

ACCREDITATION AND **E**VALUATION **S**YSTEMS
IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN:
CURRENT TRENDS AND PROSPECTS

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IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (UNESCO/IESALC)

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ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN: CURRENT TRENDS AND PROSPECTS

Organization of the Study

This study provides information on the course which accreditation has taken and its current stage of development in the English Speaking Caribbean. Many institutions and agencies have contributed to the evolution of this evaluation and accreditation process. The path has not been a linear one and so the report may appear like a mosaic reconstructed from several different jigsaw pieces. The pieces have come from a review of relevant published and unpublished documents that are listed in the References as well as from responses to questionnaires sent to key tertiary institutions and Ministries of Education. The response rate was excellent and should therefore give an accurate picture of the regional state of accreditation.

CHAPTER 1 looks at the development of higher education in the region including the key trends and emerging challenges to the maintenance and demonstration of quality in higher education. Some of the important changes which are identified include size, diversity, nature, scope and missions, competition, cost and demands for accountability in tertiary education. While the region is experiencing common threats to quality assurance, the paper classifies the countries into three broad groups and points to their likely accreditation and evaluation concerns.

CHAPTER 2 traces the evolution of accreditation and evaluation policy at the regional, national and institutional levels including the on-going definition of the quality assurance concept, emerging practice and strategies. It identifies some key players that have been directly involved, as well as others who have orchestrated policy development. It highlights the specific outputs and outcomes of a number of initiatives including workshops and consultations which have themselves informed policy.

CHAPTER 3 examines current Legal Frameworks supporting Accreditation and Evaluation. Drawing on the reports from institutions and Ministries of Education, it looks at formal and informal institutional validation and quality assurance arrangements. It reports on the various accreditation functions that Ministries of Education currently perform in the absence of accreditation bodies, and documents

the specific stage which the country has reached in the establishment of its national accreditation body. It also presents the CARICOM sponsored draft National Accreditation Bill.

CHAPTER 4 presents the conceptual framework including the key mechanisms and systems involved in the institutionalization of accreditation and evaluation. It asserts that different types of validation patterns have emerged and become established in the region and that the institutionalization of accreditation bodies requires the displacement of some of these entrenched systems and assumptions. Generally, the impetus for change has come from outside of the academe and this thrust has been experiencing resistance or inertia, at best. It notes that while mutualism can enable regionalism, it requires power sharing. The overarching challenge for policy makers and change agents is now one of winning stakeholder support through helping the new quality assurance systems to find pragmatic, cognitive and moral legitimacy.

CHAPTER 5 examines some existing coordinating and supervisory entities and processes including articulation, equivalencies, national accreditation bodies, regional and extra-regional professional accreditation, membership of validating associations such as ACTI, ACE and other professional associations. It mentions also their goals and objectives, functions, scope and financing, impact on institutions and their programs. It looks at proposed models for the Regional Accreditation Mechanism as well as its role, function and financing. It also documents existing accredited local programs/ accredited or registered institutions as well as the accreditation of external providers and virtual universities.

CHAPTER 6 asserts that the prospects for the establishment of Institutional Quality Assurance Systems are very good, for national accreditation are good and for the regional mechanism are only fair. In each situation, it identifies the threats and weaknesses but finds that the strengths and opportunities tip the balance in favour of the firm establishment of these quality assurance systems.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION - THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH SPEAKING CARIBBEAN

Over the years and particularly in the latter part of the twentieth century, the concept, organization, mission and delivery of higher education have undergone tremendous changes worldwide. The English Speaking Caribbean has also shared this experience. The major changes which have taken place include the increasing size of the enterprise; the diversification of the higher education pool; the changing nature, scope and missions of higher education; the burgeoning competition within the market; the high cost of Higher Education and the increasing demand for accountability by students, employers and the general public.

It appears therefore that earlier assumptions by the public about the uncontested quality of higher education were eroded by the apparent changes in the inputs and processes in higher education. The stakeholders in the wider society are now demanding greater transparency and even overt justification that quality has not been severely compromised by quantity and diversity. Additionally, as students are being called upon to invest more of their own resources in their higher education and as the global market presents them with wider options, they too have become pre-occupied with quality in an attempt to get the best value for their money.

Setting the Parameters

The study looks at current trends and prospects for evaluation and accreditation systems in the English speaking Caribbean. However, it must also examine the institutionalization and legitimacy not only of accreditation itself but also that of related processes such as quality assurance, equivalence and articulation. In order to realistically interpret the present and appropriately extrapolate for the future, it is important also to consider the history of Caribbean Higher Education and the critical changes that have taken place in higher education in the recent past. However, before considering the changes in greater detail, it is necessary to establish some parameters of the study by defining English speaking Caribbean, higher education, evaluation and accreditation systems, quality and quality assurance, articulation, equivalence, validation, institutionalization and legitimacy.

The countries which are being considered in this study include Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St

Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands. These seventeen islands and territories are either full or associate members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago are all former colonies of Britain gaining their independence over the period 1962 – 1983. Four territories – British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands continue to be British dependencies. Suriname, formerly known as Dutch Guiana, is similar to the rest of the group in that it is a member of CARICOM but it is different in that it was colonized at various points in its history by England, France and the Netherlands from which it gained independence in 1977. Not surprisingly, although English is widely spoken, the official language is Dutch.

The Eastern Caribbean islands and territories – British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines comprise the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) which have a common currency and through the OECS Secretariat attempt to harmonize trade, defense and educational policies. Except for Suriname, the other members of the group have English as their official language and have maintained vestiges of the British education system. However, their proximity to the United States as well as their trading, education and information links with North America have also had profound influence on their organization and practice of higher education.

