member of panels to select student leaders for university Student Representative Councils and National Student Unions. Bismark has also served on the Judicial Council of the Students Representative Council of the University of Professional Studies, Accra, leading student mediations between students, faculty and management. Bismark has a consultancy firm that provides academic and professional services to tertiary students, especially in academic research and career opportunities. Bismark holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Professional Studies, Accra, and is currently taking postgraduate studies in International Relations at the University of Ghana.

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**Bismark
Amefianu
Kudoafor**

4. Speakers' bios

He graduated first from Mathematics department of İnönü University, Malatya/Turkey and then from Civil Engineering Department of Istanbul Technical University (ITU), Istanbul/Tukey in 1987. He has an MSc. in Construction Management from Istanbul University and has Ph.D. from University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST), Manchester/U.K. in 1995.

He has joined to Gaziantep University, Gaziantep/Turkey as a Research Assistant at 1988. He has got a PhD. scholarship from Turkish Higher Education Council (YOK). After completing PhD study in U.K., he has continued to work in Gaziantep university as lecturer in Civil Engineering Department at the University of Gaziantep from 1995 to 2012. While he is lecturing in civil been involved in department, he has involved in administrative duties as well. He became the Director of Kilis Vocational High School of Gaziantep University from 1999 to 2004. He was also the coordinator of Turkish Student examination and Replacement Center (OSYM) for Kilis City from 1999 to 2004. Apart from academic works, he has involved in implementing “Quality Assurance System (KGS)” in the Ready Mixed Concrete (RMC) plants as concrete quality chief inspector in the Southeast Region of Turkey, working for Turkish Ready-Mixed Concrete Association (THBB) from 1997 to 2008. During this period, he supervised 25 plants in 9 cities to establish the KGS.

He has been involved in several national and international projects as a researcher and project leader. Apart from other projects, he has also worked on EUROCODE project at Joint Research Centre (JRC) of European Commission (EU) in Italy as a visiting fellow researcher from April 2006 to October 2007. Another research project involved as project leader was “Predicting the Compressive Strength and Slump of High-Performance Concrete using Artificial Neural Networks”, TÜBİTAK (Turkish Scientific and Technical Research Council) Project between 2003-2005.

He has published more than 65 journal and conference papers and supervised many MSc and PhD students in different universities in Turkey, Iraq and Albania.

He has served as the dean of Engineering and Architecture Faculty of Epoka University in Tirana/Albania for 4 years from 2008 to 2012. He works as the president of Ishik University in Erbil and Suleimani of Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRG) for 5 years from 2012 to 2017 and as director of International Relations office for 4 years from 2017 to 2021. Since September 2021, he is the rector of Epoka university in Tirana/Albania. He is a member of Global Engineering Deans Council (GEDC) since 2010 and elected and serving as Executive Committee Member of GEDC. He has been also selected as “FEATURED DEAN” by GEDC Executive committee in 2017. He is also serving as a member of “Standing Membership Committee” of European University Association (EUA) since September 2022.

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Ahmet
Öztaş

4. Speakers' bios

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Ellen Dixon is a Steering Committee Member at the Global Student Forum overseeing the Quality Education Cluster, and is the National President of the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations. She had worked at the local, national, regional and global level of student representation, since 2017. Ellen has partnered with various UN organs including Education2030, UNESCO and SDSN, to focus on the quality of education. She is a recognised advocate on SDG 4 by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, having been appointed by the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee's two highest seats for academic quality. Ellen is a Massey Scholar and a Doctoral Scholar, with a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and a Master of International Relations and Diplomacy. She is currently pursuing a Doctorate in International Relations focusing on biopolitical sovereignty.



Ellen
Dixon

4. Speakers' bios

David Lock has been Secretary-General of the Magna Charta Observatory since 2014. He has led on the development and delivery of the MCO's strategy including the globalisation of the Observatory's work and the development of a self-evaluation instrument for university values. His career in international higher education and university leadership has included Director of International Projects at the UK's Leadership Foundation for Higher Education where he was responsible for instigating and delivering projects with over 30 different countries, some at Governmental level. He was the founding Registrar and Acting Chief Executive of the British University in Dubai where he structured, built and then led the University following its legal creation by the Ruler of Dubai as a not-for-profit provider of Higher Education to UK standards. He was previously head of administration and secretary of two UK universities.



