



ACTT NOW

A Publication of The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago
A Project of the Office of the Executive Director

WHO WE ARE

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) was established by Chapter 39:06 as the principal body in Trinidad and Tobago for conducting and advising on the accreditation and recognition of post secondary and tertiary education training institutions, programmes and awards, whether local and foreign and for the promotion of quality and standards for post secondary and tertiary education and training in Trinidad and Tobago.

WHAT WE DO

- Conferment of Institutional Title
- Registration of Higher Education Institutions
- Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions
- Recognition of Foreign Programmes and Awards
- Programme Approval
- Equivalence Assessment
- Institutional Development

View Act 39:06 for our mandate, found on our website: www.actt.org.tt

WHERE WE ARE LOCATED

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

As the Council reflects on its achievements over the past ten (10) years, we recognise that the establishment of a “quality culture” for Trinidad and Tobago continues to be of central interest to ACTT’s operations. This is demonstrated by our continued commitment to quality assurance, student satisfaction and institutional development. To promote our agenda, ACTT launched ‘The Quality Institute’ (TQI) to facilitate the development and implementation of programmes and initiatives designed to support higher education and training institutions and stakeholders by enhancing the skills of professionals and other practitioners. This initiative illustrates ACTT’s commitment to supporting post secondary and tertiary level providers towards meeting and surpassing international standards in their operations.

The highlight event for 2015 will be our 2nd International Conference on Higher Education and Training, the theme of which is ‘Thinking Global, Acting Local: The Changing Realities of Higher Education and Training’. This Conference is scheduled to take place April 14-17, 2015. Among the distinguished plenary speakers are Professor Asha Kanwar, President and CEO - Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Canada, Dorothy M. Wax, Associate Vice President for Operations - Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), Illinois, USA, Professor Nicole Smith - Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., and Stephen Jackson, Director of Quality Assurance - Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), UK, and our very own distinguished UTT Professor Ulrich Rauch. The Keynote Paper will be delivered by our line Minister, Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, Senator the Honourable, Fazal Karim, and is entitled ‘Beyond Participation: Building the Global Citizen.’ This paper will give an insight into the development of education and training taking place over the last five (5) years.

With the advent of new communications platforms, technologies and the concept of a global village, there has been an increasing need to respond locally to the demands of the rapidly changing higher education landscape. Understanding the implications of this 21st century education landscape is fundamental if we are to gain a competitive advantage to the new phenomenon of “education tourism”. The 2nd international conference will offer a platform for academics, teachers, educational administrators, training coordinators, quality assurance professionals, government officials and industry personnel from the



Michael Bradshaw,
Executive Director

local, regional and global communities to share best practices, present research papers and review recent developments in higher education and training. In this regard, the conference will be critical to assembling local, regional and international agencies and practitioners in one venue to channel their energies and pursue a common goal of a collective consciousness of the way forward drawing on lessons learnt.

I thank all for their support.



<http://m.actt.org.tt>

ACTT's QuiTE Awards October 2015



ACTT's Board of Directors receive Instruments of Appointment

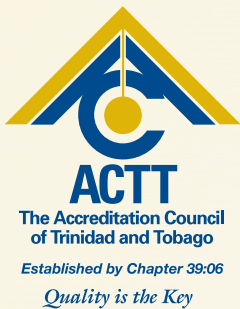
Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, presented ACTT's Board of Directors with their Instruments of Appointment on Thursday March 18, 2015 at ACTT's Head Office, Pan American Life Plaza. The Board has been granted a three (3) year term from November 2014 to October 2017.



Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, presents Dr Michael R. Dowlath, Chairman of the Board of Directors, ACTT, with his Instrument of Appointment



Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education, (centre) with ACTT's Board of Directors (l to r) Mervyn Extavour, Daren Dhoray, Hatim Gardner, Azim Ali (Deputy Chairman), Dr Michael R. Dowlath (Chairman) Veena Badrie-Maharaj, Davin Jagessar, Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director and Dr Joycelyn Rampersad. Also pictured: Jane Murray, Corporate Secretary/Legal Officer. Not pictured: ACTT Board Member: Lennon Ballah-Lashley



NESC Registration

Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training presented the National Energy and Skills Centre (NESC) with its Certificate of Registration from The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT). The ceremony took place on Friday March 20, 2015 at the NESC, Woodford Lodge, Technology Campus, Chaguanas. NESC has been registered for a period of three (3) years from March 19, 2015 – March 18, 2018. The Certificate of Registration covers the following NESC Centres:

NESC Point Lisas Campus
NESC Point Fortin Campus
NESC Ste. Madeleine Campus
NESC Drilling Academy
NESC La Brea Campus
NESC Mayaro Campus
NESC Woodford Lodge Campus
NESC Laventille Campus