The historical and cultural ties of the region are strong and significant but most countries are independent nation states with their individual economic and educational profiles and agendas (**Table 1**). They are microstates with populations totaling approximately six millions and a landmass of approximately 39 million square kilometres separated by bodies of water. Attempts at political integration through federation between 1958 and 1962 were abortive and although CARICOM was established in 1973, the establishment of a single market and economy, free movement of skilled persons and a Caribbean Court of Justice are still to be realized after several years of active discussion.

Table 1 – Selected Socio-economic Features of CARICOM Countries

NAME	POPULATION (000) (2002)	LAND MASS (sq km)	GDP Per capita \$US 000 (1999)	INDEPENDENCE DATE
Antigua	68	280	8.2	1981
Bahamas	300.5	13,942	20	1973
Barbados	276.6	431	8.9	1966
Belize	256	22,960	2.4	1981
BVI	20.8	153	32.8	N/A
Cayman Islands	35.5	260	24.5	N/A
Dominica	74.8	750.6	3.4	1978
Grenada	89.2	1,780	3.66	1974
Guyana	697	214,970	0.7	1966
Jamaica	2,680	11,000	2.65	1962
Montserrat	8	102	8.3	N/A
St. Kitts/Nevis	38.7	269	7.1	1983
St. Lucia	158	616	4.34	1979
St. Vincent & Grenadines	115.9	388	2.6	1979
Suriname	434	163,820	8.5	1975
Trinidad & Tobago	1,170	5,128	5.1	1962
Turks & Caicos	18	430	8.0	N/A

The existence of a regional university, the University of the West Indies since 1948 and a West Indies Cricket Team since 1906 (test match status in 1928) is evidence of regionalism but the ongoing challenges and the adverse criticism which is continually leveled at these entities signal also persistent countervailing forces of nationalism. The varying population bases, economic resources and development plans result in differences in the relative emphasis placed by member countries on local and regional tertiary education development. Not surprisingly, the size,

diversity and maturity of the state education institutions or institution pools show marked variation.

An established accreditation system requires partial or comprehensive self-evaluation of an institution or its programs. It provides also a mechanism for external peers to confirm whether the institution substantially achieves its objectives and is generally equal in quality to comparable institutions or units (Bogue and Sanders, 1992). The prevailing unevenness in tertiary education development is also reflected in the pattern of evaluation and accreditation systems development in the region. Accreditation must be viewed therefore as an evolutionary process where few countries have established national systems, some are at the conceptual stages and others are at various points along a development continuum. Accreditation in the region will be conveniently studied as a threefold, unfolding, mutually supportive plan which is underpinned by institutional quality assurance, anchored by national or sub-regional accreditation bodies and can be harmonized by a regional mechanism.

The meaning and scope of the term “higher education” have changed over the years and the related term of “tertiary” education currently enjoys wider usage in the English Speaking Caribbean. UNESCO uses the term higher education to include “universities, other educational establishments, centers and structures of higher education and centers of research and culture associated with any of the above, public or private, that are approved as such either through recognized accreditation systems or by the competent state authority.” As such the onus for classification rests with accreditation bodies or national governments. This approach is useful but problematic because of the paucity of accreditation bodies in the region and the lack of overt higher education designation of institutions by some Ministries of Education.

The University Council of Jamaica’s (1997) Directory of Jamaica Tertiary Institutions is an apt reference. In addition, the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions’ (1998) Directory of CARIFORUM Institutions, Howe’s (2002) Contending with Change: Tertiary Education in the English Speaking Caribbean, Brandon’s (2003) New External Providers of Tertiary Education in the Caribbean, TLIU’s (1999) Profiles of Tertiary Level Institutions are being used as reliable sources of information. ACTI’s (2003) provisional definition of tertiary institution is also being used in establishing the pool of tertiary institutions which will be considered by this study. This definition describes a tertiary institution as one with “the requisite structure to provide for the administration, delivery and certification of programs leading to the award of nationally recognized certificates, diplomas or degrees and where the majority of entrants have met nationally accepted standards for the completion of secondary education.”

Quality is recognized as a multi-faceted term which is related to excellence. In describing machines, quality relates to aesthetics, durability, efficiency of operations and consistency in output. In the case of food, quality may relate to the extent of appeal to the taste, smell, feel, sight as well as the satisfaction it gives to the stomach. For Bogue and Sanders (1992) quality is "conformance to mission specification and goal achievement within publicly accepted standards of accountability and integrity." Foskett and Lumby (2003) see quality as "a match to different types of comparators: standards, expectations and future improved states." However defined, quality is an indication of goodness and suitability.

Quality Assurance is an indication of "fitness for purpose". Across a system, quality assurance of tertiary education is a complex undertaking since it must necessarily combine the expectations and assessments of various stakeholders. In the Caribbean region, therefore, one could consider quality assurance at the institutional level as normative yet self-regulating. Quality assurance which derives from national accreditation is mainly summative and represents external validation of all institutions under the purview of the country. Quality assurance associated with regional accreditation addresses conformity with regionally negotiated standards.

Equivalence is considered as confirmation by a reputable agency that programs or courses are comparable in weight, level and quality to other approved courses and programs.

Validation is a process of conferring credibility on a course or program and is a statement that the course or program meets agreed standards for a specific award.

Institutionalization has been defined as the emergence of orderly, stable, socially integrating patterns out of unstable, loosely organized, or narrowly technical activities (Brown and Selnick, 1955). In this paper, successful institutionalization will be deemed to have taken place with the incorporation of the practice of quality assurance as an integral part of the operations at the institutional level, with the routine involvement of existing national accreditation bodies in the life and work of the institutions at the level of the state, and at the regional level with the establishment of coordinated, purposeful and systematic quality assurance relationships among institutional and national quality assurance bodies.