David J.
Lock

4. Speakers' bios

Martina Darmanin held the office of President in the European Students Union (ESU) between 2021-2022, Vice-President in 2020 and Human Rights Coordinator between 2019 - 2020. Her portfolio at ESU focused on equitable access to education, academic freedom, student agency in education governance and international cooperation on education.

She is currently the Vice-President of the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLLP) and has represented the international youth and student constituency in the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) between 2020-2022. She has been active as an elected student leader on the local level through the Malta Health Students' Association as well as the national level through Malta's University Student Council prior to her European engagement. Martina's academic background is in the field of Health Sciences and holds a Master of Science degree by research in Food Studies and Environmental Health from the University of Malta.

Her M.Sc. research was conducted in partnership with the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Engineering and Bio-economy e.V. (ATB) in Potsdam, Germany.

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Martina
Darmanin

5. The Magna Charta Observatory

The Magna Charta Observatory is the global guardian of fundamental university values and assists universities and higher education systems to operate effectively in accordance with them for the benefit of students, staff, society and universities themselves.

Over 900 universities from 86 countries have signed its statement of fundamental values since 1988.

The MCO supports a global community of universities through values. It assists universities pro-actively and through supportive actions when difficulties are encountered.

The MCO was founded by the University of Bologna and the European University Association. It is a non-profit organisation and is based in Bologna. It is funded by the University of Bologna and donations from signatories.

Why MCO is needed

The MCO provides assistance for universities who want to be at the forefront of understanding and implementation of the fundamental values.

It has developed the Living Values project which can be used by universities to enable them to put their values into practice more effectively.

MCO reviews and reports when circumstances do not allow universities to operate autonomously.

MCO helps Countries to enable their universities to be more aware of the significance of fundamental values for the development of their higher education systems.

MCO assists key stakeholders when fundamental values, especially academic freedom, are not being upheld.

MCO seeks to promote a deeper understanding of the importance of values and their operation in different contexts.

MCO helps universities learn from other situations that can enrich practice. As institutions operate more globally the importance of mutual understanding and shared values helps to build stronger partnerships through trust.

Autonomy is a journey - not a destination. Journeys have different starting points, progress at different speeds and experience different operational constraints.

MCO Strategic plan

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[Click to read the Magna Charta Observatory strategy for 2020-2025](#)

6. The MCU 2020

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The Observatory has prepared a new version of the Magna Charta Universitatum: the MCU 2020. The text (in English) has been adopted by the MCO's Governing Council.

The new MCU removes nothing from the original fundamental values to which universities signed up. It strives to be responsive to and resonate with contemporary challenges and concerns.

Its tone recognises that the pursuit of the fundamental values has worth along with their actual attainment, which, in practice, is a constant quest.

It recognises the more global nature of what universities do and the wider range of local responsibilities which they have.

The text of the MCU 2020 is here below.

It has been launched at the occasion of the XXXIII MCO anniversary on 16 June 2021.

Preamble

The Magna Charta Universitatum, a declaration and affirmation of the fundamental principles upon which the mission of universities should be based, was signed in 1988 on the occasion of the 900th anniversary of the University of Bologna. The first principle was independence: research and teaching must be intellectually and morally independent of all political influence and economic interests. The second was that teaching and research should be inseparable, with students engaged in the search for knowledge and greater understanding. The third principle identified the university as a site for free enquiry and debate, distinguished by its openness to dialogue and rejection of intolerance.

The Magna Charta Universitatum recognised that universities upholding these principles could take many forms under the combined influence of culture, geography and history. Despite being explicitly the product of a specific moment in European development the document envisaged a networked world in which knowledge and influence should cross cultural boundaries in the pursuit of human understanding.