Corner Rivulet and Southern Main Roads, Point Lisas, Couva
Corner Richardson and Volunteer Roads, Point Fortin
Manahambre Road, Ste. Madeleine
Manahambre Road, Ste. Madeleine
Vessigny Village, La Brea
Plaisance Road, Mayaro
Factory Road, Chaguanas
Eastern Main Road, Laventille



(From l-r) Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director, ACTT, Kern Dass, Chief Executive Officer, NESC, and Feroz Khan, Chairman, Board of Directors, NESC



Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, presents the Certificate of Registration to Feroz Khan, Chairman of the Board of Directors, NESC. Also pictured: Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director, ACTT and Kern Dass, Chief Executive Officer, NESC



Top: Dr Michael R. Dowlath, Chairman of ACTT's Board of Directors (4th from left) unveils the new logo for The Quality Institute with Rodney Amar and Michael Bradshaw, ACTT's Executive Director (4th from right).

THE QUALITY INSTITUTE

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to supporting higher education institutions in their quest to provide quality programmes to the nation's citizenry.

Since inception, ACTT has afforded institutions the opportunity to engage in initiatives aimed at improving their policies and processes leading to improved quality of learning opportunities. In addition to facilitating workshops and seminars for registered and accredited higher education institutions and other stakeholders, ACTT continually improves its existing offerings through review and upgrade of content and revision of training materials. This is accomplished through valuable contributions from respected educators, practitioners and quality assurance professionals locally, regionally and internationally.

In this regard, on Wednesday February 25, 2015, ACTT launched The Quality Institute. The Quality Institute seeks to streamline the quality enhancement activities of ACTT, through the consolidation of training which will be offered to higher education institutions, institutional personnel, quality assurance professionals and other stakeholders. Rodney Amar, Technical Advisor to the Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, speaking on behalf of Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, stated that: "Our institutions must remain at the forefront of technological paradigm shifts. Our employers must become more closely integrated with our institutions of higher learning. Today, this initiative augers well for the promotion of Total Quality Thinking and it is my aspiration that it will support fitness for purpose in the delivery of education and training to our people."

The establishment of The Quality Institute is in keeping with ACTT's drive to foster a culture of quality in higher education. The training that will be offered through The Quality Institute includes:

- Preparing the Self-Study for Registration
- Guiding the Self-Study Process for Institutional Accreditation
- Transnational Programme Recognition
- Institutional Governance and Administration Workshop
- Managing Institutional Finances
- Strategic Planning for Higher Education and Training Institutions
- Quality Management Systems for Institutional Effectiveness
- Developing Policies for Higher Education Institutions
- Forensics of Academic, Credential and CV Fraud
- Calculating Credits and Determining the Level of Academic Programmes
- External Evaluator Training

To promote Total Quality Thinking, ACTT will collaborate with our accredited institutions to offer a Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Quality Assurance. These initiatives will enhance the quality of the higher education product in Trinidad and Tobago through the improvement of the institutions and professionals.



Above: Dr R. Dowlath presents Rodney Amar, Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, with a token copy of The Quality Institute brochure.

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK (NQCF), THE JOURNEY

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago is the legal regulatory body responsible for quality assuring post secondary and tertiary education institutions and programmes in Trinidad and Tobago. One responsibility outlined in Chapter 39:06 Section 8 (2) (g) states that the Council shall: “develop and advise on a unified credit-based system for the post secondary and tertiary education sector”

The Council has translated this mandate into developing a National Qualifications and Credit Framework (NQCF). A qualifications framework can be described as “an instrument for the development and classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for levels of learning achieved” (OECD, 2006).

Higher education and training institutions, students and employers operate and compete in a national, regional and international context. At present, it can be challenging to understand all of the different types of qualifications, the duration, the content they cover and how they compare to other qualifications. The NQCF aims to establish a common reference point of unit and credit-based qualifications. This Framework will also serve to regulate qualifications at all levels of the education and training system in Trinidad and Tobago, including higher and technical vocational education and training, which would lead to greater transparency, comparability and portability of qualifications.

Some benefits of the NQCF to stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago include:

- Greater quality assurance of local and transnational programmes offered at institutions
- Established guidelines for education and training providers involved in developing indigenous programmes that are relevant to the needs of the country
- Improved transparency of qualifications for learners and potential employers
- Increased portability of qualifications to facilitate mobility and progression within the education and training system, nationally, regionally and internationally
- Supports the development of qualifications that are based on learning outcomes
- General public will have access to information on academic, vocational and professional qualifications in order to make informed decisions about study or work

In developing the NQCF, ACTT has ensured that the learning outcomes speak to the education and training needs of Trinidad and Tobago and the nexus created with the labour force. As such, ACTT hosted three (3) public consultations in October 2013. These consultations were held in north and south Trinidad and in Tobago. Members of the public expressed views on how the draft document can be supplemented or improved. Also, ACTT engaged stakeholders in focus group interviews between January and July 2014. The participants represented the National Training Agency, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, curriculum specialists, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, human resource professionals, employment agencies, nine (9) accredited institutions and two (2) large private institutions. In May 2014 and July 2014, ACTT held two (2) focus group interviews to engage employees representing education, tourism and human resource departments from the Tobago House of Assembly.

