



**ACTT**

The Accreditation Council  
of Trinidad and Tobago

Established by Chapter 39:06

*Quality is the Key*

# QUALITY ASSURANCE MONTH SUPPLEMENT

# 2018



**Higher Education Innovations:  
Adapting to Economic Challenges**

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I applied for a **Statement on Recognition** from ACTT to ensure that I didn't enrol in a 'diploma mill'. I made sure that my years of studies were not in vain. I graduated with my Bachelor's degree from a legitimate institution!

I cannot wait to start the next phase of my academic journey – and I will include ACTT again.

**T**his year, the Ministry of Education is proud to be a contributor to The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago's (ACTT) Quality Assurance Month Supplement, especially because of this year's theme, "Higher Education Innovations: Adapting to Economic Challenges".

## Message from The Minister



*The Honourable Anthony Garcia,  
Minister of Education*

Trinidad and Tobago has been fortunate in that we have been able, for the most part, to weather the effects of current global economic challenges. We are a resilient, creative and resourceful people. At the Ministry of Education, creativity and adaptation have served to successfully manage and mitigate against some of the challenges we have faced. At every level of the education system, teachers, parents and students have been finding ways to achieve goals despite economic obstacles.

At the post secondary and tertiary levels, there has to be a different approach to effecting change. Adapting industries such as the creative and tourism sectors, increasing the offerings for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and continuing to offer programmes that produce citizens who are more marketable globally will contribute to economic sustainability.

The higher education institutions in Trinidad and Tobago must be applauded for the work they continue

to do to ensure that the national community sees higher education as necessary, relevant and beneficial. The Ministry of Education has remained steadfast in its commitment to affording citizens the opportunity to pursue higher education through the Government Assisted Tuition Expenses

**I look forward to the outcome of the various events that took place during Quality Assurance Month and the Ministry of Education will do its part to support, wherever possible, as we soldier on in the provision of quality education that is accessible to all.**

(GATE) programme, which permits applicants to access funding from 25-100% of their tuition expenses, based on their socio-economic situation and a needs assessment.

As we prepare for the changes that have to be made to ensure the continuity and strengthening of well-developed, quality programmes across the country, the work of ACTT cannot be left unmentioned. The maintenance of the quality of post secondary and tertiary institutions,

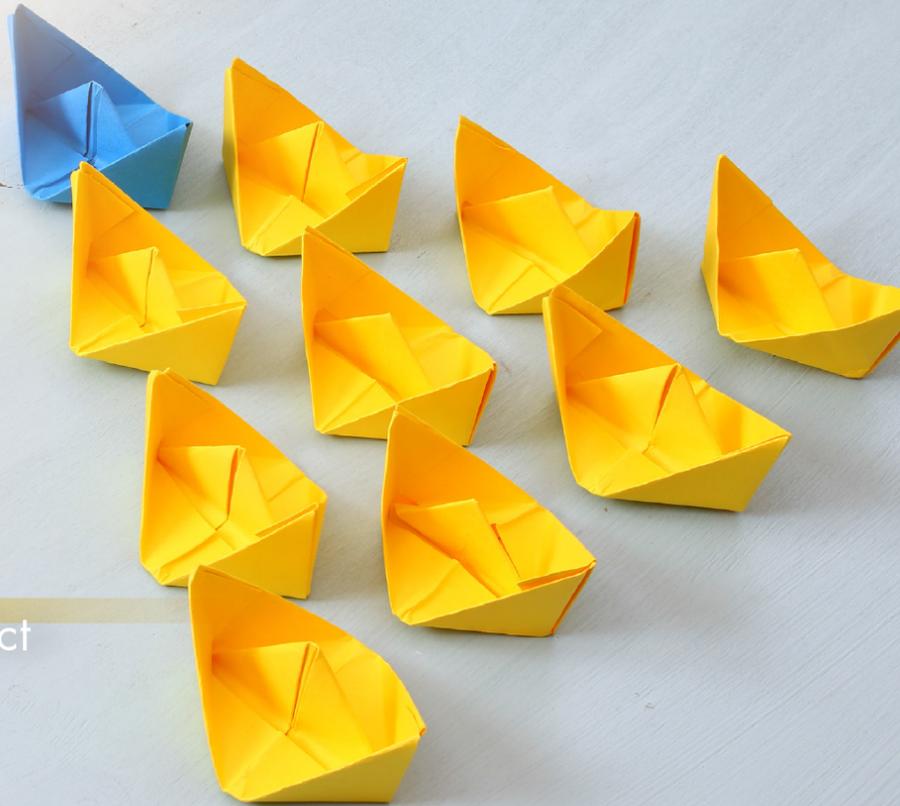
programmes and awards, to protect the interests of students, parents and other stakeholders in the tertiary education sector is no easy feat. The quality programmes and institutions that are accessible to our citizenry are this way largely thanks to the work of ACTT. I look forward to the outcome of the

various events that took place during Quality Assurance Month and the Ministry of Education will do its part to support, wherever possible, as we soldier on in the provision of quality education that is accessible to all. ■



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**T**he Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) was established by law in 2004, to have responsibility for quality assurance in higher education. This year's theme for Quality Assurance month, "Higher Education Innovations: Adapting to Economic Challenges", reminds us of the valuable resources given to enhance the higher education sector.

