

## WF 4th Executive Council Meeting, Leicester, England

### Muballigheen Training Programme Update:

The Muballigheen Training Programme (MTP) was an idea that our community Muballigheen recommended the World Federation to embark upon, and thereby serve the needs of Jamaats by providing them with high quality scholars.

From that inspiration given by the Muballigheen, and then the community worldwide, the Islamic Institute for Postgraduate Studies in Seyyida Zaynab (a.s.) Damascus opened its doors to the first intake of students on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2007 (25<sup>th</sup> Sha'baan 1428).

A team of 70 community volunteers have worked tirelessly to arrive at this historic milestone.


The Curriculum Team (Eastern) finalised the subjects that will be taught, and which books will be used. Students will go through in-depth modules on the Quran and its exegesis, Sciences of Traditions, Islamic Theology, Jurisprudence (General and Principles), Logic, History, Philosophy and Ethics. This team was chaired by Maulana Zaffar Abbas.

The Curriculum Team (Western) finalised the contemporary Western academic subjects in 34 identified areas — including Islamic Civilizations, Interfaith training, and Islam and the West — which will form an integral part of the studies at the Institute. This team was chaired by Murabbi Hasnainbhai Walji.

The Arabic Language Team developed and tested a unique module aiming at teaching Arabic with a goal of enabling an understanding of Qur'an, Hadith (Traditions) and Islam, and being able to use the language in daily cultural and educational situations. This team was chaired by Shaykh Kassim Assady.

The Accreditation Team selected a well-known UK University to academically recognize the MTP program. A first draft of The Academic Regulations for MA in Islamic Studies has been submitted to the University. This team was chaired by Yasinbhai Raheem.

The Institute Team finalised and published, in French and in English, the four-year programme, the Student Selection Criteria, the Student Application Form and the Institute Code of Conduct. This team was chaired by Shaykh Sami Bu Khamseen.

The Campus Construction Team searched for and purchased a 37000 sq.m. plot of land in Seyyida Zaynab  in Damascus, identified a dynamic architect who submitted the drawings for a six phase project of construction, and selected a contractor for the Campus construction. Last week a memorandum of understanding was signed.

The Communications Team published articles, brochures and magazines in English and in French, and conducted seminars and presentations publicising MTP to the worldwide community members. Presentations were also made to the Executive Council in Karachi and Dares salaam. A dedicated website ([www.wfiips.org](http://www.wfiips.org)) has been designed and setup by Meimunabai Walji.

The Human Resources Team produced Job and Person's spec for key positions and trained a team for carrying out interviews. Those who applied for positions were given a psychometric test to assess development needs prior to their interviews.

The Legal Team finalised the staff contracts and the Institute Organisation and Consultative Structure.

The Administration Team established an office in Damascus and has created streamlined Systems and Processes for the smooth running of MTP. This team was chaired by Shaykh Hussein Ravji.

The core members of Team MTP met over the August Bank Holidays and discussed in depth all aspects of MTP and agreed on procedures for dealing with anticipated challenges that may be faced by the Institute in the coming year.

The World Federation Secretariat Staff at Stanmore and at Harefield provided the dedicated logistical support that made it all possible.

As can be seen from the above, community members working together as a team with a focused vision, were able to deliver on what initially appeared an impossible target. And today I can tell you that Team MTP's work continues:

The Curriculum Team (Eastern) is finalising the Second Year Lesson Plans and starting work on the Third Year Lesson Plans.

The Curriculum Team (Western) is finalising the lesson plans for the course introductions and the Second and Third Year Lesson Plans.

The Arabic Language Team is monitoring module delivery and amending course books as necessary for the following years.

The Accreditation Team is evaluating Institute progress, suggesting systems for delivery improvement, finalising the validation document and recommending an External Examiner.

The Institute Team is assessing systems and processes, proposing any changes that may be necessary.

The Campus Construction Team is preparing for the supervision of the construction of the First Phase of the Project and to organising the opening ceremony.

The Communications Team is organising seminars for undergraduates and graduates in North America, Europe, Malaysia and Reunion.

The Human Resources Team is working on the production of Job and Person's spec for further positions that will have to be filled during the year.

The Legal Team is pursuing the Registration of the World Federation in Syria as an NGO.


The Administration Team is monitoring the performance of the Damascus Office and suggesting changes necessary for improvement.

The 19 core members of Team MTP will meet in March and August 2008 to discuss and decide upon core issues, and to finalise the composition of the Course Committee, chaired by Maulana Zaffar Abbas.

The World Federation Secretariat Staff at Stanmore and at Harefield will need to continue their unflinching support of Team MTP.

As you are all aware, every year it is normal for two or three community young men and women to proceed to Qum for Islamic studies. We are delighted that this year two young men and two young women who wished to go for Islamic Studies, chose to join IIPS, and already three young men and three young women have signed up for the course that is expected to start in September 2008. It is our duty now to entice more young men and young women to choose to go for Islamic Studies and hopefully join IIPS.

Before I close, I would like to extend an invitation to all Councillors to visit the Institute in Seyyida Zaynab(a.s.) Damascus and having critically assessed the Institute, submit to me

your recommendations for improvement. The Office Manager in Seyyida Zaynab  Damascus AlHajj Hussain Ravji, whose telephone number is 00963 (0) 988 799 765, will be more than happy to make any visa, transportation and accommodation arrangements that you may require.

This much needed programme that the community recommended should be launched, cannot succeed without the support of all of you. I therefore urge you to be part of it, especially by visiting it, and encouraging students to join it.

With salaams and duas,  
Jaffer H Dharamsi,  
Muballigheen Training Coordinator.  
11<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