Legitimacy can be viewed as an accepted right to exist and perform the stated function. Suchman (1995) sees it as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially contracted system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions." Legitimacy is conferred on or derived from different sources. Boland (2001) identifies three of these sources as pragmatic, moral and cognitive. He argues that pragmatic legitimacy derives from acceptance of the perceived benefits by the stakeholders. Moral

legitimacy emerges from an agreement that the organization is in the best interest of higher education itself. The basis advanced for cognitive legitimacy is stakeholder understanding and support for the purpose and value of the organization. These three are not mutually exclusive and can be in fact mutually supportive.

Another idea which has been advanced by Bloland (2001) as a way of gaining legitimacy is isomorphism. He uses this term to mean “the importing and internalization of approved processes, techniques, ceremonies and ideas from the external environment.” The term is also used in this paper to embrace relationships like affiliation and association that cause one institution to model and vicariously earn the respect accorded to a more established institution.

Diversification of Tertiary Education

In Europe, the university was the hegemonic institution of the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, other powerful institutions emerged to address development needs. These institutions included the Royal Society in Britain, the *grande ecoles* in France, Research Institutes in Germany and Academies of Science in Russia. In the United States, the seventeenth century colonial colleges were quickly complemented by other types of colleges in an attempt to cater to unserved higher education needs. The 1960s saw, in both settings, a proliferation of institutions to cater to the demands of the period.

It is noteworthy that in the Commonwealth Caribbean, unlike the case of Western Europe and North America, early indigenous tertiary education did not take place in universities but in Theological and Teachers’ Colleges. The regional university was established as recently as 1948 and expanded and adapted in response to social, cultural and economic realities of the region. In the 1960s the pressure for access by larger numbers and more diverse groups of students was also felt in the Caribbean and the response has been the proliferation of a few other universities but mainly of non-university, multi-disciplinary colleges.

The development of tertiary education in the Caribbean can be viewed as a three-phase process. The specialist national colleges dominated the first phase. The second spanned the late nineteen forties up to the sixties where the spotlight was on the regional university. During the later nineteen sixties and through the nineties, a number of national universities and multi-disciplinary colleges have been established to cater to unmet tertiary educational needs. The surviving specialist institutions, the regional university and the newer institutions are now part of a diverse tertiary education pool.

There were several specialist tertiary institutions in the Caribbean before the establishment of the University of the West Indies. Many, in fact, predated the Secondary Schools. Apart from Codrington College in Barbados which became

operational as a College in 1830 and offered degrees in collaboration with Durham University from 1875, the earliest of these specialist institutions were the Teachers' Colleges in Jamaica: Mico (1836), Bethlehem (1861), Shortwood (1884) and St Joseph's Teachers' College (1897).

In Guyana, the first of these institutions was the School of Nursing (1906) with the Cyril Potter College of Education following in 1928. In Trinidad, Agriculture seems to have had pride of place with the early establishment in 1922 of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture and the establishment in 1958 of the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry. Unlike the majority of the others, there were early religious initiatives in the form of the West Indies College (1919) in Jamaica and the Caribbean Union College in Trinidad (1927) set up for religious and other education, in association with Andrews University of Michigan. Allied Health training came on stream in 1945 at the West Indies School of Public Health in Jamaica, and Technical Vocational Education received focus at Belize Technical College (1952), Guysuco Training Centre (1957) and College of Arts, Science and Technology (1958).

Appendix I is a list of the main tertiary institutions by country. It also indicates which institutions are public and whether they are specialized (S) or comprehensive (C). It categorizes the private institutions as indigenous private or foreign. For the foreign providers, it is indicated whether they are hosted by local institutions (L) or are free standing independent providers (F). It does not of course list the many virtual universities that have students enrolled in their programs.

Many of the post-1960 tertiary institutions were created out of the merging of specialist institutions and in response to the expansion of secondary education. They also cater to the demand for skilled persons to meet the development needs of the newly independent Caribbean States. As is the case in the United States, Britain and Canada, they have provided a second rung in the tertiary education ladder in a binary system of higher/tertiary education. This has allowed for some differentiation of function between the university and college sectors (Roberts, 2003).

Whereas there are still several specialist private colleges in the areas of business and information technology, there is the trend in the public sector to create larger, more comprehensive institutions. The trend of amalgamation of smaller specialist institutions into larger, more comprehensive institutions is an on-going one (Peters, 1993). In the 1960s and 70s, amalgamation of specialist colleges into comprehensive colleges took place in Antigua, Barbados, Bahamas, Grenada, St Lucia, St Kitts/Nevis. Amalgamation has just been completed in Dominica from a merger of the Teacher's College, School of Nursing and the Clifton Dupigny Community College to form the Dominica State College.

In Trinidad and Tobago, College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT) was created from merging eight institutions including NIHERST Colleges of Health Sciences, Business Management, Information Technology, School of Languages, Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry, John Donaldson Technical Institute, San Fernando Technical Institute and Metal Industries. The College of Bahamas has recently incorporated the Bahamas Hotel Training College. Similarly, the St Vincent and the Grenadines Community College is intended to absorb the Teachers and Technical College into a single entity.

Amalgamation is not only used to increase size and scope of offerings but sometimes provides leverage for an upgrade in the level of operations from college to university college or from university college to university. The recent Belizean amalgamation produced a university from university and specialist colleges and in Barbados the merger will produce a university college from colleges and polytechnic. The University of Trinidad and Tobago is to be established in 2004 and will absorb the Trinidad and Tobago Institute of Technology (TTIT).

Appendix I indicates not only the changes in size and diversity of the tertiary education pool over time but also the pace of the change. Whereas there were six institutions established in the 18th and 19th centuries and six others between the turn of the twentieth century and 1945, more than fifty public institutions were established by the close of the century. If the private indigenous institutions are included, the growth rate for the latter part of the century would have virtually doubled and would have been greatly enhanced also by the foreign providers.