With approximately \$7.39 billion dollars allocated to education and training this year, education continues to



Dr John Prince  
Chairman, ACTT

## Message from The Chairman

play a major part in national development. ACTT's quality assurance services serve as a vital medium through which the quality of local higher education offering in Trinidad and Tobago could be improved.

In the interest of protecting stakeholders, ACTT was charged with the responsibility of regulating the post secondary and tertiary education and training sector of Trinidad and Tobago. ACTT was established as the principal body in Trinidad and Tobago for conducting and advising on the accreditation and recognition of post secondary and tertiary education and training institutions, programmes and awards, whether local or foreign, and for the promotion of the quality and standards of post secondary and tertiary education and training in Trinidad and Tobago. Given the pivotal role of education in a nation's development, ACTT will continue to do its best to ensure that citizens are protected from diploma mills and that they make informed decisions when exploring their higher education options.

It is important that ACTT continues to foster a culture of quality and continual improvement. Currently, ACTT is working assiduously with The National

presented by prospective employees, thereby ensuring that candidates have the right skills to perform the job.

**This year's theme for Quality Assurance month, "Higher Education Innovations: Adapting to Economic Challenges", reminds us of the valuable resources given to enhance the higher education sector. With approximately \$7.39 billion dollars allocated to education and training this year, education continues to play a major part in national development.**

Training Agency (NTA) to develop and implement a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which will be of major benefit to all stakeholders. It is through the NQF that students and stakeholders will be given information required to make informed decisions on their higher education choices. This framework will be used as a guide to understand qualifications at all levels in Trinidad and Tobago including general, higher and technical vocational education and training. Further, it will allow for transparency, comparability and portability of qualifications. The framework will also ensure that employers understand qualifications

The public will agree that initiatives like the NQF could not only raise the quality of higher education in this country but also sensitise the public on the importance of quality in higher education.

As Chairman, I will continue to ensure that ACTT protects the interest of the stakeholders to whom it is accountable. I will also ensure that ACTT continues to play a critical role in the development of a highly skilled and competent national workforce and that the investment made by the Government in education would benefit not only the citizens but our country as a whole ■

**T**he current economic situation has heralded changes in today's higher education and training sector. These changes have impacted The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) and tertiary level institutions directly and indirectly.

## Message from The Executive Director



Curtis Floyd  
Executive Director (Ag)

towards the external review of its operations, as is stipulated in our Act. Preparations are well underway for this external review; of particular importance is the selection of a reputable international agency. In closing, I must express my appreciation of the ACTT staff for their service through the year and, in particular, during Quality Assurance Month. I would also like to reiterate the importance of building and strengthening the relationships among higher education stakeholders.

However, regardless of the nature of the changes and their effects, adaptation by the players in this sector is an absolute requirement for survival as embodied in our theme "Higher Education Innovations: Adapting to Economic Challenges". ACTT continues to adapt to the changes it has encountered during this period.

ACTT's policies and procedures are constantly being reviewed based on best industry practices. Additionally, these policies are supported by a management team that continues to work assiduously to steer this process while engaging the support of technical staff. These efforts not only assist ACTT to keep abreast of the sector, but also afford the Council opportunities to improve upon its previous policies. In our endeavours to

**However, regardless of the nature of the changes and their effects, adaptation by the players in this sector is an absolute requirement for survival as embodied in our theme "Higher Education Innovations: Adapting to Economic Challenges".**

improve our internal quality systems, we are also seeking to improve the quality of the services provided to our stakeholders. In this regard, work is progressing on the use of technology in streamlining our processes in the near future, to the benefit of ACTT's staff, institutions, External Evaluators and other stakeholders.

Meeting and exceeding international trends in higher education are important milestones for the Council. As such, ACTT is currently working

Building strong relationships between and among staff, institutions and local, regional or international agencies is a high priority as ACTT seeks to maintain the standards within the higher education and training sector.

We will continue to be a learning and listening organisation in our efforts to be responsive to the needs of the sector, while ensuring that we fulfil the mandates of the Act that governs ACTT.

# Think Smart before you Start

**T**he July/August holidays ended with students eagerly logging on to their computers to register for higher education programmes. With one click of the mouse, hard-

earned money is spent on registration fees, tuition and textbooks. Imagine spending thousands of dollars on a programme, only to be told that the institution you attended has not been quality

assured and therefore is not recognised. No student wants to be in a situation where, after completing a career-focussed degree programme, he/she finds out that his/her hard work does not qualify him/her for employment. Unfortunately, this has been the experience of some graduates in Trinidad and Tobago.

There are documented incidents where students have completed programmes at institutions promising 'immediate employment' after completion, only to be left unemployed and with worthless pieces of paper. Ensuring that the programme you are interested in pursuing is recognised/quality assured before you enrol can help avoid lost time, re-work, huge disappointment and wasted money.