During the period February to March 2015, ACTT continued to engage stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as regional partners such as the Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board, the Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC), the Ministry of Education, Grenada, and Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) to solicit feedback on the draft NQCF. ACTT will use the feedback collected from the public consultations and the focus group sessions to refine the draft NQCF and inform the development of the Guidelines for the National Qualifications and Credit Framework.



The Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training

TEST



1 AND 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2015

on Higher Education and Training ►

➔ **THINKING Global, ACTING Local!**
The Changing Realities of Higher Education

April 15-17, 2015

at the **Hyatt Regency Trinidad**



Think Ahead





Accreditation Interview with TTHTI

1. What will it mean for the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute to be granted accredited status at this time?

Accreditation status would give recognition to TTHTI as a credible education institution. This status would increase TTHTI's legitimacy as an academic institution of quality within the tertiary education community locally, regionally and in the international arena. It will give the public the assurance that the institution is providing quality education and training.

2. How has TTHTI's experience with participating in the accreditation self-study benefitted/changed the institution?

Being involved in the self study exercise has allowed the staff to review TTHTI's operations from a critical point of view. The institution was able to analyse its current processes and procedures and to determine its strengths and weaknesses as an educational institution in relation to the defined criteria. The process allowed us to review our pedagogical practices, financial management, our facilities and other issues that impact the quality and efficiency of our operations.

The institution has also been able to

- i. Critically view the services provided;
- ii. Determine where the provision of our resources were adequate and where we needed to improve; and
- iii. Identify opportunities to improve the products and services we currently offer in the marketplace

TTHTI's experience with participating in the accreditation self study benefitted the institution by allowing the employees to better understand who we are as an institution, what is expected of us and the purpose of our existence. This introspection made us become more aware of ourselves, the importance of each staff member's roles and responsibilities, and the part each member plays in the entire process. This enhanced understanding will contribute to the achievement of our strategic vision, mission and goals. We are now more aware of the importance of timely institution-wide communication and the need for a more proactive

and systematic approval to decision-making.

3. What advice would you give to other institutions embarking on the accreditation journey?

I would advise other institutions that

- i. Accreditation is not an onerous process if approached with the intent to develop an institutional programme that serves the quality goals of the organisation.
- ii. One needs to involve staff, students and stakeholders very early in the journey. Talk to them about the process, the benefits to them and the institution as a whole.
- iii. Seek assistance from ACTT. The latter provides many opportunities to learn about the process.
- iv. If the institution is small, it is advisable to seek external assistance to help if required in assessing and examining your organisation for improvement.
- v. Information may be collected and analysed that may not have come to the fore previously.
- vi. Do not see the accreditation journey as a one-time event but as a process that will bring quality improvement to your institution.
- vii. Ensure that all your employees are committed to the exercise;
- viii. Tell the truth about your organisation and ensure that you have the evidence to support the information provided;
- ix. Ensure that you are satisfied with the composition of the evaluation team.

4. How would achieving accredited status benefit students and other stakeholders?

i. Accreditation is about credibility and recognition of the educational institution. The benefit to our students is that they would be recognised as having graduated from an accredited institution. For our stakeholders, it would mean that they would have a better comfort level with the quality of the TTHTI graduate coming to their organisations;

- ii. Our graduate will have a greater comfort level using the accreditation credential to introduce their educational achievements to employers and to pursue programs in other schools, thereby satisfying entry requirements or gaining the advantage over applicants from non-accredited institutions;
- iii. Prospective students can use the accreditation

status of our programs/courses as a factor in their decision to enrol with our institution;

- iv. Employers seek efficiency in the process of hiring and in training new employees as such graduates of our institution should be viewed as higher quality employees.
- v. Accreditation would help TTHTI boost its on-going performance efforts for the benefit of its students;
- vi. While accreditation does not ensure that every graduating student will become a successful professional, it does guarantee that the student has acquired a specific set of skills and abilities;
- vii. Achieving accredited status would benefit students in that they will be more attractive to their future employers and they should have a better chance of transferring to other reputable educational institutions.

5. What impact might the accreditation of institutions have on the local and regional education sector?

- i. Accreditation of institutions should improve the status of the local and regional sector in the global education arena;
- ii. The impact accredited institutions may have on the local and regional education sector is that they should raise the local educational standards to a higher level in keeping with international standards and best practice. Accredited institutions weed out diploma/degree mills so that one is certain to attain a recognised degree;
- iii. Accreditation of institutions would increase the availability of quality education in the local and regional education sector. It would reduce the transfer of funds outside the country thereby limiting outward flows of funds from local and regional economies. The increase of quality in the sector may serve to prevent the "brain drain" syndrome which existed in Trinidad and Tobago.