

ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN AREA NETWORK FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

CANQATE is a professional body, established as a regional sub-network of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). Its aims and objectives are compatible with the purposes of INQAAHE.

The following countries are actively involved in CANQATE: Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Haiti, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St Christopher & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & The Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, Guyana

CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

Full members are organisations such as accrediting agencies, universities and other tertiary institutions, evaluation agencies and similar organisations within the region with responsibility for assuring the academic quality of tertiary institutions or educational programmes.

Associate members are organisations with a major interest in evaluation, accreditation and quality assurance in tertiary education, but without the responsibility for assuring quality of institutions or educational programmes.

Individual members are those persons who are interested in and/or who focus on quality assurance and standards

but who do not have direct responsibility for them.

Honorary members may be appointed at the discretion of the Board of Management from persons who have made, or are making, distinguished contributions which are in keeping with the goals of CANQATE.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS & SERVICES

- Access to training workshops and seminars
- Opportunities to participate in the administration and governance of CANQATE
- Collaboration in the attainment of CANQATE's objectives
- Links with professional colleagues throughout the region
- Opportunities to contribute to development of quality assurance in the region
- Opportunities to learn from best practices and from what others in the region are doing to improve quality in tertiary education
- Participation in discussion forums on global issues
- Access to regular newsletters and other publications from INQAAHE and CANQATE
- Reduced rate for attendance at conferences and other activities

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

Membership in CANQATE is open to all countries in the Caribbean

Complete an application form and send it to the CANQATE Secretariat.

See the website for more information



CANQATE NEWS is a publication of The Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE). It is distributed free of charge. To obtain your copy of this newsletter or to submit material for future publications of CANQATE contact the CANQATE SECRETARIAT.

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Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education



October 2015

CANQATE CONFERENCE 2015

A stimulating and intellectual professionals, educators, policy makers, representatives from regional and extra-regional bodies, meet for the 12th Annual and other interested organizations Conference at the beautiful St. Kitts and Nevis, to share experiences and discuss developments in quality assurance in tertiary education and the socioeconomic impact. The Conference is being hosted by the Ministry of Education, St Kitts and Nevis, and The St. Christopher and Nevis Accreditation Board.

This 12th annual meeting under the theme, *Quality Assurance and Socioeconomic Development in a Global Environment: Regional and International Perspectives*, promises to be an interactive platform for quality assurance professionals, educators, policy makers, representatives from regional and extra-regional bodies, to share experiences and discuss developments in quality assurance in tertiary education and the socioeconomic impact. The distinguished surgeon and medical educator Professor Joseph M. Branday, University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus, will deliver the keynote address, inspired by the conference theme. Plenary presenters will include: Dr Ethley London, founding President of CANQATE;

12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Frigate Bay, St. Kitts and Nevis
October 7-9, 2015



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ruby Alleyne, PhD

In a region like ours, which currently holds the distinction of having some of the world's leading track athletes (including men's and women's relay teams) we understand only too well the importance of passing the baton. More than speed, it is about precision, efficiency and control. We have all seen high-performing teams snatch defeat from the jaws of victory by dropping the baton. When the Board that I lead was handed the baton in November 2013, we grasped it firmly, determined to run a good leg. This we believe we have done.



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Over the past two years our focus has been on:

- ◆ Creating and maintaining a comprehensive membership database
- ◆ Attracting new members
- ◆ Strengthening communication with our members and stakeholders
- ◆ Developing a new Strategic Plan
- ◆ Adding new member benefits
- ◆ Facilitating greater collaboration among External Quality Assurance Agencies (EQAAs)
- ◆ Increasing cooperation with regional and international agencies
- ◆ Enriching capacity-building opportunities for EQAAs and tertiary level institutions (TLIs)
- ◆ Stimulating interest in, and awareness of, CANQATE through our Country Core Groups

Some of our major achievements in this regard have been:

- * Publication of the Scoping Study of Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education in the Caribbean (funded by UNESCO)
- * Development of the Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018
- * Introduction of the CANQATE Webinar Series
- * Launch of the CANQATE Art Competition
- * Facilitating implementation of The Belize Accord (signed by EQAAs in 2014)
- * Development of the CANQATE Information System (membership database)
- * Frequent publication of CANQATE News and contributions to the INQAAHE Newsletter
- * Creation of new Country Core Groups in Dominica, Guyana and Grenada and revival and strengthening of the Core Group in Trinidad and Tobago
- * Supporting the first revenue generating professional development activity by the Trinidad and Tobago Country Core Group (TTCCG)

We have also worked towards improving the efficiency of

some of CANQATE's organisational processes. As a Board, we have kept in our lane, we have run the course and we have taken CANQATE one leg further in its movement towards its vision. The time has come to pass the baton.