Quality assurance agencies, like The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT), provide quality standards that institutions must satisfy. Quality assurance agencies evaluate tertiary institution against these standards. If the institution meets the standards, the quality assurance agency

grants institutions approval to deliver programmes at specified levels. They ensure that institutions provide quality education. Without quality assurance, employers and other institutions would lack confidence in the programme and/or the graduate.

universities will not accept credits from a school that is not recognised. Attending an institution that is quality assured gives the accepting institution the assurance that the completed courses are of quality.

It is imperative that students check to see if the institution has been quality assured by a recognised quality assurance agency before pursuing any higher education programme.

**No student wants to be in a situation where, after completing a career-focussed degree programme, he/she finds out that his/her hard work does not qualify him/her for employment.**

There are several risks associated with attending an institution that has not been quality assured. One major risk is the effect on employment opportunities. Employers in Trinidad and Tobago may not hire a potential candidate if the qualification he/she possesses was issued by an institution that has not been quality assured. Employers are likely to choose the candidate with a degree from an institution that has been accredited/recognised.

They want to feel assured that potential employees have attended an institution that has adequately equipped the graduates with the knowledge and skills needed for employment. Institutions that are not quality assured may not have the same educational standards and policies as institutions that have gone through a rigorous quality assurance process. These institutions may offer programmes that do not adequately prepare students for a career in the field of their choice. Another risk of attending an institution that has not been quality assured is that most colleges and

Most legitimate quality assurance agencies provide information on their accredited institutions online. Alternatively, students may contact ACTT's Qualifications and Recognition department, which issues Statements on Recognition. A Statement on Recognition is an official document which provides information on whether a post secondary or tertiary level institution is recognised and/or accredited. Statements on Recognition also include information on specialised accreditation of qualifications for professions that require a licence to practise.

For information on local post secondary and tertiary institutions, students are advised to consult ACTT's online [Compendium of Registered, Accredited and Recognised Institutions, Awarding Bodies and Programmes](http://www.actt.org.tt) at [www.actt.org.tt](http://www.actt.org.tt) for the most up-to-date information on all registered, accredited, transnational programmes and foreign awarding bodies and institutions recognised by ACTT.



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# Economic Development and Higher Education

*Dr Verleen Bobb-Lewis  
Technical Advisor –  
Division of Education,  
Innovation and Energy,  
Tobago House of Assembly*

**T**he economies of developing states, including that of Trinidad and Tobago, are creatures of the global marketplace and are required to participate for goods and services for their growth and economic development. Participation in global markets is conditioned by the quality and capability of higher education systems that produce the human resource professionals who engage the challenges that determine the relative success in the growth and development of small states.

The capacity of higher education systems, along with the availability of materials and labour, best explains and justifies the significant expenditures on education in national budgets. These expenditures, particularly those in higher education, have provided the human resources with the competence to make significant contributions to economic development and participate in global markets.

The role of higher education in Trinidad and Tobago has been influenced by the economy of our colonial past and the challenges that arose in our path to economic development since our independence in 1962. The University of the West Indies emerged from embryonic relationships with the

University of London and the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture. Other higher education institutions, The University of Trinidad and Tobago, the University of the Southern Caribbean, Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies, are sources of human capital with the capacity to engage the challenges that are inherent in the global marketplace. While responses to challenges in global marketplaces have established 'best practice' solutions to market imperfections, developments in transportation, information and communication and the introduction of modern technologies have revolutionised the patterns of the exchange of goods and services in the global marketplace. Human resource professionals are required to create

however. Higher education institutions in developed economies provide a wide range of professionals with the skills and capacities to contribute to and participate in the global market and economy. In developing economies, global market participation is constrained by small population size, economies of scale, residual colonial cultures and limitations in social and economic institutions. These economies continue to be influenced by limited capital, systems of accountability and transparency in state decision-making and a culture that de-emphasises the value of risk-taking market place participation.

Economic development in Trinidad and Tobago is firmly located in active participation in global markets and

**The role of higher education in Trinidad and Tobago has been influenced by the economy of our colonial past and the challenges that arose in our path to economic development since our independence in 1962.**

and innovate appropriate reactions that allow developing economies to keep pace with the rapid developments. Responses include innovation and communication technology, transportation and environmental concerns.

Significant progress has been achieved. There still exist major gaps in the preparation of professionals between developed and developing economies,

significantly influenced by historical antecedents and cultural imperatives. In addition, achievement motivation is a salient element in the national culture that promotes and supports enrolments in the higher education sector. This culture of national achievement motivation has emerged as an imperative to participation in global markets, the provision of human resources and continued economic development.

# Promoting Innovation

## to Adapt to Economic Challenges

Kassandra Mano  
Research Officer (Ag), ACTT

**T**he higher education and training sector, locally and internationally, continues to face challenges with the changing landscape of education as well as the economy. Since the 2008 recession in the United States of America where state funding drastically reduced, institutions have not been receiving a significant increase in funding (Swanger, 2016).

