



# APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION OF A TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME

## SECTION A: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LOCAL PARTNER INSTITUTION

Name of Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of qualification for which application for recognition is being submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Title of Award)*

Foreign Awarding Institution/Body: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years this qualification has been delivered at this Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Not previously delivered at this Institution

\*Is there a written agreement on the collaborative arrangement with your Foreign Partner Institution? \_\_\_\_\_

\* *Local Partner Institutions are required to submit a 'Collaborative Provision Report' that provides evidence that the programme leading to this qualification meets with ACTT's 'Guidelines for Collaborative Provision of Post Secondary and Tertiary Education' as outlined on page four (4) of this document.*



# APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION OF A TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME

## QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

Name of qualification for which application for recognition is being submitted:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Title of Award)

Programme Entry Requirements:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Duration of the Programme:

\_\_\_\_\_

Programme Exit (*graduation*) Requirements:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Practical Component(s) (*if any*) of the programme:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comparable qualification offered by the foreign institution at its home campus/site (*if any*):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Further study accessible at the Awarding Body/ Institution on completion of the programme:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Head of Local Partner Institution**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE INSTITUTIONAL  
STAMP HERE

Title and designation:

ACTT REGISTRATION # \_\_\_\_\_



# APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION OF A TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME

## SECTION B: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE FOREIGN INSTITUTION

Name of Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Country of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Country where the institution maintains its primary establishment)*

Accredited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Period of current accreditation: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorisation to establish an overseas site *(if relevant)*: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of qualification for which this application for recognition is being submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Title of Award)*

Local Partner Institution for which this application for recognition is being submitted *(please state all campuses if relevant)*: \_\_\_\_\_

**Head of Foreign Institution**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE INSTITUTIONAL  
STAMP HERE

Title and designation: \_\_\_\_\_



**ACTT**  
The Accreditation Council  
of Trinidad and Tobago  
*Established by Chapter 39:06*  
*Quality is the Key*

**Level 1 Maritime Centre**  
**29 Tenth Avenue**  
**Barataria, San Juan 250606**  
**Trinidad, W.I.**  
**T: 285-9177**

## CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION OF A TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME

*The Foreign Institution will be required to provide a copy of the most recent quality assurance report on the local partner institution for ACTT's review.* Local institutions engaged in collaborative arrangements with foreign awarding bodies/institutions are required to apply to the Council for recognition of each transnational programme. There are four (4) criteria for the recognition of transnational programmes in Trinidad and Tobago:

CRITERION 1	LEGAL AGREEMENT
<b>Criterion Statement</b>	<i>The programme is governed by a written and legally binding agreement that sets out in detail the rights and obligations of the parties identified as the foreign awarding body/institution and the local institution.</i>
<b>Standard 1.1</b>	There exists a written and legally binding agreement relating to the programme, signed by the duly authorised representatives of the awarding body/institution and the local institution.
<b>Standard 1.2</b>	The legal agreement sets out the rights and obligations of the awarding body/institution and the local institution.
<b>Standard 1.3</b>	The legal agreement includes adequate provisions to ensure that the interests of students are protected.
<b>Standard 1.4</b>	The respective responsibilities of the awarding body/institution and local institution are consistent with the legal agreement and are accessible to staff, students and other stakeholders.

CRITERION 2	ACADEMIC STANDARDS
<b>Criterion Statement</b>	<i>The foreign awarding body/institution and local institution are responsible for the academic standards of the award.</i>
<b>Standard 2.1</b>	The awarding body/institution and programme have been quality assured in accordance with the recognised quality assurance system in the country of origin.
<b>Standard 2.2</b>	The awarding body/institution reviews the academic standards of the programme and makes revisions as necessary.
<b>Standard 2.3</b>	The awarding body/institution has a system for the approval, monitoring and review of standards at the local institution.*
<b>Standard 2.4</b>	The awarding body/institution and the local institution are jointly responsible for the teaching and learning process leading to the final award.
<b>Standard 2.5</b>	The programme is delivered by faculty who are proficient in terms of qualifications, teaching experience, research (if relevant) and other professional experience necessary to maintain academic standards.
<b>Standard 2.6</b>	The awarding body/institution is responsible for the assessment of students and award of the qualification.

## CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION OF A TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME

CRITERION 3	EQUIVALENCE /COMPARABILITY
<b>Criterion Statement</b>	<i>The programme is comparable to similar programmes in the country of origin.**</i>
<b>Standard 3.1</b>	The programme has admission requirements that are equivalent to those of comparable programmes offered by the awarding body/institution in the country of origin.
<b>Standard 3.2</b>	The programme complies with the requirements of the qualifications framework developed by The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago.
<b>Standard 3.3</b>	The programme has an academic workload equivalent to that of comparable programmes at the awarding body/institution.
<b>Standard 3.4</b>	The qualification awarded allows graduates articulation into further study opportunities afforded to graduates of comparable programmes in the country of origin.

CRITERION 4	RELEVANCE
<b>Criterion Statement:</b>	<i>The programme is socially and culturally relevant and meets stakeholder needs in Trinidad and Tobago.</i>
<b>Standard 4.1</b>	The foreign awarding body/institution and the local institution are committed to continued review of the programme to ensure relevance within the social and cultural context of Trinidad and Tobago.
<b>Standard 4.2</b>	The foreign awarding body/institution has established policies and procedures for the approval of amendments to the programme to include content that is relevant to the context of Trinidad and Tobago.

\* *The foreign awarding body/institution is required to submit the most recent 'Centre Approval Report' that provides evidence that the local institution has met the requisite standards to deliver the programme.*

\*\* *If the programme offered in Trinidad and Tobago differs from the programme offered by the awarding body/institution in its country of origin, the awarding body/institution must provide a clear statement on the variation, the rationale for it and the implications for the recognition of the qualification awarded.*



# GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION OF TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMMES

These Guidelines are organised into six sections:

- 1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE** ➤ identifies the rationale for the guidelines and provides references to the key legislation that governs ACTT and its processes
- 2 DEFINITIONS** ➤ explains any new or not commonly used terms introduced in these guidelines and in the criteria
- 3 GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS OF ACTT'S RECOGNITION PROCESS** ➤ explains the goals and expectations of the recognition process. This section provides clarification of the criteria and the expected outcomes for an institution or awarding body applying the criteria to its operations
- 4 GENERAL INFORMATION** ➤ provides information on:
  - what constitutes an application for recognition
  - how to submit and re-submit an application for recognition
  - the resources and support services available to assist institutions
  - how to communicate with ACTT prior to and during the processing of the application for recognition
- 5 REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION** ➤ identifies the requirements for an application to be accepted by ACTT  
➤ provides a suggested format and style for submitting applications to ACTT



## 1.0 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist registered institutions, as well as foreign awarding bodies and awarding institutions, to prepare applications for recognition by ACTT. ACTT acknowledges its responsibility to create an enabling environment for the recognition of transnational programmes, awarding bodies and awarding institutions operating in Trinidad and Tobago.

These guidelines are prepared following ACTT's criteria and process for recognition and will assist applicants to comply with requirements under Chapter 39:06 of the laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The aim of recognition is to assure the quality of transnational programmes delivered in Trinidad and Tobago.

## 2.0 Definitions

<u>Awarding Body</u>	an organisation or consortium which develops content and standards for educational programmes that lead to the award of qualifications in its name. Awarding bodies are not directly involved in the delivery of the programme.
<u>Awarding Institution</u>	a post secondary or tertiary institution that awards degrees and other qualifications in its own name
<u>Criterion</u>	the reference point against which operations are evaluated
<u>Criterion Statement</u>	an overall description of requirements of the criterion
<u>Collaborative Provision Report</u>	a narrative that shows how the evidence provided satisfies the criteria for recognition of a transnational programme
<u>Equivalence</u>	the determination of the comparable academic value of a foreign qualification in Trinidad and Tobago
<u>Evidence</u>	information that supports the existence of quality practices expressed in the institution's or awarding body's narrative or collaborative provision report  meaningful data that are helpful in forming a conclusion or judgment as to whether the particular standard has been met  <i>NOTE: The term <b>meaningful data</b> is included in the definition to emphasise that only <b>relevant</b> information should be submitted</i>
<u>Executive Head</u>	a properly certified person who has executive authority over an institution or provision of educational services or  the person who officially directs and controls the institution/provision at the executive level