As leader for the past two years, I thank the membership for having given me the opportunity to serve and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your support. My love for this region continues to inspire me to pursue the noble ideals espoused over the years by many Caribbean leaders. As I demit office, I am pleased to announce the launch of the CANQATE Quality Footprint Initiative (QFI). It symbolises my desire to give something back to the region which has given me so much, and I thank the members of my Board for their support. This year, for the first time, members of the CANQATE Board of Management will host two seminars (one in St Kitts and one in Nevis) to sensitise students to the importance and benefits of accreditation. This forum will become the first CANQATE Quality Footprint. The area of focus was decided on in consultation with the St Kitts and Nevis Accreditation Board which identified it as an area of need. It is envisaged that, on an annual basis, in every country in which the CANQATE conference is held, the members of the Board of Management will give unstintingly of their time, experience and expertise in similar fashion.

We believe that as the years go by, the CANQATE Quality Footprint Initiative will contribute to raising awareness of quality assurance and accreditation issues and strengthening the quality culture in the host countries. It will be a service to our region. Through this initiative each year, CANQATE will take one step closer to its vision - walking side by side with our members and stakeholders, moving steadily towards our common goals and leaving a Quality Footprint behind for future generations to follow.



CANQATE CONFERENCE 2015

Continued from page 1

Professor Stafford Griffith; and Dr Neil Kemp. Day two of the conference will explore the conference theme further through a high level panel discussion. The panelists are, Dr Tomlin Paul, Dr Neil Kemp, Dr Kelvin Daly, Professor Emerita Vivienne Roberts, and Dr Alvin Ashton. The pre-conference workshop will be held on Wednesday 7 October, focusing on the topic "Assessing and Improving Financial Health of Educational Institutions". This will be followed by an educational tour to Nevis.

In addition to the stimulating presentations, plenary sessions, and panel discussion, conference attendees will be treated to a and a rich social and cultural programme that will provide opportunities for networking.

CANQATE News extends best wishes to all presenters and conference attendees for a successful conference.

SERVICE TO CANQATE



Vonrick Knights

Mr Vonrick Knights has worked as a professional in the information technology sector since 2003. Having started as a Network Technician, he has worked at various levels at different organisations ranging from Data Entry Clerk at COSTAATT in 2004 to IT Manager at the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago in 2009. In the field of Information

Technology, he holds an Associate Degree from NIHERST, Bachelor's Degree from UTT and Comptia's Network + Certification. Currently he is pursuing his Masters in Information Technology at the UWI—Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business.

Mr Knights participated in the selection of the vendor to upgrade CANQATE's website in 2010 and was trained in its upkeep, which he performed until the website was further upgraded in 2012. At this point maintenance was transferred to Mr Onver Lewis at UTT. Vonrick resigned from ACTT this year and is currently pursuing a career as an IT Consultant.

Onver Lewis



Onver Lewis started his career back in 1999 in London, the home of industry-leading design and web development. He had earlier graduated from The University of the West Indies with a B.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering but instead chose to pursue a career in Interactive Media and Software Architecture.

At UTT, Onver currently holds the position of Manager – Interactive Media where he designs, develops and maintains a portfolio of marketing related websites and the Intranet - www.u.tt. He also designed, developed and continues to maintain the website of the Office of the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, www.otp.tt. Onver also enjoys landscaping and sports and lives in Arima, Trinidad with his wife and three daughters.

Outgoing Board

Term 2013-2015

of Management



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The University Council
of Jamaica (UCJ), Jamaica



SERVICE TO CANQATE

THANK YOU!



CANQATE gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) for hosting and supporting the Secretariat and its many activities for the 2013-2015 term.



UNESCO has been a major partner in the development of CANQATE through the provision of financial assistance and technical advice and support over the years. We express our sincere gratitude for the support provided by the UNESCO Kingston Cluster Office for the Caribbean and the Higher Education Section, Education Sector, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris. In particular, we acknowledge the contribution made by Mr Robert Parua (Jamaica) and Ms Hassmik Tortian (Paris).