Tertiary level institutions (TLIs) must keep abreast of these ongoing changes in order to remain relevant and attract students in the face of changes. It is important that quality is maintained in the delivery of service to students and other stakeholders despite the challenges. In order to ensure this, TLIs must find innovative ways to ensure that they can continue to sustain themselves.

One of the major challenges facing the higher education sector locally is the rising cost of higher education to institutions, which are typically passed on to students. Aggregate university costs have been increasing with a decrease in public funding resulting in lower enrolment rates for institutions in Trinidad and Tobago. Effective September 2017, public funding was restricted to local programmes at accredited institutions, significantly reducing the number of programmes that qualify for funding.

Institutions have begun utilising various measures to adapt to the current financial situation. Many institutions now offer payment plans to make



tuition more affordable on a term by term basis to students. In an effort to remain competitive, institutions are increasing focus on student support services. Student support services have become critical to enhancing the learning experience for students thus differentiating themselves from their competitors.

Reduced financial support mechanisms have also led to the introduction of new and flexible programmes by some institutions. To increase student mobility and to widen access to higher education and training, many institutions continue to introduce distance and blended learning options

to tap into a wealth of digital education resources. Teaching and learning materials in the form of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) offer new potential for digital learning and offers students flexible alternatives which can reduce institutional as well as individual cost (UNESCO, 2018). TLIs continue to market short and professional development courses as a means of enhancing skills and marketability in the workforce since the costs of these courses are significantly lower than degree programmes.

The introduction of innovative initiatives to have additional income streams is becoming more important to institutions. More TLIs may consider fundraisers that showcase the work of students or market the skills gained to earn income. Many institutions offer music, theatre and culinary programmes, all of which can be integrated into fundraisers to assist in income generation.

Institutions continue to adapt and innovate while adjusting their programme offerings when faced with economic challenges. Attracting and retaining students is critical to institutions and it is important that institutions keep abreast of the changing climate and be able to innovate to service the needs of stakeholders.

### References:

UNESCO. (2018). Digital higher education. [online] Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/higher-education/digital>  
Swanger, J. (2016, June).

Innovation in Higher Education: Can Colleges Really Change? Retrieved September 21, 2018, from <https://www.fmcc.edu/about/files/2016/06/Innovation-in-Higher-Education.pdf>

# Barriers to Internal Evaluation

## Collaboration for Quality

Sherma Joseph  
Director, Accreditation and Quality  
Enhancement (Ag), ACTT

The process towards Institutional Accreditation and the maintenance of that status, once granted, involves both internal self-evaluation and external peer evaluation. The complexities of external evaluation are obvious. While undergoing the process, the institution lays itself bare to the external quality assurance agency. This exposure is at times disquieting with high-stake consequences as the institution's survival and public image are thought to be at risk.

The process of internal evaluation is also vital to the continued existence of the institution. As part of its quality assurance thrust, an institution must undergo intense reflection. This self-interrogation encourages the institution to examine and evaluate its structures, mechanisms, processes, policies and products.

This exercise involves members of governance, administration, faculty, students and stakeholders with the aim of improving internal institutional interventions and, at the same time, satisfying the requirements for Institutional Accreditation. Successful institutions ensure that the mechanisms and structures that are developed and/or improved as a result the process of institutional accreditation become routinised.

The process of internal evaluation, therefore, is central to the success of the external evaluation. Given the enormity of the stakes and the possible tensions among the groups involved, it is understandable that the process is not without its challenges.

Stake, Conteras and Arbesu (2017) contend that there are eleven barriers to internal evaluation. These barriers are widespread opposition; administrator misunderstanding of formal evaluation; lack of funding and training for key personnel; political implications; expectation that the data may be

used for other purposes; reactive affects; ethical ownership of personal data; self-promotion; variegation in the conceptions of teaching and its evaluation; undervaluation of teaching and invalid indicators. Institutions should take cognisance of these barriers.

One consistent action that mitigates against the effects of the barriers to effective internal evaluation is collaboration. Collaboration in this sense can be termed "communitarian teaching." It eschews the conception of individuals teaching in isolation in separate classrooms. Instead, the lecturer is seen as directly contributing to the development, improvement and sustenance of educational quality.

Communitarian teaching will require different ways of managing classrooms; commitment to several consistent actions; peer and administration reviews; observation and standardisation of content and methodologies. However, the information will be aggregated and range of common understandings of the ways in which teaching is enacted will result.

This process of communitarian teaching will ensure that there is adequate agreement of the conceptions of excellence in teaching; combined effort to engineer solutions; promotion of the ideals of the group; common understandings of the use and impact of the information and ownership of the process by the group.

When implemented, communitarian teaching will greatly mitigate against the barriers to internal evaluation and improve the institution's response to external evaluation.

### Guiding texts:

Secolsky, C. & Denison, D. B. (eds). (2012). Handbook on measurement, assessment, and evaluation in higher education. New York, NY: Routledge.

Stake, R.E., Conteras, G. & Arbesu, I. (2017). Assessing the quality of a university-particularly its teaching. REDU. Revista de Docencia Universitaria, 15(2), 125-141. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4995/redu.2017.6371>.

