

ACTT NOW

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

What is ACTT?

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) was established by Chapter 39:06 as the principal body in Trinidad and Tobago responsible for the quality assurance of post secondary and tertiary level institutions, programmes and awards.

Another ACTT Milestone: Institutional Accreditation

On April 21, 2011, Institutional Accreditation was granted to three public higher education institutions in Trinidad and Tobago, viz the College of Science,

Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT), The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) and The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine (UWI). These higher education institutions are the first to be accredited by ACTT in Trinidad and Tobago and in the Caribbean. In this regard, this is a milestone achievement, not only for these three local institutions but also for ACTT and other quality assurance agencies regionally. Institutional accreditation is a voluntary process of quality assurance whereby an institution demonstrates that it meets or exceeds criteria established by ACTT. It examines the entire institution within the context of its mission, vision, governance and administration, educational goals and objectives.

In May, ACTT held a Press Confer-

ence to present the Certificates of Institutional Accreditation to these institutions. Senator the Honourable Minister, Fazal Karim, Ministry of Science Technology and Tertiary Education in his address stated, "The ACTT stamp of approval our institutions have earned is in support of the Government's framework for sustainable development, a primary one being their role in aiding the Government in its quest to achieve a 60% participation rate within post secondary education by building confidence in our institutions within the public domain.

Institutional Accreditation is beneficial to the institution, to students, the government and to the country. The benefits to the country not only redound to improved quality of higher education but also equally important, contributes to the development of highly competent world class graduates who are adequately equipped to contribute to the social and economic advancement of the country. Students will also benefit directly through articulation agreements among institutions to facilitate the transfer of students and credits.



Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim - Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education; Dr. Michael Dowlath - Chairman of the Board of Directors, ACTT and Michael Bradshaw - Executive Director (Ag), ACTT congratulates (from right to left) Emmanuel E. Gonsalves, Esq. - President of COSTAATT, Professor Kenneth Ramchand - President of UTT and David Moses, Deputy Registrar at UWI, St. Augustine Campus who proudly hold Certificates of Institutional Accreditation presented at the Press Conference hosted by the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago on May 18, 2011

ACTT GOES MOBILE WITH THE LAUNCH OF ITS STUDENT CARAVAN

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) launched its Student's Caravan on Monday May 23, 2011 at the Iere High School, Siparia. In keeping with ACTT's mandate as outlined in Chapter 39:06, the Council continues to provide the public with information about the quality and recognition of higher education programmes and institutions. The Council believes that equipping students with information on quality higher education will ensure that informed decisions are made when selecting a higher education institution and programme of study.

Apart from students at Iere High School, students from neighbouring schools such as Siparia West Secondary, Shiva Boys Hindu School and Fyzabad Secondary, were briefed about the roles and services of ACTT. Students were also informed of the benefits of attending a registered or accredited institution and acquiring a 'Statement on Recognition' before enrolling in a higher education institution to pursue a programme and the dangers of fraudulent qualifications produced by Diploma Mills.

Students can visit ACTT's website or facebook and twitter sites to learn more about the Council's roles and services. Additionally, ACTT has published its Compendium of Registered Institutions and Recognised Awarding Bodies in Trinidad and Tobago, which has been placed in all secondary schools, libraries and on ACTT's website, www.actt.org.tt.



Dr. Michael Dowlath - Chairman of ACTT's Board of Directors, Michael Bradshaw - Executive Director (Ag.), ACTT and Roy Ramlogan - Principal, Iere High School celebrate with secondary school students at the launch of ACTT's Student Caravan at Iere High School, Siparia.

ACTT's Student Caravan and Community Outreach

Are you interested in having ACTT's Student Caravan visit your school?
Contact: The Corporate Communications Department at 623-2500 or at customerservice@actt.org.tt



REGISTRATION and ACCREDITATION

What's the Difference?

Chloe Williams is a student of journalism at a local registered institution; she has chosen the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) as part of a feature article for an assignment.

Below is an excerpt of an interview she had with Mr. Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director, ACTT.

Chloe: Good morning, Mr Bradshaw, thank you for meeting with me.

ED: I am pleased that you have taken the time to learn more about ACTT's services.