Michaela Broomes

Ms. Michaela Broomes holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Sector Management with a minor in International Relations from the University of the West Indies. She is currently a postgraduate student at the University of the West Indies where she is completing her practicum for her M.Sc. in Public Sector Management. At the moment Ms. Broomes is employed as an Administrative Assistant II at the University of Trinidad and Tobago in the Registry department. Prior to this, Ms. Broomes served within UTT's Quality Assurance and Institutional Effectiveness department. Ms. Broomes is self-motivated, organized, interested in continuous growth and self-development and most importantly believes in the use of team work as an aid in organizational and customer growth. Ms. Broomes has most definitely enjoyed working along with the CANQATE Board and interacting with the wider CANQATE community. Among other hobbies Ms. Broomes enjoys gardening, hiking, and spending time in nature.

Secretariat Support Personnel

CANQATE expresses its appreciation to the hardworking support personnel in the Secretariat who voluntarily contribute to the daily management and information technology services. The four volunteers are featured below.



Kwesi Charles

Currently, Ms Kwesi Charles is employed as an Information Technology Officer with the Quality Assurance and Institutional Effectiveness Department at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. Her primary focus is on the implementation of new and innovative technologies that support knowledge management and the development of technology-driven systems to support quality assurance, quality improvement and institutional research. Ms Charles holds a B.S. with honors in Information Science and Systems from Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland (2005). Her previous professional experience includes working as a Junior Implementation Specialist with Fast Enterprises on a specialised project to provide software and information technology consulting services for the Board of Inland Revenue (Trinidad and Tobago) from 2006 to 2009. Ms Charles has a keen interest in design particularly, graphic design and event decorating. When she is not busy developing her design portfolio, she enjoys engaging in various social initiatives to uplift her community.

11TH ANNUAL CANQATE CONFERENCE

The 11th CANQATE Conference 2014 took place in Belize City at the Radisson Hotel, 12-14 November 2014. The conference was hosted jointly by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, and The Association of Tertiary Level Institutions in Belize. The conference theme, *Quality Assurance as a Regional Priority – Partnering to Improve Educational Outcomes in the Caribbean*, was informed by the findings of the UNESCO funded Scoping Study on Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education and CANQATE's priority to harmonize standards and processes, and promote quality improvements in the assessment of student learning outcomes and the environment that supports student learning in the region. The conference was sponsored in part by UNESCO. The financial assistance provided by UNESCO allowed CANQATE to cover costs for the pre-conference workshops.

The plenary sessions were as follows: "The Regional Qualifications Framework and other Developments in Caribbean Tertiary Education". - Presenter: Dr Morella Joseph; "Partnering with Neighbouring Sub-regions in Strengthening Quality Assurance Systems: Sharing Experiences and Exploring Opportunities". - Presenter: Dr Angel Cal; "Cooperation and Harmonization: Challenges and Opportunities for External Quality Assurance Agencies in the Caribbean". - Presenter: Dr John Randall; "Fitness for Purpose: Program Relevance as a Quality Indicator". - Presenter: Professor Emeritus Vivienne

Roberts; and "The Role of Effective Student Support Systems in Enhancing Institutional Effectiveness". -Presenters: Dr Deborah Mencias-McMillan and Ms. Kathy Ramos. The sessions were very well received and all presenters were of a high calibre.

Prior to the main conference sessions, two pre-conference workshops were held on Wednesday, 12 November. A total of ninety-five (95) participants were engaged in the two interactive workshops: 1. "Developing and Assessing Learning Outcomes", Facilitator: Dr Susan Murphy; 2. "Harmonizing External Quality Assurance Standards and Processes across the Region", Facilitator: Dr John Randall.

A highlight of the Conference was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, referred to as "The Belize Accord", signaling collaboration among Caribbean External Quality Assurance Agencies for Tertiary Education. The MOU was signed by the representatives of six EQAAs. The management team formed to oversee implementation is headed by Mr Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director, Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago. In addition to the learning and networking opportunities provided by the conference, participants were treated to a welcome reception, a gala dinner, a city and museum tour, a visit to a Mayan archaeological site and a showcase of the Belizean culture.



WHAT IS RELEVANT HIGHER EDUCATION IN CARIBBEAN SOCIETIES?