**Successful institutions ensure that the mechanisms and structures that are developed and/or improved as a result the process of institutional accreditation become routinised.**



# UNIVERSITY *of the* SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN



**Jean-Claude Cournand**  
BS Behavioral Sciences '13  
Founder, 2 Cents Movement  
Queen's Young Leader 2018  
Chevening Scholar 2018/19

*My time at USC was transformational. I was given the space to think and learn about myself as a person with lecturers who invested in my growth. I am a firm believer that quality education can be found at home in T&T and USC has proven that to me.*



**Joanna Alleyne-Shah**  
BS Nursing, '17  
Top Student: Regional Examination  
Nursing Registration (RENr) Exam,  
April 2018

*USC's Nursing program sits at the forefront of nursing education in Trinidad & Tobago because of their well-structured curriculum, highly qualified and experienced faculty and their drive to produce well-rounded nurses who excel in the practical and social aspect of their profession.*

## 2018: A Year Beyond Excellence for USC

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Over the past nine decades, USC has built a legacy of excellence in academia and notable contributions to the global community, through our faculty and alumni. Glittered with illustrious achievements for a number of our alumni, 2018 has been a year with no exception, taking them not only beyond our shores and up the academic ladder, but most importantly Beyond Excellence!

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**Amber Ruby Charles**  
BS Nutrition & Dietetics, '18  
OAS Scholarship Recipient 2018.  
Accepted at Johns Hopkins University  
to pursue the Master of Public Health  
and an international dietetics  
internship

*I chose USC because of its international reach and high standards. Their dedication to holistic education contributes to the development of students who go on to become well-rounded, balanced members of society.*



**Darryan Cornwall**  
BS Biology, '17  
Undergraduate Scholarship  
Recipient 2018  
(Government of the Republic of Cuba)

*My time at USC was highlighted by the campus' inviting atmosphere, environment of spiritual nurture, dedicated and helpful lecturers, and the bonds formed while a member of the USC Men's Football Team. My USC experience has bolstered my determination and discipline.*



**Kyla Thomas**  
BS Biology, '18  
Undergraduate Scholarship  
Recipient 2018  
(Government of the Republic of Cuba)

*Against the backdrop of a campus community of diverse religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, the education I received at USC was truly exceptional. The institution's emphasis on service to others has especially equipped me to move on to my next chapter.*

**U**K NARIC is the designated United Kingdom national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills attained from outside the UK. It performs this official function on behalf of the UK Government. The agency provides information, advice and opinion on academic, vocational and professional qualifications and skills from all over the world.

## Global moves

### towards digitisation in credentials

Dr Cloud Bai-Yun  
Chief Executive Officer, UK NARIC

**This is a broader and more complete concept of 'recognition', which moves us beyond documents and certificates, to a surer and faster form of authentication, and evaluation and recognition of the knowledge, skills, and experience of the whole individual**

UK NARIC continues to be involved in a number of initiatives internationally which are working towards digitisation of credentials.

A search for greater efficiency in application and credential evaluation processes for education, employment, or professional registration is one of the motive forces driving these moves. A paperless system in which credentials can be sent and viewed using the internet is especially useful in international contexts. Transfers of qualification documents or records of training can be more or less instant; this 'portability' avoids all the delays and expense of sending paper certificates by mail or courier service.



Dr Cloud Bai-Yun  
Chief Executive Officer, UK NARIC

UK NARIC is a signatory to the Groningen Declaration [<https://www.groningendeclaration.org/>]. The Groningen Declaration Network has the goal to make digital student data portability happen. The Network aims to bring together stakeholders from across the world, who, in their respective countries, can help to promote digitisation. Twenty-five countries are currently party to the Groningen Declaration.

Europass is a Europe-wide scheme which offers, free of charge, a range of online tools to enable people to build a CV and to record their skills, including language skills and informal learning, in a standard format that is recognised in all the European countries.

UK NARIC is the national Europass centre for the UK, and has taken part in the Europass Innovation Working Group, which has explored ways to extend Europass beyond a 'documents' approach, and to better integrate the platforms and services available.

It is not only governments and national agencies who are active in this area of activity. UK NARIC is working

with a number of private sector companies internationally, which have developed systems for online storage of credentials and records of training and development. Some of these are being marketed successfully to professional bodies as a means of capturing and recording ongoing professional updating. Some systems are scalable to national level and are attracting interest among qualification authorities and awarding bodies. There are also open-source, non-commercial 'digital badges', now used by around 3,000 organisations worldwide. These are suitable for recording smaller units of learning and achievement of specific skills. The issuing organisation can create encrypted badges using online tools, and learners can collect and showcase their badges in 'digital backpacks'.

The other main driver in moves towards digitisation is fraud prevention. A shift away from paper documents means avoidance of counterfeit certificates and altered paper statements. Digitisation offers the prospect of online authentication, directly with the issuing authority.

This is a considerable prize. However, at a national scale, there are challenges (and costs) in the establishment of a large, secure IT infrastructure. Securing digital certificates using Blockchain technology, for example, can be expensive in the context of a national system, and this may be an obstacle to adoption for some countries and authorities.