<u>Foreign institution</u>	has its origin and main campus/establishment in an overseas territory (outside of Trinidad and Tobago)
<u>Report on Completeness</u>	identifies any deficiencies in an application submitted by an institution for any of ACTT's core services.
<u>Narrative</u>	an evaluative account that shows how the evidence provided satisfies the requirements of the respective standard
<u>Partner Institution</u>	a post-secondary or tertiary institution that collaborates with an awarding body/institution in offering programmes that lead to either an award in the name of the awarding body/institution or joint awards in the names of both the partner and the awarding body/institution
<u>Recognition</u>	the approval by an authorised agency of the quality and acceptability of a legitimate educational institution and the qualifications it awards
<u>Registration</u>	the process whereby an institution/provider has its quality management system (QMS) evaluated by ACTT to determine whether its QMS meets the minimum requirements of established criteria and standards
<u>Standard</u>	the specific requirements that must be met by the institution/provider. The standards are used to determine whether the overall requirements of a particular criterion have been met
<u>Supporting documents</u>	include copies of policies, procedures, processes and records that show evidence of the information given in the narrative
<u>Transnational programme</u>	a higher education programme that is awarded by a foreign awarding body or institution and is delivered in collaboration with a registered institution in Trinidad and Tobago



### 3.0 Goals and Expectations of ACTT's Recognition Process

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) is the authority established by an Act of Parliament, Chapter 39:06, for the recognition of the quality and acceptability of legitimate post secondary and tertiary institutions and awarding bodies, whether overseas, transnational or local, and the qualifications they award. Any transnational institution or awarding body desirous of operating in Trinidad and Tobago must first be legally established and recognised and/or accredited in the country of origin in accordance with the quality assurance system of the respective country.

Foreign institutions or awarding bodies seeking to offer programmes in Trinidad and Tobago may do so through partnership arrangements with local institutions that are registered by The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago. ACTT expects that foreign awarding bodies and institutions, along with their local partner institutions, would demonstrate:

#### 1. Integrity

Reliable and tested systems are implemented to avoid the various forms of academic fraud. All parties involved in assessment, record keeping and issuing the award must be aware and committed to safeguarding against any form of fraud or discrepancy.

#### 2. Protection of the rights of enrolled students

Students in Trinidad and Tobago should have the same rights of access to information regarding changes in fees, changes in policy, examination results and other information available to students at the awarding institution. In the case of a termination of the agreement between the foreign and the local institutions, students should be protected by an 'exit policy' and 'teach-out' arrangement which reasonably allow students to complete the programme leading to the award of the qualification.

#### 3. Equivalence

Transnational programmes offered in Trinidad and Tobago should be equivalent and comparable to programmes that carry the same or similar titles in the country of the awarding body or institution. Equivalence is intended to ensure that the holders of transnational awards have acquired comparable skills and competencies as those expected in the country of the awarding body or institution. Local graduates should also be assured of similar opportunities for further study and employment as graduates of the equivalent programme(s).

#### 4. Relevance

The local context shall be considered in the design and delivery of the programme leading to the qualification to ensure that graduates are suitably able to apply their newly acquired knowledge and competencies within Trinidad and Tobago. Labour market needs and employer feedback should be considered to ensure that the programme is relevant to the economic, cultural, societal and technological context in Trinidad and Tobago.