The world has since become interconnected in ways unimaginable at the time of the original declaration. Universities have proliferated around the globe, dramatically increasing in variety as well as scope and mission. Globally the number and diversity of students seeking a university education has increased, as have their reasons for doing so and the expectations of their families and communities. The number of publications has increased enormously while trust in academia is being eroded by a loss of confidence in expertise. In the sway of new technologies, modes of learning, teaching and research are changing rapidly; universities are both leading and responding to these developments.

Despite these changes, the potential of higher education to be a positive agent of change and social transformation endures. The principles laid out in the Magna Charta Universitatum are as valid today as they were in 1988, and they are the necessary precondition for human advancement through enquiry, analysis and sound action. The dramatic changes outlined above require the global academy to identify responsibilities and commitments that the signatories agree are vital to universities around the world in the Twenty-First Century. That is the reason for this new declaration.

Principles, Values and Responsibilities

Universities acknowledge that they have a responsibility to engage with and respond to the aspirations and challenges of the world and to the communities they serve, to benefit humanity and contribute to sustainability.

Intellectual and moral autonomy is the hallmark of any university and a precondition for the fulfilment of its responsibilities to society. That independence needs to be recognised and protected by governments and society at large, and defended vigorously by institutions themselves.

To fulfil their potential, universities require a reliable social contract with civil society, one which supports pursuit of the highest possible quality of academic work, with full respect for institutional autonomy.

As they create and disseminate knowledge, universities question dogmas and established doctrines and encourage critical thinking in all students and scholars. Academic freedom is their lifeblood; open enquiry and dialogue their nourishment.

Universities embrace their duty to teach and undertake research ethically and with integrity, producing reliable, trustworthy and accessible results.

Universities have a civic role and responsibility. They are part of global, collegial networks of scientific enquiry and scholarship, building on shared bodies of knowledge and contributing to their further development. They also are embedded in local cultures and crucially relevant to their future and enrichment. While they are immersed in and connected with global developments, they engage fully with and assume leading roles in local communities and ecosystems.

Universities are non-discriminatory spaces of tolerance and respect where diversity of perspectives flourishes and where inclusivity, anchored in principles of equity and fairness, prevails. They therefore commit themselves to advance equity and fairness in all aspects of academic life including admissions, hiring and promotion practices.

Education is a human right, a public good, and should be available to all. Universities recognise that learning is a lifelong activity with tertiary education as one part of a continuum. Within that one part, universities serve diverse learners at all stages of their lives.

Universities acknowledge that individuals and communities, often due to inequitable circumstances, have difficulty gaining access to higher education or influencing the modes and matter of academic study. To realise human potential everywhere, universities deliberately seek ways to welcome and engage with diverse voices and perspectives.

By signing the Magna Charta Universitatum 2020 universities declare their commitment to the original declaration and to upholding and advancing the Principles, Values and Responsibilities stated above, to strengthen the role of universities in the preservation of the planet and promoting health, prosperity, and enlightenment around the world.

Approved by the Governing Council 12 March 2020

7. How to become a signatory of the MCU 2020

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In order to apply to become a signatory of the MCU2020, you are kindly asked to read the Admission Policy, fill out the Application Form that you can download from the MCO website (link for your convenience: <http://www.magna-charta.org/magna-charta-universitatum/sign-the-magna-charta>) and email it with the following documents to the Magna Charta Observatory Administrator at magnacharta@unibo.it.

Documents to be attached:

- a) A formal request to become a signatory signed by the senior academic post holder (Rector, President, or Vice-Chancellor)
- b) Evidence in the form of certified minutes from the senior academic body and the ultimate governing body that the application has their full support
- c) Statements of support from 3 universities, at least two of which should be outside their own country, already signatories of the Magna Charta Universitatum.

The Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory reviews request to sign the MCU during its Summer meeting, before the 2023 signing event that will be held in Lodz, Poland on 23rd-25th October 2023.

Please send us the listed required documents by the 15th of June, to be reviewed within the next Ceremony of October 2023.