Of particular interest to UK NARIC is that digitisation offers the prospect of simplifying and enhancing the recognition of skills. The potential for all the kinds of learning and achievement of an individual, including modules of learning and informal learning, to be captured in a secure online environment, and then made accessible to a recognition agency anywhere in the world, is powerful.

This is a broader and more complete concept of 'recognition', which moves us beyond documents and certificates, to a surer and faster form of authentication, and evaluation and recognition of the knowledge, skills, and experience of the whole individual.

## UTT: Student-centred... in Pursuit of Excellence!

AS THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) continues to provide quality tertiary education and training through its diverse programme offerings in these areas:

- Animation
- Aviation
- Biosciences, Agriculture and Food Technologies
- Carnival Studies
- Criminology and Public Safety
- Education
- Engineering
- Fashion
- Information and Communication Technology
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Maritime and Ocean Studies
- Music Technology
- Performing Arts
- Sports

The University specialises in the delivery of industry-relevant Undergraduate and Postgraduate degrees, and consistently engages in a robust review of all programmes. Such quality enhancement initiatives ensure the highest international standards in tertiary education are met.

In 2018, the University introduced the following new academic programmes:

- Diploma in Natural Resource Management
- B.Sc. in Aeronautical and Airworthiness Engineering
- B.Sc. in Agriculture and Entrepreneurship
- B.Sc. in Coastal and Ocean Management
- B.F.A. in Digital Media Arts with specialisations in Animation and Music Technology
- B.Sc. in Kinesiology
- M.Sc. in Kinesiology



- Postgraduate Diploma in Cybersecurity
- M.Sc. in Cybersecurity

The introduction of these programme offerings come amidst an exciting time for UTT, as the University has also made a leap of almost 1,000 places in the World Ranking of Universities on Webometrics in just over one year, and now

sits in the top 22 percent of universities worldwide.

In the pursuit of excellence and inculcating a student-centred philosophy, UTT continues to be a world-class Institution forging ahead in world rankings.

Visit [www.u.tt](http://www.u.tt) for more information on UTT's programme offerings.

## UTT's ACCREDITATION STATUS



UTT is an accredited Institution of higher learning having been awarded Institutional Accreditation from the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) in December 2010. In December 2017, UTT received continuing accreditation until 2024 - the maximum period that can be awarded to tertiary institutions.

In addition to this, UTT is proud to have received specialised accreditation from:



**Energy Institute (EI), United Kingdom (UK)**

- Master of Engineering in Petroleum Engineering
- Master of Science in Petroleum Engineering
- Master of Science in Reservoir Engineering
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Petroleum Engineering
- National Engineering Technician Diploma in Petroleum Engineering



**Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE), UK**

- Master of Engineering in Process Engineering
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Process Engineering
- National Engineering Technician Diploma in Chemical Engineering



**Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), UK**

- Master of Science in Information and Communication Technology
- Master of Science in Innovative Design and Entrepreneurship
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Computer Engineering
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Manufacturing and Design Engineering
- Diploma in Computer, Networking and Telecommunication Engineering
- Diploma in Software Engineering



**Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology (IMarEST), UK**

- Master of Science in Operational Maritime Management
- Bachelor of Science in Nautical Science/Maritime Operations
- Diploma in Maritime Operations - Engineering
- Diploma in Maritime Operations - Navigation



**UTT is the host institution for the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre for the Caribbean Region (MTCC Caribbean).**



📍 UTT O'Meara Campus

# The Journey

## The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Lesley-Ann J. Brathwaite  
Director, Qualifications and Recognition  
(Ag), ACTT

**T**he Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) is in the process of developing a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in collaboration with the National Training Agency (NTA). The NQF is one of the major initiatives of the Council and is informed by emerging trends in higher education and training.

In the absence of a qualifications framework, it can be challenging to understand different types of post secondary and tertiary education qualifications and awards. For example, it can be difficult to assess a qualification based on the title of the award due to the arbitrary use of programme titles. It is challenging to compare programmes from various parts of the world with local programmes as credit calculations vary across institutions and countries.

The NQF aims to establish a common reference framework of qualifications. It is designed to act as a translation device between different qualification systems and their levels.

The framework will regulate qualifications at all levels of education in Trinidad and Tobago, including general, higher and technical vocational education and training. This will lead to greater transparency, comparability and portability of citizens' qualifications. The NQF will establish national standards for the award of qualifications at various levels of the education and training system of Trinidad and Tobago and it will serve as an instrument to assist in the quality assurance of local, transnational and technical and vocational programmes in Trinidad and Tobago.

CARICOM member states are required to align their NQFs to the CARICOM Qualifications Framework (CQF) as part of the process of developing an NQF. The CQF will serve as a unifying mechanism that will allow stakeholders to understand and compare qualifications awarded at various levels within the CARICOM region. ACTT and the NTA have adopted

the CQF as an instrument to be used in the quality assurance activities of each agency. As such, the CQF will influence the development of the NQF. In developing the NQF, ACTT and the NTA have ensured that the learning outcomes takes into consideration the contextual needs of Trinidad and Tobago with regard to education and training and the labour force.