Some years ago, CARICOM identified the following as specific desirable outcomes which should be nurtured in the Caribbean citizen:

1. is imbued with a respect for human life
2. is emotionally secure
3. values human diversity
4. is aware of living in harmony with the environment
5. has a strong family and community orientation
6. has an informed respect for the cultural heritage
7. demonstrates multiple literacies, independent and critical thinking, questions the beliefs and practices of the past and present and brings this to bear on the innovative application of science and technology
8. demonstrates positive work ethic
9. values and displays creative imagination
10. promotes physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being and contributes to community and country
11. shows gender sensitivity

It can be seen that attributes such as these point to critical components of programme relevance which must be considered within the Fitness for Purpose quality framework. Not to be forgotten are two subtle yet important dimensions of relevance: the matter of time and space. It is important to note also that relevance should apply to contextual, supporting networks including ease of articulation with the other levels and parallel types of education in order to facilitate upward progression and lateral mobility of students. Equally important is the offering of leadership in the form of the training of teachers who can influence and bring about coordination in the larger educational system.

In the region over the past 65 years, in many areas, universities have changed dramatically in size, purpose, status, curriculum, methodology, target group, focus, orientation, cost and quality assurance. There has been remarkable growth in the size and campuses of the University of the West Indies and in addition, there has been the emergence of national public universities and colleges, private indigenous universities and colleges as well as the upsurge of foreign providers- onshore and offshore, providing an expanding array of face to face and distance education offerings. The diversity in the profiles of the tertiary institutions has been eclipsed by that of the student population which now includes persons of all ages, at different life stages, with varying educational backgrounds and work experiences, possessing various abilities and disabilities, pursuing a kaleidoscope of disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies, leading to a multiplicity of careers.

According to COL President Asha Kanwar: in 2007, there were 150.6 million tertiary students globally, in 2012 there were 165 and in 2025, 263 million are expected. Stated differently, she indicated that using current accommodation practices, 4 new universities would be required each week to cater to 30,000 children who will reach enrolment age in 2025. In other words, the demand for higher education is expected to continue to grow even as costs increase. The target group in higher education is no longer the small academic elite; the curriculum includes not only academic and professional disciplines but also technical and vocational studies; the methodology now extends beyond face to face

to blended and online offerings and the range covers long, short, formal and non-formal, professional and continuing education. The cost is no longer primarily a public responsibility but is shouldered also by private and philanthropic interests. No longer are the universities separate, apart and transcendent but are much more open and accountable to the stakeholders who no longer rely on institutional reputation as the single quality assurance measure.

Many of these changes have come about by the gradual emergence of knowledge economies, the growing application and impact of new technologies, the creation of new areas of interdisciplinary interests, growing involvement in internationalisation, expansion in tertiary education enrolment, corresponding growth in unemployment of graduates, the push and pull towards entrepreneurship, the commodification of higher education, a growing demand for scientific research and a burgeoning societal development need for a focus on STEM, (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). It is interesting that some have proposed the inclusion in the STEM acronym of an "A" for the Arts producing a better propellant called "STEAM" (pun intended).

In addition to these changes in demography, cost, openness and accountability, research has pointed to other recent changes in Higher Education including a rise in competency based curriculum; cuts to public higher education; wider pool, albeit inadequate numbers, of graduate jobs; progress in the areas of recognition of experiential learning in the form of Prior Learning Assessment; and ever expanding opportunities for independent and e-learning including MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses).

Unhappily, other changes continue to pose significant social challenges including functional illiteracy, rising crime and the deeply entrenched scourge of poverty. It is disturbing in relation to the former i.e. crime, that even where there has been increasing financial investment and noticeable economic growth, there does not seem to be corresponding improvement in quality of life. The latter i.e. poverty is no less unsettling when recent research indicates that in 2014, 1% of the world's richest segment owns almost 50% of the world's wealth - a predicament, not so much that the rich are getting richer but that the poor are getting poorer.

Quality in terms of fitness for purpose requires that excellence in programme relevance establishes a match between the needs of students, employers and societies on the one hand with those of the offerings and learning opportunities provided by the higher education institutions, on the other. It is useful therefore to look at some of the needs of these stakeholders and to map a trajectory for higher education relevance.

Alongside the pool of traditional learners are other existing and potential students who are the digital natives where computer technology is a major part of their lives; persons who are matrix and not linear learners, making multiple and unusual conceptual and operational connections; acrobats juggling work, hobbies, family life and social life at any stage; free spirits moving at will from one job to



Contributed by:
Vivienne Roberts, PhD

THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF JAMAICA

Institutions gather for the UCJ's annual awards' ceremony

Recently registered institutions and those which had programmes accredited or re-accredited during the period 2014/2015, received 'Certificates of Registration' or 'Accreditation' at the UCJ's annual awards' ceremony held at the Knutsford Court Hotel, Kingston on Thursday, March 12, 2015.