The Application Form and the required documents must be drafted in (or translated into) English.



8. Supporters of the MCO - 2023

'The MCO thanks its supporters whose donations enable it to implement its strategy and serve universities

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ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA



The MCO depends
on donations
to undertake
its work.
To make a
donation, please,
click here

9. MCO Contact details

Magna Charta Observatory

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Secretariat

DAVID J. LOCK

Secretary General

CARLA PAZZAGLIA

Events organizer & Administrator

JULIA BERRUEZO

Research Assistant

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10. Essay competition 2023

Information about the essay

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The central role of students in universities features in the original (1988) Magna Charta Universitatum (MCU) and is endorsed and expanded in the 2020 version. The Magna Charta Observatory (MCO) includes representatives of students in the membership of its governing body and in its various activities. It wishes to increase and raise the profile and effectiveness of student involvement in universities.

To do this the MCO is pleased to announce an essay competition for students with a view to ascertaining how students might exercise more influence in enabling their universities to make a more effective contribution to society and sharing this information.

There will be 5 prizes of expenses paid participation (including travel and accommodation costs) in the MCO's 2023 Anniversary Conference which will be held from 23 – 25 October in Lodz, Poland at which the winners will present their essays and participate in discussions with an international audience.

The competition is open to students in any university in any country. The closing date for the submission of essays is 12 June 2023. The winners will be announced on 28 July 2023. More details are contained below.

The theme of the competition: How might students exercise more influence in enabling their universities to make a more effective contribution to society?

MCU 2020 says: "Universities acknowledge that they have a responsibility to engage with and respond to the aspirations and challenges of the world and to the communities they serve, to benefit humanity and contribute to sustainability."

In their essays students *may* wish to:

- reflect on how and to what extent their universities live up to the above text
- refer to how the universities' governing structures address this
- observe how professors and administrators at their universities put this principle into practice
- reflect on methods and approaches students have used to enable universities to achieve this aspect of the MCU
 - how they have they enabled universities and with whom,
 - whether this has been through the student union, class groups or individually
 - whether this has been achieved through the universities' governing structures
 - their involvement in the universities' strategic processes,
 - involvement in class activities
 - through protests
- suggest what more might be done to enable universities to engage with societies and to do so more effectively?

Essays must not exceed 2000 words. They must be in the English language and uploaded as a pdf [HERE](#)

They must be the solely the work of the author who must certify as follows at the bottom of the essay. '*I hereby certify that the above essay is entirely my own work and that I have acknowledged any reference that I have made to other work. Signed electronically.....*'

Essays will be judged on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the question
- Awareness of the factors involved
- Innovation/ novelty/ uniqueness of the approach proposed
- Potential impact for the university and beyond

An independently chaired and gender-balanced international judging panel comprising current and former student representatives and senior leaders in universities will review entries and their decisions will be final.

Members of the judging panel:

- Caroline Sundberg (Chair) Brussels representative - Lärosäten Syd/ EU Policy Officer at Lund University and Former Member of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory
- Cristina Demaria, Rector's delegate for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion of Alma Mater Studiorum – The University of Bologna and Member of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory
- Peter Kwasi Kodjie, Secretary General, All-Africa Students Union (AASU), Ghana, and Member of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory
- Marcelo Knobel, Former Rector University of Campinas (UNICAMP), Brazil, and Member of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory
- Catharine Stimpson, Professor and Dean Emerita of the Graduate School of Arts and Science, New York University, USA, and Member of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory

Five prizes of expenses paid participation in the MCO's 2023 Anniversary conference in Lodz, Poland will be awarded. In addition, the judging panel may award certificates of merit. All entrants will receive a certificate of participation.

The MCO is pleased to be working with the Global Students Forum and the European Students' Union in the organisation of this competition.

More details about the MCO and MCU can be found at <https://www.magna-charta.org>

11. About GSF & ESU

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Click on the images to know more





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Thank you!

LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE
QUESTIONS OR CLARIFICATIONS.