Both ACTT and the NTA are conducting a survey of local qualifications currently offered by post secondary, tertiary and technical and vocational institutions in Trinidad and Tobago. The results of the survey will guide the development and design of the NQF.

ACTT has engaged several stakeholders in focus group interviews to solicit feedback on the draft framework. It is envisaged that ACTT and the NTA will continue to dialogue with various stakeholders as both agencies continue on the journey towards the development and implementation of the NQF in Trinidad and Tobago.



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# Evolve or **DIE!** Higher Education Innovations

Trinidad and Tobago Group of Professional Associations Limited (TTGPA)

In today's economy and social environment, everything competes for our attention.

With digital media at our fingertips and information a mere button click away, an individual's attention span is fleeting. A person is often hard pressed to stay focused when data is compressed into immediate and digestible bits of information.

These persons are often accustomed to fast paced and modern forms of communication and would look to stay away from administrative headaches and organisations that are refusing to embrace modernity. They choose instead to associate with institutions more in line with their needs and lifestyles.

So what does that mean for higher education institutions that rely on more traditional means? Why and how do they evolve?

## Higher Education Institutions Face Barriers to Change: Resources

The first step is to determine the resources available to make changes to classrooms and teaching methods. Does the institution want to problem solve or evolve? Because most public institutions pride themselves on traditions and almost define themselves based on their tradition, they often resist change and resist innovation.



The Professional Centre, Fitzblackman Drive, Woodbrook

Understanding which camp an institution falls into can help guide where resources should be allocated. For example, a university looking to solve problems may invest in education technology that alleviates some of the pressures of everyday tasks, while those looking to evolve may be more interested in technology that embraces new ways of learning on campus.

## Create Buy-in through Team Effort

According to a recent report from **Learning House** and the **Online Learning Consortium**, administrators noted **structure, culture** and **resources** as the top three barriers to bringing innovative solutions to their campus. In the face of these challenges, strong, transparent and supportive leadership is critical. Administrators should create a plan for change and stick to it. A plan that is scalable and realistic. Lecturers who have input can better advocate for innovations and link it directly to their students' needs, while student committees provide buy-in and advocacy, which is equally integral to the process.

Students are often the most powerful drivers of change as they are the one constant at the many touch points on campus. These tertiary student leaders often go on to become professionals who use innovation and cutting edge techniques to help their organisations to evolve, which in turn drives the economy.

As with all things, these changes will take time and constant evaluation but the one thing we can all agree on is that we must evolve.



## About the TTGPA:

The Trinidad and Tobago Group of Professional Associations Limited (TTGPA) is a non-governmental organisation, whose membership is open to Professional Associations of Trinidad and Tobago. Membership covers Accountants, Architects, Contractors, Engineers, General Medical Practitioners, Internal Auditors, Registered Nurses, Optometrists, Planners, Real Estate Agents, Surveyors, Dentists, Librarians, Advocates for Women's NGOs, Advertising Executives, Psychologists and Safety Experts. TTGPA represents a significant intellectual, creative and economic resource for our country. The 2018/2019 current Executive team is led by Camille Cumberbatch-Dhoray (President), Richard Saunders (Vice President), Neville Sandy (Secretary), Leroy Calliste (Treasurer) and Deborah Gamaldo (Assistant Secretary/Treasurer).

For more information, visit our website at [www.ttgpa.org](http://www.ttgpa.org) or contact us 868-623-5434 / 868-627-1539.

# Harnessing the Potential

of Technological Change through Education



Ronald Ramlogan, Team Leader –  
Public Relations and Research, ECATT

**T**he digital revolution is having an increasingly exponential impact on human and economic activity, and is one of the biggest drivers of transformation in how humanity produces, works, learns, lives and interacts. Related to this is the “Future of Work” (FoW), a topic that is gaining traction globally with vibrant debates and conversations around imminent and inevitable changes in how we work, who does the work, the required skills, as well as issues concerning identifying, interpreting and responding to these changes.

These trends and developments will also have an impact on Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) – its people and institutions – even as the country continues to grapple with a harsh economic reality and resultant continuing structural adjustment. For those involved in education and training, the imperative is much more compelling for programmes that effectively prepare and meet the knowledge demands of this FoW. Too often, curricula are designed without sufficient involvement of other social partners, resulting in learning outcomes that do not meet the needs of business.

The use of digital technologies is becoming much more prevalent in T&T with 78% of the population having ready access to broadband internet and more than 70% with access to a computer in their homes. Moreover, the mobile penetration rate more than doubles the global average for developing countries, at 150%! While this is a remarkable achievement, we must consider how we have constructively utilised these technologies to change how we work, teach and learn.

In Tanzania, for example, the use of mobile phones has contributed to major advances in the delivery of banking and agriculture services. Hospitals in several developed countries also use mobile phones as the first port of

Institutions of learning must revisit their policies, programmes, and learning channels to educate for the FoW with deliberate, time-sensitive and forward-looking programme offerings. For vocational training, technologies like virtual reality, augmented reality and Artificial Intelligence (AI) represent immersive forms of technologies that promote experiential learning for building skills through the simulation of real-life experiences. These initiatives support the principle of “learning by doing” and promote the development of important social and behavioural skills through practice rather than through instruction. Some work has started in this direction that must be advanced sooner rather than later.