Chloe: I have researched and gathered information about the services offered by the Council but I still don't understand the differences between Registration and Accreditation. Please explain.

ED: Ms. Williams, that question is very popular as those terms are often confused by students and the public.

It is important to note that REGISTRATION is a mandatory process for all post secondary and tertiary level institutions to operate in Trinidad and Tobago, according to Chapter 39:06.

Registration signifies that post secondary and tertiary level institutions have met minimum educational standards and quality requirements to operate in Trinidad and Tobago.

Institutions that satisfy ACTT's requirements for Registration are placed on a National Register of Post Secondary & Tertiary Institutions which is maintained by the Ministry of Science, Technology & Tertiary Education (MSTTE). This list of Registered Institutions can also be found on ACTT's website - www.actt.org.tt

An institution can be registered for a period of up to three (3) years depending on the strength of its Quality Management System. All institutions must re-register prior to expiry of their period of registration.

Chloe: Why is Registration important to students and not only institutions?

ED: It is important that students enquire about the registration status of an institution before they enroll in a higher education course of study as registration with ACTT means that the institution is approved to offer programmes at the post secondary and tertiary level. This means that you are obtaining value for your time and finances invested and it can assist in facilitating acceptability and transferability of a qualification or award.

Chloe: Okay I understand now, Registration means that an institution is operating within guidelines established by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Then what is Accreditation?

ED: Yes, Accreditation on the other hand is a voluntary process. Accreditation is a status granted to a registered institution or specialised programme that has been evaluated and found to have met or exceeded stated criteria of educational quality.

Accreditation is also the process used to evaluate an institution or programme and assist in improvement. Accreditation assures academic quality, improves accountability and supports continual improvement. An institution can apply for Institutional Accreditation and or Specialised/Programme Accreditation.

Accreditation allows for evaluation of an institution and the programmes offered in greater depth than

registration with focus on the achievement of student learning outcomes. However, the institution must be offering local programmes.

Chloe: There are different types of Accreditation? What is the difference between Institutional Accreditation and Specialised/Programme Accreditation?

ED: Institutional Accreditation reviews the characteristics of the institution as a whole and evaluates the organisational capacity to consistently deliver quality educational programmes at the post secondary or tertiary level. Although individual programmes are reviewed as part of this evaluation process, Institutional Accreditation focuses on the broad characteristics of the institution.

Specialised/Programme Accreditation evaluates specific educational programmes leading to the award of qualifications at the post secondary and tertiary level and is primarily undertaken by specialised accreditation bodies or professional bodies. Specialised/Programme Accreditation is generally required in fields such as medicine, engineering, law, teaching and other professions which require a special licence to practise.

Chloe: Does that mean professional bodies and ACTT work together when evaluating these programmes for Accreditation?

ED: Yes, ACTT collaborates with national regulatory bodies for the professions, and regional and international specialised accrediting bodies for the accreditation of programmes. This helps to ensure that the requirements for Programme Accreditation are related to the current requirements for licensure and professional practice.

Chloe: Mr Bradshaw, if accreditation is voluntary, then why would an institution apply for this status if they are already registered?

ED: Acquiring accreditation, though voluntary, is very important to most if not all local institutions as it promotes national, regional and international recognition of quality. This is important especially in increasing global competitiveness. It also fosters the building and maintaining of the prestige of local institutions. This can enhance student recruitment efforts as accreditation promotes a positive international image of the institution.

Chloe: I understand now. Accreditation is indeed important to institutions but how is this beneficial to students?

ED: Every service offered by the Council is beneficial to all our stakeholders. Accreditation is beneficial to both students and the institution as it improves educational delivery and the quality of the institution and the programmes offered. This can facilitate the transfer of credits from one institution to another and provides

recognition of qualifications for entry into higher education programmes.

Chloe: Does that mean Institutional and Programme Accreditation can assist students like me with entrance into post graduate programmes?

ED: That is correct, Chloe. Employers also benefit, as accreditation provides standards which can be used to measure educational quality against employment requirements.

Professional organisations may use these educational qualifications for job placement.

Chloe: Very interesting. I think I understand now, registration is mandatory for any institution offering post secondary and tertiary level qualifications in Trinidad and Tobago and it is important that students attend ACTT registered institutions.