The commodification of higher education is a matter which has also been changing the worldwide higher education landscape. In recent times, World Trade Organization (WTO) regulations have been facilitating the free movement of education providers. There is now the expectation that foreign universities will be able to freely establish centers in other countries where they will be able to enjoy the same rights and privileges as local institutions. Even though this is not fully operational, there has been an influx into the Caribbean of off-shore universities in the field of medical sciences as well as in business and education.

Among the many challenges which this presents is that of ensuring that for these foreign offerings, national and regional program standards are upheld for both traditional as well as distance offerings. Additionally, particularly where local students are involved, there are concerns that these providers will be overly concerned with economic considerations and might not be culturally sensitive to the context and needs of developing societies. The fear of competition due to the larger size and economic bases of the overseas universities puts pressure on local institutions. However, this is serving to underscore the need for the establishment and development of systems and offerings that would not only give indigenous

institutions a competitive advantage but also allow them to demonstrate outstanding quality, and challenge them also to find markets outside of the region in the geographical space of their competitors.

Appendix I shows further that there are about 70 public institutions, 61 indigenous private institutions and 47 overseas providers. The number of virtual universities and programs is difficult to determine. The number of institutions has shown only a modest increase in number over the past five years or so because although new institutions are being established, the majority of the public institutions result from amalgamation of existing institutions.

For the purposes of this study, the countries are being grouped on the basis of the number and distribution of public and private institutions. **Table 2** indicates that the majority of countries, eleven in fact, have or are in the process of creating a premier, multi-disciplinary public university, university college or college. Group A countries have very few private indigenous institutions and except for St Kitts which has about 5, they have few in-country foreign providers. Their accreditation concerns would therefore be mainly those relating to validation of credentials in a single institution and equivalence of qualifications earned overseas. The pressures for the inter-institutional harmonization of standards, determination of equivalence, registration and regulation of private providers are present but are less intense. Montserrat is not included since it does not have a tertiary institution.

Table 2: Grouping of Countries by Distribution Pattern of Private and Public Institutions

Countries with one Dominant Public and Few (<5) or no Private Tertiary Institutions (Group A)	Countries with one Dominant Public and Several Private Tertiary Institutions (>5) (Group B)	Countries with Several Public and Private Tertiary Institutions (Group C)
Antigua & Barbuda	Bahamas	Guyana
Barbados	Belize	Jamaica
British Virgin Islands	Suriname	Trinidad & Tobago
Cayman		
Dominica		
Grenada		
St. Kitts/Nevis		
St. Lucia		

St. Vincent & the Grenadines	
Turks & Caicos Islands	

The Group B countries, Bahamas, Belize and Suriname, have a single, dominant, public, multi-disciplinary, bachelor's degree granting institution as well as a fair number of local, private and foreign providers. Therefore, in addition to the need for validation of the qualifications in the single public institution, there are greater pressures for in-country co-ordination and equivalence as well as for registration and regulation of private institutions.

The Group C countries, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, have several public, private and foreign providers. The size and diversity of their system make more obvious the need for accreditation bodies to offer services in validation of qualifications, harmonization of standards, registration and regulation of institutions. Arguably, the greater turbulence in the system of the Group C countries also makes more apparent the need for more co-ordination of tertiary education development. A closer look at all three groups shows however an erosion of the boundaries between secondary and higher education and between academic and occupational education and training and the need for re-ordering and clarification through accreditation. Globalization and regionalism require that high priority be given to the portability of qualifications and this reality points to the need for increased emphasis by accreditation bodies in all countries on regional and international relations.

CHAPTER 2

THE EVOLUTION OF ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION POLICY

The evaluation and validation of tertiary education programs and recognition of tertiary institutions in the region have been important issues for as long as new programs were developed and new institutions established. Therefore although accreditation is relatively new to the region, forms of evaluation and validation have always existed. In many instances, validation was achieved through external examinations, qualifications endorsement by or affiliation with reputable universities. Transparency of operations and a proven track record have also helped tertiary institutions to establish their credibility.

In examining the evolution of evaluation and accreditation policy, it is important to look at seven relevant policy issues. The first relates to the nexus between quality assurance and accreditation and the fact that evaluation and quality assurance pre-date formal accreditation. The former can be considered either as a pre-cursor, an integral component or even as an alternative arrangement. These validation arrangements may include university validation and articulation arrangements. The second relates to the control of the accreditation process. This issue emerges because the locus of control could reside mainly with government, with autonomous institutions or with faculty in the institutions.

A third policy consideration is that of the focus of accreditation as it relates to institution wide, program, professional accreditation or a mix. A fourth consideration is that of the approach to accreditation. Here the options include the use of quality audit and quality assessment; the use of self-studies and institutional accreditation visits and /or the use of inspections. A fifth policy issue relates to the role, scope and properties of national accreditation in respect of equivalence, tertiary education development, validation of qualifications and regional and international relations. A sixth policy consideration is that of the financing of accreditation by the state, private sector or both. The seventh is the determination of the optional or compulsory nature of accreditation.

Programme Validation

Codrington College, from as early as 1875, validated its programs through affiliation with Durham University. The University College of the West Indies (UCWI) derived validation in 1948 at its inception from its parent institution, the University of London.

Shortly after it became an independent university, UWI also began to validate the national programs of theological colleges through affiliation relationships and the local programs of the Teachers' Colleges in Jamaica through a Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) arrangement. Similarly, the University College of Belize (now the University of Belize) made provision in 1996 for the accreditation of non - UCB programs through UCB's Program Validation System (PVS). The University of Guyana has had similar validation arrangements. During the 1970s, a number of national colleges were established in several Caribbean countries and the colleges themselves often supported by their Ministries of Education sought and earned program validity through association, program endorsement and articulation with reputable institutions.