Dr Nicholeen DeGrasse-Johnson, Principal, Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, chaired the event with both humor and panache, which had the 64 guests in fits of laughter. Greetings were

received from Mrs Maxine Henry-Wilson, Commissioner, Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (J-TEC).

Guest speaker, Mrs Elaine Foster-Allen, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, welcomed guests and congratulated the institutions that received certificates.

The Standards for Guidance and Counselling for the Bachelors Degree was launched at the ceremony. The Standards are intended to serve as a guide for the development of Guidance and Counselling programmes, delivered through face-to-face and or distance education

modes of delivery in tertiary education institutions.

Guests were treated to an outstanding musical performance by Mr Nicholas Groskopf, a student at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

The ceremony closed with a response from Dr Ruby Brown, Chief Executive Officer, Management Institute for National Development (MIND).



Mrs Elaine Foster-Allen, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Jamaica, congratulates the institutions during the Awards' Ceremony as Dr Nicholeen DeGrasse-Johnson, Principal, Edna Manley College of the Visual



Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, UCJ (left) with representatives from the recently registered institutions and those which had programmes accredited or re-accredited with their certificates.

"Quality is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skillful execution. It represents the wise choice of many alternatives."

Willa A Foster



NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF JAMAICA

UCJ workshop focuses on curriculum development and mapping

One hundred and eighteen (118) delegates including senior administrators, faculty members, and curriculum development personnel attended the “Curriculum Development and the Development of Student Learning Outcomes” workshop for institutions at the Mona Visitors’ Lodge and Conference centre on Tuesday, 10 March, 2015.

Dr Carol Gentles, Council member, the UCJ, welcomed delegates to the workshop.

Consultant and facilitator for the day, Dr Susan Murphy, took delegates through exercises, which focussed on applying lessons learnt about curriculum development to developing and reviewing courses and programmes for

their institutions. Delegates were guided in how to write meaningful learning outcomes at both course and programme levels.

Delegates commented that the workshop was “excellent”; however, felt that it should have been run over a two-day period so more time could have been spent working through exercises and group activities. Participants also identified the curriculum mapping, and writing learning outcomes exercises as the most interesting and useful.

Dr Susan Murphy also facilitated a workshop for assessors and UCJ officers at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel on Monday 9 March, 2015. A total of 42 delegates participated in the workshop.



Left to right: Dr Carol Gentles, Board member, UCJ; Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, UCJ; Dr Susan Murphy, Consultant and Facilitator and Miss Grace Gordon, Director of Accreditation, UCJ.



Delegates get down to work at the workshop for institutions

Continued from page 4

another and from one geographic location to another in this global village; entrepreneurial and enterprising prospectors, wanting to learn as the need arises, entering and exiting the system at will. Many employers demonstrate the appetite for employees imbued with soft skills, job readiness, critical thinking, problem solving, strong work ethics, team work, conflict management, moral compass, strategic planning and task implementation, and the new three R's of education: reflection, responsibility, and resilience.

The society seems to welcome persons who are skilled in information technology and management, entrepreneurship, civic responsibility, conflict resolution, communication, conservation, environment and cultural sensitivity, second language mastery, flexibility. They also cry out for peace, tolerance, reduction in crime and violence and according to the former Prime Minister of Barbados, the late Right Honorable David Thompson, leadership geared towards establishing good societies more so than good economies.

In such a context, it is easy to envisage a higher education institution - driven by scarcity of financial resources, intense competition, burgeoning technology and compelling market forces, surrendering its academic leadership and its traditional mission of liberal education for life. It may be argued however that adaptation and survival or growth must result not from surrender but by the skillful and effective balancing of:

- academic leadership against accommodation;
- conservation of old values against purposeful management of change;
- quantity in enrolment numbers versus quality in institutional standards;
- maintenance of the status quo versus innovation;
- economic growth and development against holistic social development;
- preparation for the needs of today versus the possibilities of tomorrow;
- focus on the needs of aspiring knowledge societies versus the realities of mainly service economies;
- embracing an ethical agenda in a largely amoral world.