## 4.0 General Information

### 4.1 What is a letter of intent?

Before an institution applies for recognition, a Letter of Intent must be submitted to the Executive Director of ACTT. The Letter of Intent:

1. states the status that the institution intends to apply for recognition of a transnational programme
2. identifies the name of the foreign awarding body or institution
3. identifies all foreign programmes to be offered in Trinidad and Tobago
4. must be signed by the executive head

### 4.2 What is an Application for Recognition of a Transnational Programme?

*Applications for Recognition of a Transnational Programme* consist of:

1. SECTION A of the application form completed by the local partner institution
2. SECTION B of the application form completed by the awarding body or institution
3. Collaborative Provision Report compiled and submitted by the local partner institution
4. Supporting documentation
5. The most recent 'Centre Approval Report' on the local institution from the awarding body or institution
6. Application Processing Fee (**non-refundable and non-transferrable**)

**NOTE:** *An Application for Recognition of a Transnational Programme is only deemed to be complete when all elements under Section 4.2 have been met. Applications that fail to meet the requirements of this section will not be processed. Applicants may be requested by ACTT to collect and resubmit any application that does not meet these requirements.*

**NOTE:** *The application form must be signed by the executive heads of the respective foreign and local partner institutions.*



### 4.3 How to submit an application

Applications for recognition should be submitted:

1. to: Executive Director  
The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago  
Level 3 Building B, Pan American Life Plaza  
#91 – 93 St Vincent Street  
Port of Spain, Trinidad  
West Indies
2. in print (hard copy/paper) via mail or hand-delivery
3. in **duplicate**
4. in soft copy on a CD or via e-mail to [transnational.programmes@actt.org.tt](mailto:transnational.programmes@actt.org.tt)

### 4.5 What resources and support does ACTT provide to help prepare for recognition?

The following resources are available to assist local institutions prepare their applications:

1. Criteria for Recognition
  - The criteria for recognition are a key resource for registered institutions applying for recognition of transnational programmes
  - Applicants are advised to review these documents thoroughly before preparing a submission.
2. ACTT's Staff – Qualifications and Recognition Department
  - Applicants are encouraged to utilise the electronic medium to contact the Council at [transnational.programmes@actt.org.tt](mailto:transnational.programmes@actt.org.tt) to access information on its processes and services.



#### **4.6 How long does an application take to be processed?**

The cycle time for processing an application is dependent on the quality, appropriateness and adequacy of the submission and the evidence to support the claim for recognition. However, the projected timeline for processing is as follows:

##### **Preparation of the Application**

- a) Compilation of supporting documentation and relevant evidence (2 – 3 weeks)
- b) Completion of the Collaborative Provision Report (3 – 4 weeks)
- c) Completion of Application form (1 day)

##### **Gap Analysis**

- d) Completion of the Report on Completeness by ACTT staff (1 week)

##### **Evaluation**

- e) If sufficient evidence has been presented, a team of external evaluators will be appointed to review the application and conduct a site visit (3 weeks)

##### **Decision**

- f) Following the site visit, the External Evaluators' Report is reviewed by ACTT's Board of Directors and a decision on the status to be granted is taken (3 – 4 weeks)



## 5.0 Requirements for Submission of the Collaborative Provision Report for Recognition

### 5.1 Content requirements

1. The Collaborative Provision Report must:
  - a. be aligned with ACTT's criteria and standards for recognition
  - b. include a narrative which gives an evaluative account of the quality practices in relation to each standard. The narrative should also explain how the evidence submitted demonstrates that a practice exists to adequately address the standards.
  - c. address issues directly related to the criteria but not go beyond the scope of standards
  - d. be correctly cross-referenced where evidence is submitted for more than one (1) standard
2. Where specific evidence or documents are submitted in support of more than one standard, the narrative must clearly explain how the evidence is relevant to each.

**NOTE:** *Evidence is any data that clearly prove that the requirements of the particular standard for recognition have been met. Evidence may be documents such as a policy, plan, procedure, an agreement with a particular organisation; records such as minutes, completed feedback forms; a database.*

### 5.2 Evidence requirements

1. Include only information and evidence that deal directly with the recognition issues related to the specific criterion and standard. Evidence must be relevant and facilitate an effective evaluation of the fulfilment of the standards.
2. Relevant information may be summarised or copies of the relevant pages of a document may be extracted as evidence.
3. Electronic evidence may be cited through the use of hyperlinks to the institution's website or a secure portal. Copies of these documents should also be provided as appendices to the narrative.



