



Classter



THE MCAST CASE

**CLASSTER ALL-IN-ONE CLOUD
SOLUTION CONNECTS THE DOTS**

CUSTOMER

The Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology

SOLUTION

Classter SIS @ Microsoft Azure

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CHAPTER 1

CUSTOMER

MALTA COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

IN A GIST

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is a public higher education and training institution offering 180 full-time and more than 300 part-time programs.

These programs consist of undergraduate and postgraduate studies as well as vocational training programs. MCAST is the country's leading vocational education and training institution with six institutes on the main campus in Valetta and a separate campus in the island of Gozo.

MCAST serves approximately 10,000 students of all levels and types of study. Teaching and administrative staff consists of about 1,000 employees.





CHAPTER 2

CHALLENGES

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

As part of the **digital transformation of the educational institution**, MCAST's management wanted to **replace its outdated, on-premises, IT systems** with an innovative solution based on cloud environment that would simplify and improve its administrative processes while connecting its campuses located in different geographical areas.

As in any case of an upgrade of an existing IT system, at first there are many concerns from users and a general denial of the impending change. Time must pass to develop the necessary trust for a successful partnership.

After the adoption of the platform, there have been several challenges related to the implementation of the system. Time constraints were the most difficult to be overcome for both parties involved, as the main part of the project had to be delivered within 6 months.

Although 6 months is a very tight period of time for a project of this scale, **the fact that Classter has extensive out-of-the box functionality** helped to achieve this goal despite the limitations in time.

CHAPTER 3

OUR SOLUTION

CLASSTER ALL-IN-ONE SIS AND LMS

Following a public tender, MCAST selected Classter's solution as the best choice with a fully customizable platform offering a wide range of solutions in a cloud environment. This architecture allows online access by all users, from any location, with features that **facilitate the management of academic processes**, financials and seamless communication between the administration, faculty and students.

One of the main competitive advantages offered by Classter's **cloud architecture** is the advanced management of its regional departments, with which the college has been able to create the central administration under which the individual faculties of the college are located. In this way, the individual faculties were given the freedom to shape the platform according to their needs.

The Classter platform for MCAST is hosted on the Microsoft Azure platform with a **99.5% uptime guarantee** for all its units. In addition to improving the user experience, this architecture enhances the security of the data as it is continuously backed-up on the MS Azure cloud; to ensure its resilience and high availability.

The solution is **fully integrated with Office365** and uses the infrastructure of Mailgun, an email sending provider.

Classter solution has utilized the full stack of MS Azure with both PaaS and pure SaaS infrastructure. **Multiple MS Azure modules** are used, such as :

- Azure SQL Datacenter
- Azure Web Services
- Azure Micro Services
- Azure Queue Services
- Azure Push Notification Services
- Azure Blob and File storage
- Azure Logging Services

- Azure Vault and Backup Services
- Azure Identity Services
- Azure Microsoft SQL Services
- Azure PowerBI Services





CHAPTER 4

CUSTOMIZATION

CUSTOM DEVELOPMENT ON THE MS AZURE CLOUD

MCAST's unique requirements led to the development of custom features for the platform that complemented existing Classter functionality. In summary, the solution was developed as follows:

-  Automated creation of sections and tools for **online creation of timetables** and monitoring.
-  Centralized management and **quality control of curricula**.
-  Automation of the year or course completion check and the automatic issuing of **certificates of study and degrees electronically**.
-  Automated management of the entire **student application process** for all degree programs. The organization was using an off-line process. The process was fully digitized and interfaced with the country's national identification system (e-ID). All prospective students can now send applications for one or more MCAST schools, **upload their personal details and attestation files**, their qualifications, high school transcripts, respond to online **GDPR Consents** and set priority in case of multiple applications.

Automated and **centralized user management** and automatic account creation for all students and teachers in **Office365**. The system syncs accounts and provides a single sign on for both Classter and Office365. At the same time, it gives the central administration the tools to monitor the details of all employees and their access rights to all institutes of the college.



- Bulk scheduling of all assignments and examinations for all courses. The system gives **specific workflows for approval** and control of the content of all assignments, examinations, and student assessments by external or internal assessors. It also supports the random checking by internal or external mark reviewers of all marks given on assignments and examinations.
- Tools for external partners (Agents) for **mass registration** of student applications from non-EU countries.
- Tools for sending **messages and push notifications to students** from professors or the administration of each institute.
- Ability to request continuation of studies from year to year or **graduates transfer** to the next level of postgraduate studies.
- Registration of absences by lecturers using **Mobile Apps** and automatic issuance of student compensation reports sent to the Maltese Ministry of Finance (stipends reports).
- Introduction of a **brand-new functional module, Internship & Thesis**, which enabled the improvement of the workflow management related to internships, as well as the streamlining of all processes related to the management of the thesis project.
- Ability to present **centralized BI-type reports using Microsoft PowerBI** to monitor enrollment progress, drop-out level, evaluation of the educational work provided and the level of students' attendance for the courses (attendance ratios).