The demands are varied and enormous and no institution can be all things to all persons. It becomes important therefore that individual higher education institutions work with its stakeholders to formulate its own mission and goals; declare and document this mission and mobilise and inspire its staff and students towards the achievement of those goals. It is within this framework that the relevance and excellence of that institution and its programmes could be reliably assessed.

Here I suggest for programmatic relevance, a basket of twenty attributes - all A's in 5 groups: Firstly, it is almost self evident that in an environment of increasing demand by diverse groups, a measure of programme effectiveness and relevance must include offer to and uptake by an increasing number and growing diversity of learners - that is accessibility. Similarly, the provision is only available to the learner if it is affordable. Additionally, in this environment of rapid change, adaptability and agility are key characteristics to enable timely and appropriate responses to stakeholder current and future needs. It is likely also that asynchronous delivery will be a definite advantage to segments of this heterogeneous pool of learners.

Secondly, relevant programmes cater to the affective domain, are better attuned to the needs of stakeholders, aligned and appropriate to the learning styles and needs of students and not only provide articulation among the different programme levels and types but also give credit for experiential learning outside of the formal setting. Thirdly, relevant programmes are committed to the advancement of knowledge and to the promotion of application and analysis. They deal with the realities of the present but anticipate the new developments of the future.

Fourthly, relevant programmes hold the institution, its staff,

partners and students accountable for the achievement of agreed standards and are committed to the achievement and maintenance of accreditation, even though optional. Fifthly, in this highly competitive higher education environment, programmes perform best when they are not simply appealing and attractive but where the learning experience is exceptional and the environment simply astounding. This is often aided by ongoing professional development. I strongly recommend these twenty A's.

In summary, our region is one in which knowledge driven economies are emerging. Learners are seeking a place to learn in order to earn but they are also seeking a place to make themselves adaptable and resilient in a climate of change. The market forces unleashed by technology and driven by increasing demand are great. Universities are sought after to disseminate the old but also to produce new knowledge which will be beneficial to society, not only for economic competitiveness but also for on-going social cohesion and well-being, for healthy living, peace and environmental conservation. Viewed in this context, traditional programmes are limited in their scope.

Higher Education organization and delivery of programmes must be directly related not only to the local, the pragmatic, the operational and the immediate but even more so to the universal, the situational, the strategic and the future. They must go beyond the functional to inspire creativity and promote ongoing change in order to sustain development and promote continuous quality enhancement. Programme relevance, meaning mainly curriculum relevance in Higher Education, is a necessary and important quality indicator. However, it is not by itself sufficient to holistically assure fitness for all the critical purposes of twenty first century higher education. It will not be sufficient to cater to the changing needs of communities and dynamically interconnected societies.

Good governance, effective leadership, efficient management of financial and human resources and the use of effective partnerships present other critical opportunities and key indicators of fitness for purpose. In addition, there is a compelling imperative for a strong, relevant and dynamic co-curriculum. This would foster in today's higher education learner the deep, mission - critical characteristics so clearly delineated by CARICOM. It would also buttress the unshakable character and inspire the indomitable spirit of the Caribbean higher education graduate who will, out of the collective higher education experience, embody the new 3 R's of higher education - reflection, responsibility and resilience.

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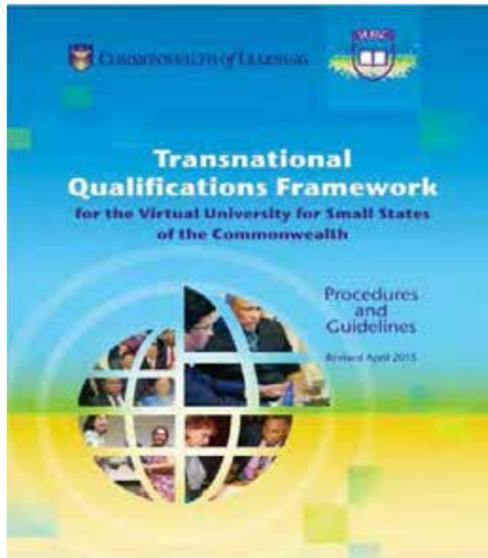
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This article is an excerpt from the conference paper “Fitness for Purpose: Programme Relevance as a Quality Indicator”, presented 14 November, 2014 by Professor Emeritus Vivienne Roberts at the 11th Annual CANQATE Conference, Belize City, Belize.

Used with permission

NEWS AND HAPPENINGS



March, 2015.