National Accreditation

The institutionalization of a process of accreditation was introduced to the region by Trinidad and Tobago in the late 1970s in the form of a Committee for the Recognition of Degrees (CORD). (<http://www.niherst.gov.tt>). Its initial focus was that of establishing the equivalence of foreign qualifications, researching and documenting the status of overseas universities and programs. and reviewing and assessing local programs including their related inputs, processes and outputs to ensure that minimum standards were met.

The Guyana National Equivalency Board (GNEB) was established in 1984 and its remit was that of establishing comparability between extra-regional and local qualifications. However, this board never achieved the status of a national accreditation board.

The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) was established in 1987 as a statutory body under the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its broad mandate includes not only registration of institutions and accreditation of programs and institutions but also the award of degrees. Its mission is "to increase the availability of university level training in Jamaica, through accreditation of institutions, courses and programs for recognition and acceptability. The Council is empowered to confer degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards and distinctions on those who have pursued courses approved by the Council from associated tertiary institutions." (<http://www.ucjamaica.com>). Like Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica had also taken steps to institutionalize but it also broadened the scope of national accreditation.

Regional Accreditation

By 1987, most of the member states of the English Speaking Caribbean had gained political independence and had established national colleges to advance their

human resource development needs expeditiously and in cost-effective ways. The British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos and Cayman Islands also established institutions although they are not independent States. All these institutions sought, perhaps out of expedience, to achieve program validation by routes other than formal national accreditation, mainly through endorsement by or articulation with university programs. Additionally, they adopted individualistic approaches to the development of their programs leading to variability in structure, nomenclature and standards. In 1988, regional governments expressed their concerns about this variability and mandated CARICOM to develop a mechanism for equivalence, articulation and accreditation.

Simultaneously, the tertiary education leaders saw the need for professional cooperation to address some of the challenges of the diversification and expansion of tertiary education in the region. Spearheaded by Sir Alister McIntyre, then Vice Chancellor of UWI, discussions led to the establishment of the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI) in 1990. This association is composed primarily of the heads of tertiary institutions – Vice-chancellors, Presidents, Principals or Chief Executive Officers.

The objectives of the association include facilitation of inter-institutional collaboration and program articulation as well as “the provision of a forum for discussion and problem solving”. It is significant that ACTI established two standing committees – the first for articulation, equivalency and accreditation (AEA) and the second for program and institutional development. In response to the governments’ identified need for regional harmonization of tertiary education, ACTI in collaboration with CARICOM, developed a proposal to address this need and presented this proposal to the annual regional Ministers of Education meeting in 1992. ACTI was mandated by the governments to be the primary implementation agency of this proposed mechanism with CARICOM giving administrative and technical support. The regional Accreditation thrust had formally been launched.

It is worth noting that institutional quality improvement was a challenge that was embraced to different degrees by all tertiary institutions but without explicit documentation of regulations or a code of practice. National accreditation had started with Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica and, in a more limited way, with the Universities of Guyana and Belize. Regional quality assurance which had started in a limited, normative and ad hoc fashion with UWI now had the opportunity to be more inclusive, systematic and comprehensive. What followed over the succeeding eleven years (1992 - 2003) represents the efforts of many stakeholders who worked sometimes collaboratively and at other times independently, sometimes converging and at other times diverging but always advancing the process of quality assurance on three different fronts – at the institutional level, the national level and the regional level.

At the regional level, the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI), the CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Examinations Council, the Caribbean Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (CATVET) and several professional associations have played a critical role. Their work has been assisted by funds from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), European Union (EU), Organization of American States (OAS) and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

By 1992, several colleges in the region were delivering their own programs including the newly adopted associate degrees. ACTI had by now articulated the following as important principles which were needed to support the establishment of any regional accreditation mechanism:

- standardization of program nomenclature
- introduction of a common credit system
- introduction of college owned qualifications including the associate degree
- development of a qualifications framework encompassing technical/vocational and academic qualifications
- design of relevant courses of high quality.

ACTI conducted the first of many annual workshops using this one to draft guidelines and standards for the associate degree. To facilitate articulation with the regional university, ACTI held consultations in 1993 with Deans of Faculties at UWI and sought also to familiarize them with the qualification and to negotiate the award of advanced standing at UWI for associate degree graduates from the colleges. In that same year, efforts were made at another ACTI sponsored workshop to harmonize standards and competencies in selected Technical and Vocational areas and this was followed in 1994 by a workshop to establish procedures for the determination of equivalencies.

ACTI sponsored and assisted with the preparation, production and dissemination of the Programme Development Manual (1993) which laid the groundwork for an important component of tertiary education institutional practice. Its significance resides not only in its substance which is very useful and relevant but also in its timeliness. This is so because many institutions were for the first time shedding prescribed curricula and external examinations and were being coached in the skills of program development and being encouraged to take responsibility for “fitness for purpose” in the curriculum.

Since 1995, ACTI has been involved in a number of accreditation workshops and consultations. In 1995, there was an accreditation workshop at the ACTI annual

assembly in June involving regional and international presenters. The objectives were to sensitize persons to accreditation issues and the implications for their institutions. As recent as 2002, accreditation was a topic discussed at the annual ACTI conference in St. Maarten.