Accreditation on the other hand, is a more in depth assessment of a post secondary and tertiary level institution and its programmes. Although it is voluntary, accreditation provides assurance that the programme in which students are enrolled or are considering enrolling, is continually reviewed and meets nationally endorsed standards.

This means that an institution will undergo ongoing evaluations and there will be continual programme improvement which will be beneficial to students, the institution and other stakeholders.

ED: Exactly. ACTT's mandate is to assure the quality of post secondary and tertiary level institutions, programmes and awards offered in Trinidad and Tobago.

Chloe: I understand the terms now. Registration and accreditation are different but both are important to all involved in post secondary and tertiary level education.

How can a person verify that an institution is registered or if an institution or programme is accredited?

ED: The official listing of ACTT "Registered Institutions", "Accredited Institutions" and "Candidates for Accreditation" can be found on ACTT's website www.actt.org.tt. It is important to note that "Candidates for Accreditation" are NOT accredited but are institutions that have qualified to begin going through the Accreditation process. The official listing of ACTT approved programmes offered by ACTT-Registered Institutions, known as Compendium of Accredited/Registered Institutions and Recognised Awarding Bodies/Institutions, is available to the public on ACTT's website.

Chloe: Thank you for answering my questions.

ED: Again, thank you for your interest in ACTT.

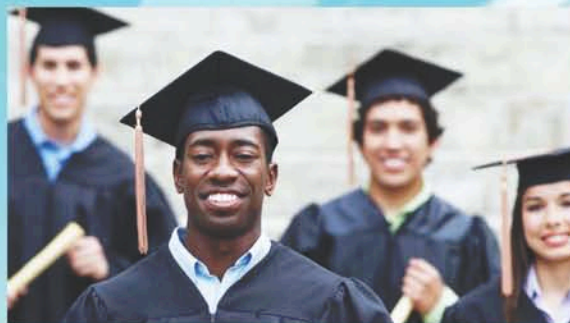
WHAT IS RECOGNITION?

Almost five years after leaving secondary school two friends meet in queue at the famous Richard's Bake and Shark at Maracas beach. Anil has finished his B.Sc. Business Education at a local institution and Marcus has returned from completing his B.Sc. in Rehabilitation Studies and Sport Management from a university abroad. They both discuss their next step to gain employment.

After their greetings they talk about employment. Marcus explains that he is interested in working with young persons and as such he has approached the Teaching Service Commission to be registered as a Teacher. As the line at Richard's moves ahead, Marcus gives details of his scenario. Upon reading the Teacher's Application Form he realised that he needs to provide proof that his undergraduate degree is recognised by a legitimate accrediting body.

Unaware of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT), he has put his application on hold whilst he enjoys the simple life as a Surfer. He explains his frustration to Anil; he does not understand why he needs to present documentation to the Teaching Service Commission to prove his qualifications are legitimate since he attended a well known foreign university. Recognition? Accreditation? What does this mean and how do these terms relate to him pursuing a career in teaching?

Anil reassures Marcus stating that the Teaching Service Commission is seeking the best interest of the nation by requesting official documentation of prospective teachers' qualifications. He explains that he also visited ACTT to acquire a "Statement on Recognition". ACTT was established by Chapter



39:06 as the principal body in Trinidad and Tobago responsible for the quality assurance of post secondary and tertiary level institutions programmes and awards. The Customer Service Representative at ACTT explained to him the difference between accreditation and recognition.

Anil explained to Marcus that he learnt that Accreditation is both a status and a process. It is a status because it is granted to an educational institution or programme that has been evaluated and found to meet or exceed stated criteria of educational quality. It is also a process used to evaluate and assist in institutional or programme improvement.

On the other hand, Recognition is the evaluation and approval of the quality of foreign awards. In Trinidad and Tobago, qualifications awarded by foreign institutions MUST be recognised by ACTT. ACTT's Customer Service Representative assured Anil that a "Statement on Recognition," would be an asset to him and would include the information on the accreditation status of the institution, as well as the programme. If the institution or programme is not accredited (quality assured) in the country of origin, ACTT will not recognise it as a legitimate qualification.

What then are the benefits of acquiring a "Statement on Recognition?"