According to the Commonwealth of Learning, The TQF will function as a translation device making qualifications more readable, which in turn will help learners and workers that move between countries or change jobs”.

Senior officials of the Small States of the Commonwealth also announced the approval of the VUSSC course registration process, and an online referencing tool.



Mr Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director, Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago and Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, The University Council of Jamaica (pictured) along with members of the TQF's management committee and senior officials in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) approved the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) at its Management Committee meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 2-6

CHEA's International Quality Group releases quality principles

The International Quality Group (CIQG) of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), has released international quality principles, which address seven key areas. The principles—quality and higher education; quality and students; quality and society; quality government; quality and accountability; quality and the role of quality assurance and accreditation bodies; and quality and change—are intended to serve as a framework for international deliberation about quality in higher education, according to news release issued by CHEA on 15 June, 2015. For further information on the seven key areas and the work of the CIQG, log on to: www.cheainternational.org



Our Vision

“A Centre of Excellence in Tertiary Education Quality Assurance with a strong membership base that influences tertiary education in the Caribbean”



NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

JAMAICA INSTITUTE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Prestigious Scholarship Awarded to Jamaican Banker for Top MBA Programme through Global Partnership with Leading University

Local Banker, Horace Watson, Branch Manager for CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank (Jamaica) Limited, Portmore, was awarded a 50% scholarship to support his studies for the Chartered Banker MBA. He has 22 years of financial services sector experience with almost 20 of those at the CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank (Jamaica) Limited.



The programme is offered in Jamaica through the Jamaica Institute of Financial Services' (JIFS) - the training arm of The Jamaica Bankers Association (JBA) in partnership with Bangor University Business School and the Chartered Banker Institute. The unique MBA experience brings together high level skills and knowledge from an internationally recognized University and the world's oldest banking institute. The outcome for students is a dual award of a top MBA in Banking and Finance and Chartered Banker status.



OUR MISSION

“To enhance the quality of tertiary education in the Caribbean through research, capacity building, advocacy and enabling members to share information and good practices”



Ms Valda Alleyne, Executive Director, presenting at the Primary School Principals Association's general meeting in January this year.

Executive Director, Ms Valda Alleyne presenting the draft NQF at the Competency Based Training Fund Cycle III Info Workshop in February this year.



The National Qualifications and Credit Framework (NQCF): A Local Instrument Enabling Regional and International Educational Linkages

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) is in the process of developing a National Qualifications and Credit Framework (NQCF). The NQCF is one of the Council's major initiatives, which is being informed by emerging trends in higher education and training with regard to determining the various levels of qualifications and the comparability of qualifications in a global context. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2006, a qualifications framework is an instrument for the development and classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for levels of learning achieved. ACTT's NQCF will detail the characteristics of vocational, academic and professional qualifications and will identify the minimum requirements for the award of qualifications at various levels of the education and training system in Trinidad and Tobago. The NQCF will establish a common reference framework of units of learning and credit-based qualifications, which will facilitate a seamless education and training system.

Further, the NQCF will be used to compare qualifications obtained locally, regionally and internationally against other existing frameworks. It will also serve as an instrument to assist in the quality assurance of local and transnational programmes in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as in determining the comparability of foreign programmes against local programmes.



Michael Bradshaw
Executive Director
The Accreditation
Council of Trinidad
and Tobago

It should be noted that, at the regional level, educators and quality assurance professionals have already developed a draft CARICOM Qualifications Framework (CQF) in order to quality assure qualifications, which will facilitate the free movement of labour within the region. The CQF serves as a common framework for Member States within the Caribbean and will also provide a means for facilitating labour mobility. As a member state of CARICOM, Trinidad and Tobago is developing a National Qualifications and Credit Framework in keeping with CARICOM's mandate to develop a NQF that establishes national standards for the award of qualifications at different levels.

Currently, the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) has mechanisms in place to facilitate CARICOM nationals desirous of seeking employment in other Member States. The NQCF will enhance the mechanisms CSME has in place by providing reliable information on varying qualifications across the region and will also assist in securing appropriate recognition for skills acquired at various levels regionally and internationally. Nationals are able to apply for and obtain a CARICOM Skills Certificate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Trinidad and Tobago or their home country.