In 1996, Dr Alvin Ashton completed and presented at the annual ACTI Conference an ACTI commissioned document entitled "Towards a Regional Accreditation Model." The document sought inter alia to:

- *Develop a conceptual framework/ model of a regional accreditation model based on national accreditation bodies, the CXC Initiative and the UWI validating role.*
- *Analyze the operations and methodologies of the principal national accreditation bodies to determine their similarities in methodologies and operations.*
- *(In light of 2) make recommendations as to the critical elements of accreditation as a process at the national and regional levels.*
- *Make recommendations as to how ACTI within the context of the model should deal with those countries whose accreditation capability is limited to a few national equivalency personnel.*

The document provided background information on national and regional accreditation. It pointed to a number of options and approaches, made some relevant observations about the status quo and made several recommendations which were accepted by ACTI in principle. They included the following:

- *National accrediting bodies may wish to consider both institutional and program accreditation, based on their own circumstances. Like UCJ and CORD, this should include the self-study which should serve to assure the quality of the institution or its programs as well as assist in the improvement of the institution.*
- *Small states like the OECS countries may wish to establish a sub-regional accreditation body.*
- *National accreditation /equivalency bodies should inter alia accredit tertiary education providers and validate programs; assess foreign awards and foreign providers; harmonize methodologies and procedures used in national assessments, establish and maintain a credit system and ensure that the standards of awards in the country are comparable with regional and international standards.*
- *Although inspection was not generally recommended, it was suggested that the smallest TLIs and single discipline TLIs may wish to use a system of accreditation based on a thorough and*

independent system of inspections. These inspectors can include senior academics. Inspections could be conducted every five years and should focus on accommodation and learning resources, administration and staff, quality control, student services and teaching and learning.

- *The Quality Audit as practiced in the UK can be adapted to the regional context because of the validation arrangements which are already in place.*
- *Tertiary level institutions should standardize their approach to program development and nomenclature to facilitate the development of a credit accumulation and transfer scheme in keeping with the recommendations of the national accreditation body.*
- *The regional body should function as a co-coordinating, advisory and planning and development agency, should be staffed by a secretariat and function under the aegis of ACTI.*

In 1996, ACTI and CXC received funding from the European Union to simultaneously assist CXC with the development of the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) as well as to help ACTI to advance the goals of the regional accreditation mechanism. There are at least three noteworthy outcomes. First, a number of post-secondary syllabuses were prepared and piloted by CXC and have become a part of the repertoire of programs used by some TLIs, either as discrete course or part of an associate degree package.. Second, the project organized a number of simulated accreditation visits to a number of institutions including Knox Community College, Jamaica; John Donaldson Technical Institute, Trinidad and Tobago; Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, St Lucia ; H Lavity Stout Community College, BVI and Barbados Community College. The visits were significant in that they provided practice both for potential assessors as well as for the faculty and staff of institutions.

The third and perhaps the most wide ranging outcome was the production of Procedures & Guidelines for the Regional Mechanism for Accreditation, Equivalency and Articulation, First Edition in 1998 and the second in 2000. The process involved the preparation of position papers by practitioners from education institutions and accreditation bodies. These papers were circulated to all the TLIs in the region and Ministries of Education which along with CXC, CARICOM and Accreditation bodies were invited to take part in a two-day workshop to achieve consensus and arrive at common understandings. The topics addressed include:

- The Caribbean Context and General Approach;
- Partners in Quality;
- Operational definitions;
- Review of the Caribbean (Accreditation) experience;
- A Regional Accreditation, Equivalence, Articulation (AEA) Mechanism, and
- Sustainability of the Regional Mechanism.

Following the acceptance in principle by the Standing Committee of Ministers for Education (1997) of the establishment of a regional accreditation mechanism, CARICOM undertook many activities to advance the adoption of the model and support its establishment. However, considerations related to funding, sustainability and autonomy have favoured different approaches. Proposals have been made for the establishment of a Secretariat operating under the aegis of ACTI or CARICOM. Proposals have been made also for the mechanism to be a coordinating body with direct involvement in accreditation only for those countries without a national accreditation body (Peters, 2000).

London (2001) recommends that national and sub-regional accreditation bodies should be established and based on common standards and understandings in a

context where there would be mutual recognition and on-going information sharing. The role of the regional mechanism would be “to assist in the process of mutual recognition across the region.” In that case, it would be the body authorized for the purpose of recognition of accreditation bodies in the Caribbean, operating in a similar way to Council on Higher Education Accreditation of the United States (CHEA) which does not itself accredit institutions, but monitors accrediting agencies.

National Accreditation Re-visited

It was the general understanding that any regional accreditation mechanism had to be supported by strong and efficient national accreditation bodies. In 1999, CARICOM engaged the services of three consultants “to identify the constraints to the implementation of the decisions relating to the strengthening /building/establishing of national accreditation bodies in Member States where they are at early stage of development or not yet in existence and to develop an action Plan to address the constraints identified.”

Dr. Ethley London who worked with Guyana, Barbados and Suriname concluded that the main constraints to the implementation of national accreditation bodies in these countries were:

- *Chief implementers were not prepared conceptually and psychologically for undertaking what is perceived as a mammoth task and in some cases, an unnecessary one.*
- *They are not aware of operational issues such as how an accreditation body functions (criteria, self study, external assessment, site visits, team selection etc.)*
- *They are uncertain about procedural issues, for example how to set up the body, how to conduct reviews, how to do a self-study.*

She reported on the absence of an accreditation body in Guyana. She indicated that Barbados had prepared a paper on the subject in 1996 and had earmarked funding for the body. She also observed that the Bureau of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Suriname had tackled the introduction of an internal quality assurance system and looking at self assessment and external assessment but were yet to establish a Council. She noted a specific challenge for Guyana to list and monitor private tertiary education providers, She noted also Barbados’ intention to include primary and secondary levels in its Accreditation system. For each country, she formulated a detailed proposal for the establishment of a national body including a statement of mission, functions, underlying principles and scope, institutional framework, legal basis, sustainability concerns and implementation plan. The implementation plan included the drafting of legislation, setting up of a data base system, training and sensitizing stakeholders, monitoring and evaluation of the plan.

Drs. Marie Levens carried out a similar study in 1999 in the OECS countries and after consulting with Ministries of Education, College authorities and key stakeholders concluded that “the establishment of one sub-regional body will be more efficient and more effective. (It) will be situated in the OECS Secretariat and will be networking with its counterparts in each of the Eastern Caribbean States.”