CHAPTER 5

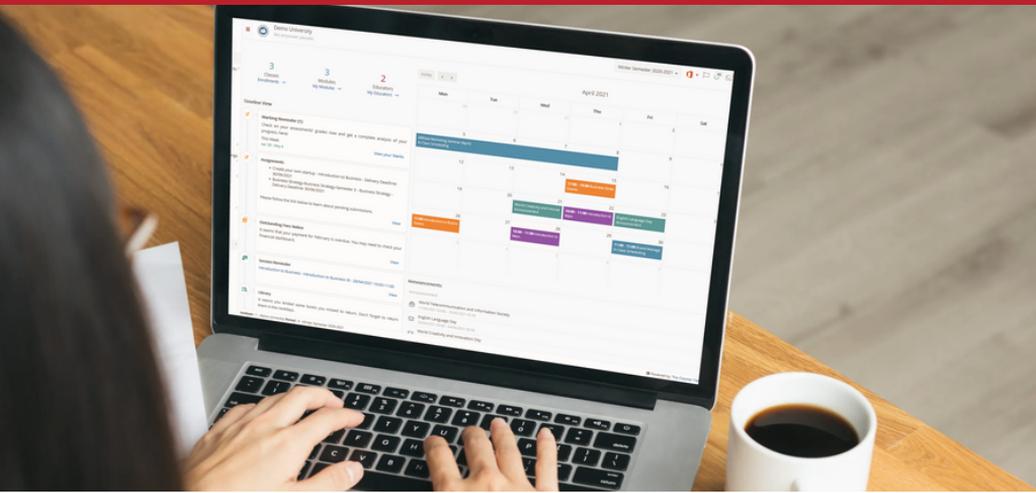
COLLABORATION

CUSTOM DEVELOPMENT ON THE MS AZURE CLOUD

MCAST and Classter have developed an excellent partnership, based on 3 pillars:

-  Leveraging a unified cloud solution that is easy to manage and scalable, which **reduces the college's overall operating costs**.
-  **Ongoing support** and training to MCAST staff.
-  Creation of an **open college** with direct communication between students and faculty.





CHAPTER 6

ABOUT CLASSTER

CLASSTER ALL-IN-ONE SIS AND LMS

Classter is revolutionizing the educational technology space, as it has been designed and implemented to help educational institutions reduce bureaucratic processes and enhance the efficiency of their existing resources with the goal of improving the educational experience for all stakeholders: students, teachers, employees, alumni and parents.

Founded in 2016, it is one of the most innovative education management platforms in the world using SaaS architecture, providing an end-to-end solution as it combines the features of five different management systems, Student (SIS), School (SMS), Learning (LMS), CRM and ERP.

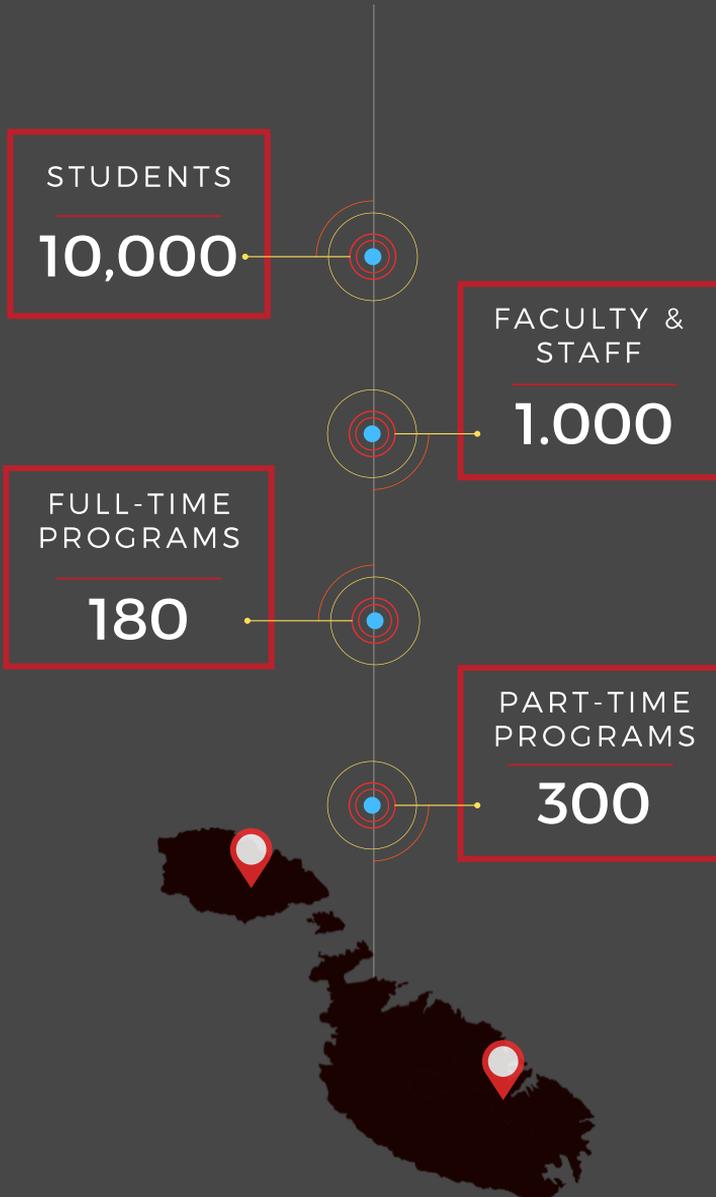
Classter is currently used by more than 600 educational institutions worldwide, with over 600,000 active users on the platform in more than 30 countries.



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