PROPOSED NQCF

LEVEL 10 - DOCTORAL	LEVEL 5 CVQ
LEVEL 9 - MASTERS & MPhil	
LEVEL 8 - PGD & PGD	
LEVEL 7 - BACHELOR & BACHELOR (HONS)	LEVEL 4 CVQ
LEVEL 6 - ASSOCIATE/HND	LEVEL 3 CVQ
LEVEL 5 - DIPLOMA/HNC	
LEVEL 4 - ADVANCE CERTIFICATE	
LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE 3 (CAPE A-LEVELS)	LEVEL 2 CVQ
LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE 2 (CSEC, O-LEVELS)	
LEVEL CERTIFICATE	LEVEL 1 CVQ



Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education

Our Values

- Commitment to Excellence
- Strategic Influence
- Innovativeness
- Inclusiveness
- Research Focus



NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD

The Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board (ABNAB) is a small agency with a big mission, serving a great purpose. With a staff complement of only three persons, it is at times challenging to fulfill our mandate but every effort is taken to provide our clients and stakeholders with quality service.

At the Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board, the re-registration of tertiary institutions is ongoing with three institutions scheduled for re-registration this year. Recognition status has been granted to foreign institutions operating in Antigua but no local institution has applied for accreditation to date.

Public education is very important and much time and effort has been spent over the past months, outlining the role of the ABNAB and highlighting the services we offer. To this end, the ABNAB officers have travelled across the country, talking to many stakeholders. We have visited schools, service clubs, non-government organizations (NGOs) management groups and made presentations. We have also developed a half-day workshop and have invited those requiring more in depth knowledge to participate. Information has also been disseminated through our Facebook page and our new quarterly online newsletter. Indeed, our newsletter already has a reach of approximately 3,500 people.

Capacity building was another area of focus. In addition to taking part in CANQATE Webinars and other online training opportunities, the Accreditation Officer (Mr Eustace Hill) and the Executive Director (Mrs Eloise Hamilton) were involved in other capacity building activities. The Accreditation Officer attended a workshop facilitated by Educational Credentials Evaluators and the Executive Director participated in an Executive Director's three-day attachment /training session at ACTT in Trinidad. The Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board remains committed to developing the skills and competencies of staff members.

The Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board also works collaboratively with other agencies. The Executive Director is a member the local Free Movement Committee.

In this capacity, her role is to authenticate and verify credentials submitted by applicants for the CARICOM Skills Certificate and to advise the Committee on matters relating to the credibility of the awarding institutions. The Board is also represented on the Technical Committee for Management Services by the Accreditation Officer. This committee operates under the auspices of the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards and is responsible for the development and maintenance of national standards and technical regulations in the field of management services.

Looking ahead, the Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board hopes to be in a position to offer training, through workshops and seminars, to the tertiary institutions on island. We would like to assist them in capacity building as they seek to move forward.



NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

BARBADOS ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

From January this year, the Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC) continued to facilitate preparation for the design, development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), with the hosting of several internal and external stakeholders' workshops. These were facilitated by the NQF Consultants, Dr Armand Hughes-d'Aeth, Team Leader, Dr Paulette Dunn-Pierre, Senior Expert and Ms Denise Murray-Beresford, Junior Consultant.



Pictured are - top left: Dr. Paulette Dunn-Pierre, Senior Expert; top right: Dr. Armand d'Aeth, Team Leader; bottom right: Ms Denise Murray-Beresford, Junior Consultant and the participants

Over the past ten months, a total of five stakeholders' workshops were held at the BAC. These workshops provided opportunities for robust discussion and feedback from tertiary educational/training providers, officials from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development,



Dr Paulette Dunn-Pierre leading a group discussion at a stakeholders workshop

and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council regarding the design and development of the NQF.

At the final stakeholder workshop facilitated by the consultancy team, the proposed governance and management for the NQF, the proposed Implementation Strategy, Change Management and Training Plans, and other deliverables were presented and once again, stakeholders had a chance to discuss and comment on the proposed way forward for the successful implementation of the NQF.

NQF Communication Advocacy In Full Effect

The Barbados Accreditation Council, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development embarked on the Communication Advocacy programme for the proposed National Qualification Framework (NQF) for Barbados in January this year.

To date, the general public has been involved in the discussions and given an opportunity to offer valuable feedback through attendance at town hall meetings and interactive programmes on local television.

A wide cross section of stakeholders, from students to educational providers also benefitted from a number of targeted information sessions, which were held to garner the buy-in for the NQF which is seen as a 'game-changer' in the educational sector in Barbados.



Students of one of the local secondary schools