The consultant recommended:

- *the introduction of a quality assurance system in the tertiary institutions related to the Suriname model;*
- *an awareness/sensitization program to inform national policies/plans for the introduction of national accreditation; and*
- *the introduction of relevant policies, a legal and administrative framework, information systems and (gaining) human resource commitment to support the plans for sub-regional accreditation.*

While these discussions were in progress, St Kitts/Nevis felt the need to set up a mechanism to evaluate the many applications which were being submitted to governments by interested foreign tertiary education providers mainly in the areas of Medical Sciences and also in Education. It therefore established its own Accreditation body in 1999.

CARICOM continued its thrust for the establishment of national accreditation bodies as pillars of regional accreditation. To this end, funded by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation a number of workshops were conducted by Dr Ethley London in Barbados, Suriname, Guyana and St Lucia. The consultant was expected to advise on the implementation of the Action Plan for national accreditation and as well as to conduct workshops for the key actors of the region. The main purpose of the workshops was to ensure that the “primary purposes and methodologies of accreditation arrangements were reached and to facilitate greater collaboration, networking and support for implementing the new arrangements.”

The consultant reported a number of critical issues which were identified by some countries including:

- *the treatment and status of the University of the West Indies in the national and regional accreditation bodies;*
- *the role of post-secondary/ tertiary institutions in the structure of the accreditation body;*
- *the optimal level of flexibility in registration and accreditation requirements for institutions;*
- *the relationship of the national accreditation body with existing regulatory bodies, specifically the TVET Council (London, 200, p 7-8).*

Barbados was reported to have prepared a Cabinet paper which was due for submission in July 2001. It also sought and obtained assistance from the consultant in the areas of job specifications and descriptions for national accreditation staff, identifying training needs and opportunities and development of operational procedures for the body.

The Ministry of Education in **Guyana** had prepared a position paper and Draft legislation was in the process of being formulated. The Ministry identified as urgent sensitization of the stakeholders. To this end, a seminar was held to orient potential council members. A subsequent press conference served to inform the wider public of the significance of a national accreditation body. The tasks ahead were similar to those for Barbados.

In **Suriname**, the advancement of national accreditation activities in the Ministry of Education had been slow. Many tertiary institutions had done self-studies but were awaiting the accreditation body to conduct external assessments and accreditation where required. Re-training was done by the consultant who re-iterated the functions of the accreditation body as: accreditation/ quality assurance, equivalency of local and other programs, articulation of programs among institutions, quality enhancement and international relations with other accreditation bodies. The consultant also underscored some guiding principles including autonomy, transparency, credibility, academic respectability, integration and posited that the operations should be deemed as an education institution.

In **St Lucia**, by the time of the visit, May 2001, a draft Document on Accreditation was already prepared and was under review. The consultant advised on the composition and function of the NAC, the responsibilities of sub-committees, terms of reference in respect of linkages, extent of its authority in terms of levels of education. Agreement was also reached that the NAC would operate under the aegis of the Human Resource Division of the Ministry of Education and would have responsibility for the TVET Council, the National Training Board and a Training Committee. It would relate to the sub-regional body when established in information sharing, access to databases, collaboration in training and mutual recognition of qualifications. It would also relate to international accreditation bodies and the regional mechanism when established.

Equivalence and Qualifications Framework

The issue of equivalence in general and specifically the integration of technical/vocational and academic qualifications in a qualifications framework has been long standing. CATVET was established in 1986 and sought through national chapters not only to define standards, promote certification and accreditation but

also to establish equivalence between technical/vocational and other programs in the system. National Training Agencies in Jamaica and Trinidad continued that work in those countries. A project administered by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States with funding from the German Government through the European Union (OECS/GTZ Project) continued the work in the OECS since the early 1990s.

The development of a qualifications framework was first officially tackled under the auspices of ACTI in the 1990s by Sangster and Bethel. This subject was re-visited in 1998 and 2000 at two regional workshops funded by EU/CXC. They were attended in each case by over 40 participants from tertiary institutions of the CARICOM countries, Ministries of Education, accreditation bodies, CXC (Reviere, Roberts, Whittington and Peters (Eds). 2000, pp 58–64). The matter was again re-visited under the auspices of CARICOM in 2001 at a regional workshop in Barbados. The major outcome was reported to be the “development of a Revised Regional Qualifications Framework.” Plans were made to follow this up with a database to support the regional accreditation process. The database would document the regional pool of providers, provisions, accreditation status and involvement of professional associations with the various provisions

Institutional Quality Assurance

As indicated earlier, many tertiary institutions were operational in the Caribbean as credible institutions before the establishment of national accreditation bodies. Additionally, of the seventeen countries being studied, national accreditation bodies are operational in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and St. Kitts/ Nevis only and their terms of reference and emphases are different. It is reasonable to assert therefore that a large number of Caribbean tertiary institutions have earned their credibility in ways other than through national accreditation. It is reasonable to assume also that over the years, governments, boards of management and institutions have taken responsibility for their own quality improvement and assurance. Institutional Quality Improvement and Assurance were indirectly promoted and monitored by universities and other partner institutions with which newer institutions negotiated articulation and affiliation arrangements of various kinds. These include a number of relationships with University of the West Indies as well as with institutions in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Some institutions have improved their academic standing through association with international validating bodies e.g. American Council on Education (ACE). It is true to say that these validation arrangements are bilateral and sometimes result from rigorous institutional and or program assessments: their inputs, their processes and outputs by reputable targeted tertiary institutions.

In addition to these numerous bilateral validation arrangements which exist, several attempts were made by the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI), the University of the West Indies through its Quality Assurance Unit and the Tertiary Level Institutions Unit (TLIU), the OECS Education Reform Unit and professional regulatory bodies to specifically address institutional quality assurance in tertiary institutions in the region.