There are several benefits associated with the use of digital technologies in business, chief of which relate to growth, the expansion of opportunities and improvements in service delivery. Institutions can also avoid the perception of continuing low return on investment in education and disenchantment among graduates who cannot find employment in their chosen fields through more effective synergies between education and FoW projections.

As we continue to discuss the implications of the FoW and the relative impact on higher education institutions, let us be mindful that, in a real sense, **the future is here.**

**The use of digital technologies is becoming much more prevalent in T&T with 78% of the population having ready access to broadband internet and more than 70% with access to a computer in their homes.**

communication in treating with non-critical cases, fundamentally changing the way the public is serviced.

With advances in digital infrastructure, processing power and platform technologies, it is imperative that our education system also adapt to meet the attendant changes in knowledge demands. Education management in this technological age must be revolutionary – ahead or, at minimum, in step with global technological advances.

Current trends in business, society, technology, communications and information are already changing the where, when, how, why, and with whom we work, learn and associate.

The use of digital solutions is a major opportunity available to educational institutions for stimulating demand even in the face of economic decline, as individuals seek to up-skill and retrain for career relevance and sustainable livelihoods.

# Quick and Effective Solutions for Business Disputes

Elizabeth Solomon, Executive Director,  
Dispute Resolution Centre

**I**n a tighter economy, the cost of doing business and the importance of managing risk become even more crucial. Conflicts within your business or between your business and your suppliers or service providers seem inevitable.

The key question is how to prevent disputes that result in cost overruns, project delays or, worse, a breakdown in business partnerships altogether. Litigation is often not the most effective way of resolving problems and it is almost always the most expensive. What is needed is a quick and effective way of problem solving that allows the work to continue and is aimed at protecting business relationships.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) provides a toolbox of solutions for all manner of business-related disputes, which probably explains why training in techniques like negotiation, mediation, dispute adjudication and arbitration are significant areas of study in big-league business schools such as Harvard University.

In ADR, neutral third-party mediators work with disputing parties to achieve a negotiated settlement in a way that encourages practical solutions and preserves business relationships. These neutral experts help the business people involved to find a settlement that is acceptable to all, within a fully confidential process. ADR gives disputing parties control over the outcomes, removing the high cost and uncertainty that comes with a

court judgement, and when an agreed settlement is not possible the parties retain the right to take legal action.

The benefit of choosing an alternative dispute resolution approach is that it is time-efficient, flexible and confidential. Furthermore, experience has shown that a high percentage of disputes that go to ADR are settled to the satisfaction of both parties. Some studies show that ADR can save up to 95% of the costs businesses would have put out by going to court.

This method helps to avoid lengthy court processes and the high cost of litigation. It can be undertaken at any stage, even if a dispute has already gone to court. It is confidential and private, facilitated by a neutral ADR specialist. The process begins with the parties agreeing to mediate and usually ends with the parties compromising their dispute.

• **Arbitration** – is closest to a formal court process, where a trained arbitrator provides a binding adjudication of



ADR covers a spectrum of techniques that includes the following:

- **Structured Negotiations** – a collaborative and solution-driven dispute resolution method that often happens before a lawsuit is considered;
- **Expert Determinations** – help to clarify the facts by seeking a neutral expert assessment of the facts under dispute;
- **Dispute Adjudication Boards** – often used in construction disputes, this provides for a neutral panel of experts to review the project on an ongoing basis, providing written non-binding recommendations. It ensures that disputes are resolved quickly, mitigating against any impact on projects;
- **Mediation** – tends to be a more structured process of dialogue between disputing parties seeking a mutually acceptable resolution.

the dispute based on internationally acceptable rules and standards. Arbitration, however, is often used in matters involving cross-border issues or high-stakes business operations, where the dispute needs to be resolved quickly and decisively.

These ADR techniques improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of doing business in Trinidad and Tobago. They are all available at international standards of professionalism through the Dispute Resolution Centre, an autonomous division of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce. To ensure the highest quality of service and professionalism, the DRC protects its neutrality through strictly observed independent governance structures.

Please visit our website at [www.disputeresolutioncentre.org.tt](http://www.disputeresolutioncentre.org.tt) and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.



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The National Energy Skills Center (NESC) was established in 1997 out of a Trust Deed between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and Atlantic (formerly known as Atlantic LNG).

The objective was to create a skills development centre which would produce skilled labour consistent with the industrial needs of the country. The NESC has campuses across Trinidad and Tobago, providing training to hundreds of students annually in various occupational areas. In developing our course offerings, we continue to be responsive to the needs of Industry and have significant assistance from industry experts. Apart from training for the general public, the NESC also provides customised Corporate Training Solutions through its Business Development Department.

The NESC has within recent years developed a reputation at the global level with ongoing training for Nigerian Nationals and Training Agreements signed with Public and Private Sector Companies Internationally.

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