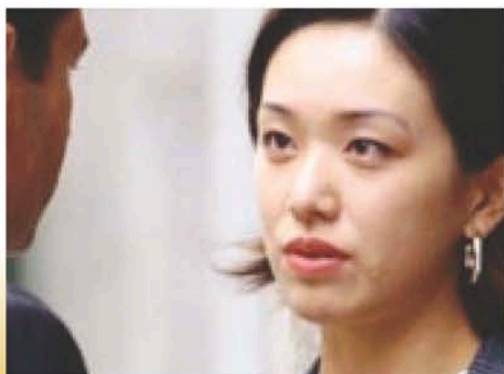
- It confirms whether the institution and the qualifications it awards have been quality assured.
- It states whether the programme has the specialised accreditation necessary for membership in a professional body.
- It is a requirement for scholarships and financial aid awarded by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.
- It enhances opportunities for employment.

Anil states that he also learnt that a "Statement on Recognition" could be issued for qualifications that have already been awarded or for an intended course of study.

Anil also states that after receiving his "Statement on Recognition" he was able to apply for a CARICOM Single Market Economy (CSME) Skills Certificate thereby expanding his employment possibilities. Grateful, Marcus thanks Anil for the advice and decides to pay for Anil's meal at Richard's. Both friends exchange mobile pins and decide to keep in touch.

WHAT IS EQUIVALENCE ASSESSMENT?

Maria is an Accounting Assistant at a renowned banking institution in Trinidad and Tobago. She is also a student pursuing a professional accounting qualification, having just completed level 2 of this foreign programme offered locally. The Human Resource Officer at her workplace has advised her that there is a job opening but the required qualification is a degree. She then advises Maria to visit the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) where she can acquire an Equivalence Assessment.



What is Equivalence Assessment?

An evaluation of a foreign qualification to determine its comparative level and value to a similar qualification offered at an institution in Trinidad and Tobago.

What are the benefits of acquiring an Equivalence Assessment?

For Graduates

- Facilitates transfers from one educational institution to another.
- Facilitates application for a CARICOM Single Market Economy (CSME) Skills Certificate
- Facilitates entry to further studies locally, regionally and internationally.

For Employers

- Assists in determining whether a prospective employee meets the academic requirements for employment

How to apply for a Statement of Equivalence:

Contact the ACTT at 623-2500 or customerservice@actt.org.tt

Find us on:



[Twitter.com/ACTTNews](https://twitter.com/ACTTNews)



[Facebook.com/ACTTNews](https://facebook.com/ACTTNews)

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) Family Day and Cookout 2011

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) would like to thank all who contributed to the success of ACTT's Family Day and Cookout 2011.

ACTT acknowledges the support of Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education (MSTTE); the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education (MSTTE); ACTT's Board of Directors; ACTT's Management team; staff; their families; friends and well wishers, who together at the Trinidad and Tobago Prisons Sports Grounds made the Family Day and Cook Out 2011 a successful day filled with laughter, camaraderie and clean completion.

We also wish to thank:

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- Blue Waters Limited
- Bonanza Farms
- Carib Brewery Limited
- Chatak Food Products Limited
- Chief Brand Products
- Copyright Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago
- Create Magical Moments
- Devon Biscuits (Associated Brands Limited Industries)
- Domino's Pizza
- Glaxosmithkline (GSK) Trinidad
- Hi-Lo Food Stores
- Holiday Snacks Limited
- Kabuki Sounds
- Kristina's/Kris n Tony's Shoe Store
- Langston Roach Industries Limited
- Mario's Pizzeria Limited
- Martini Makers
- Nationwide Waste Disposal & Management Company Limited
- Nestle Trinidad and Tobago Limited
- Nigel Bailey
- Oscar Fancois Limited
- Party E-Zee Tent Rentals
- Reliability Maintenance Services Company Limited
- Sacha Cosmetics Limited
- SM Jaleel and Company Limited
- Sunshine Snacks and Charles Candy (Associated Brands Limited Industries)
- Table Top Unlimited
- Three Star Sportswear Limited
- Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service
- Trinidad and Tobago Police Service
- Trinidad and Tobago Prisons Service
- Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society
- Turban Marketing Company Limited



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