### 6.3 Presentation and style requirements

1. Avoid exaggeration of quality practices.
2. Less is more - reduce the content of the narrative to the essentials.
3. Refrain from the use of jargon and acronyms except when previously defined.
4. Do not make claims in the narrative that cannot be supported by the evidence.

### 5.4 Format requirements

1. Ensure consistency in document layout.
2. Use numbers (1, 2, and 3) to identify each statement; bullets or roman numerals may be used for sub-statements.
3. Organise submission according to the criteria and standards for recognition.
4. The submission should be securely fastened by using folders, ring binders or spiral binding.
5. The Collaborative Provision Report should comprise the following elements:

#### **I. Table of Contents**

#### **II. Introduction and Background of Institution**

- a. Provide a brief history of the institution
- b. Provide information on provisions in Trinidad and Tobago and/or other countries

#### **III. Institutional Commitment to the external quality evaluation process**

- a. Make a statement on the institution's commitment to the external quality evaluation process.
- b. Express commitment to being professional and collegial throughout the process.
- c. Express commitment to address problems or gaps identified and to operate within the laws of Trinidad and Tobago.



#### **IV. Fulfilment of criteria and standards**

1. In this part of the submission you are writing a narrative that will explain how the institution meets each standard within the scope of the criterion. Provide a description that will help the evaluators to understand the institution's and awarding body's practice and to determine compliance with the standards.
2. A good narrative will outline the main parts of relevant policies and procedure and describe the link between the institution's operations and policies. This will enable the evaluators to determine that the standard has been met.
3. Additionally, the narrative should provide an evaluative account of the quality practices in relation to each standard.

#### **V. Compilation of Evidence/Appendices**

Documents comprising the appendices should be individually numbered and correspond with the citations in the narrative.

**NOTE:** *If the requirements in this section have not been met, the application may not be processed by the Council and the applicant may be required to re-submit the application in its entirety.*

#### **5.5 Submitting additional evidence**

ACTT prepares a Report on Completeness on applications for recognition. At this point, applicants may be asked to submit additional evidence identified in this Report. Applicants are urged to carefully consider the Report on Completeness before submitting additional evidence. Response to the Report on Completeness should be submitted in duplicate, as well as soft copy on a CD or via e-mail to [transnationalprogrammes@actt.org.tt](mailto:transnationalprogrammes@actt.org.tt)



## 6.0 Understanding the Criteria

### 6.1 Documentation Requirements for Applications for Initial Recognition of a Transnational Programme

The following items **must be submitted** for an institution to successfully demonstrate that the programme meets the criteria for recognition. While these are required, the application should include additional forms of evidence to support the narrative.

1. Collaborative Provision Report
2. written and legally binding contract signed by the heads of both parties or their designate (required for Criterion 1)
3. exit policy that protects students' interests in the case of dissolution of the collaborative arrangement (required for standard 1.3)
4. documentation of approval/accreditation status of foreign awarding body or institution and/or programme from the relevant quality assurance agency (required for standard 2.1)
5. policy and procedures for review of programmes by the foreign awarding body or institution (required for standard 2.2)
6. centre approval procedures and criteria (required for standard 2.3)
7. procedure for monitoring approved centres (required for standard 2.3)
8. list of faculty who have been approved by the foreign awarding body or institution (required for standard 2.5)
9. details on the entry requirements of equivalent programme(s) in the country of the awarding body/institution (required for standard 3.1)
10. Programme specifications (required for standard 3.3)
11. Reports from stakeholder consultations in Trinidad and Tobago (required for criterion 4)

**Additionally, the foreign institution must submit a copy of the most recent quality assurance report on the local partner institution.**

**NOTE:** *If these policies, documents or reports are not submitted, the transnational institution will not be able to demonstrate fulfilment of the criteria.*