The matter of institutional quality assurance was addressed in 1997 by a NIHERST/OAS/ACTI project which resulted in Internal Quality Assurance System Development Guidelines for the Caribbean Region (1997). The study was done by a project management team at National Institute for Higher Education Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) of Trinidad and Tobago. It made an important contribution to the clarification of the concept of Quality Assurance in institutions and detailed a number of procedures which should be adopted by institutions in the region.

In 1999, funded by European Union funds from the OECS, the TLI Unit conducted an associate degree workshop in Grenada to assist the OECS countries to come to common understandings and work out standards and frameworks for their divergent associate degrees. This was followed in 2001 in Jamaica by regional and UWI endorsement of a pool of general education courses which would receive credit from UWI. (TLIU, 1999; 2001).

The Community Colleges in Jamaica had general assistance with quality assurance through the Association of Community Colleges of Canada and through their association with City College, Birmingham. In 1996, they set up a task force to develop some basic standards for quality assurance.

In 1999, with funding from the Commonwealth Secretariat, consultants from City College Birmingham with support from the TLIU, conducted two workshops at T. A. Marryshow Community College and Barbados Community College to bring together a broad cross-section of their teachers, managers and administrators to:

- arrive at a shared understanding of the concept and rationale and practice of institutional quality assurance,
- to adopt or adapt some regionally agreed quality statements, standards and criteria for quality assurance in the institutions,
- agree on appropriate instruments and procedures for self-assessment by peers,

- practice through role-playing and discussion the use of such agreed instruments for institutional self assessment.

The institutions were sensitized to the area of institutional quality assurance. Institutional staff were guided to prepare Quality Assurance Frameworks incorporating Quality Statements and self-assessment criteria and formulated recommendations about the institutionalization of a quality assurance capacity.

Further work was done in 2002 by the TLI Unit with the St Vincent and the Grenadines tertiary institutions, Antigua State college and the Dominica State College with the institution embracing the practice of quality assurance, producing its Quality Assurance Framework and making recommendations for consideration by its Board for specific improvement in the College's quality assurance capacity.

Specialized Accreditation

Over the years, professional and occupational groups have been involved in the regulation of training and registration for practice in such areas as medicine, engineering, law, nursing, pharmacy and medical technology. The medical programs of the University of the West Indies have always been accredited by UK Accreditation bodies. With the membership of the United Kingdom to the European Community, there have been changes in policy including the suggestion that foreign Commonwealth universities make other arrangements for their accreditation.

Hospitality and Tourism has recently embarked on a Caribbean Tourism Learning Systems Project which includes a regional quality assurance thrust for Caribbean institutions involved in Tourism and Hospitality Training and Education. A regional workshop conducted by Drs London from UCJ and Dr Denis Paul from T A Marryshow College, Grenada, was held in Barbados in June 2003 to advance this process.

The Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions also coordinated a credentialing project for the region. The objective of this project was to recognize and acknowledge by credentials the relevant experience gained by workers through employment, professional development, professional membership and volunteerism.

UWI and Quality Audit

The University College of the West Indies (UCWI) was established in 1948 as a College of the University of London. This new institution derived immediate legitimacy from its association with a reputable institution. The structure, organization, policies and processes of UCWI mirrored, with limited adaptation, those of the parent institution, conferring through this isomorphism, credibility and acceptability. By 1962 when the UCWI became an independent university, University of the West Indies, it had already acquired its own legitimacy through a track record of excellence in light of its stated mission. It had established a tradition of excellence validated also by external professional bodies and reputable universities abroad.

The UWI was originally established in Jamaica but expanded itself through the creation of two other campuses in Trinidad and Barbados in 1962 and 1963 respectively. Using a system of intra-, inter- campus and international peer review and support as well as functioning committees, the university was able to demonstrate with adequate transparency and consistency the achievement and maintenance of high quality up until the 1990s. With the establishment of national universities in the region, with the incursion of foreign providers and with the

expansion of the university colleges and other colleges in the region, the whole matter of quality assurance and accreditation became a regional issue. Two national accreditation bodies operate in countries which host UWI campuses and jurisdictional questions have been raised about the accreditation of UWI campuses by these bodies. There has been on-going discussion also about UWI and regional accreditation.

There were a number of factors which would have contributed to the establishment by UWI of a new quality assurance system. First, accreditation systems which had for a long time existed in the United States were now being developed, albeit on a different model, for and by universities in the Commonwealth so there was a universal trend. The regional dialogue on the role and scope of regional and national accreditation was escalating and questions were being asked about their authority over UWI. This was important because a peculiar situation exists in the Caribbean where the regional university has already established an international reputation and where its potential local accreditation bodies are still finding their own legitimacy. These considerations no doubt prompted UWI to improve and document its quality assurance systems and led to the establishment of a system of Quality Audit in 2001.

The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) was established at UWI under the aegis of the Board for Undergraduate Studies but with provisions for collaboration with the Board for Graduate Studies. The primary aim of the QAU is to raise the level of the learning experience of students and to demonstrate the quality of the UWI provision to its stakeholders. The QAU conducts reviews of the teaching of targeted disciplines at the undergraduate and graduate levels. It includes: (i) a self-assessment exercise which produces a guided self assessment report; (ii) a visit by the review team which includes peers from another campus and independent experts from outside of the institution and which tests the validity of the report and (iii) a written report by the review team giving feedback and recommendations for improvement. Quality improvement relies on the implementation of the recommendations.

Conclusion

Several important accreditation and evaluation policy decisions have been taken in the region over the past 30 years. Some of these are reflected in the Accreditation Acts and Regulations of individual states and others appear as agreements from consultations. In general terms, the institutionalization of regional and national accreditation has been accepted in principle as desirable quality assurance mechanisms for the region. Larger states have agreed to have individual national accreditation councils but smaller states like the OECS countries have agreed to the

establishment of a sub-regional OECS body.

Although the idea of institutional quality assurance is adopted as important and complementary to national accreditation, the practice has been developed in bilateral and individualistic ways which include program validation through articulation. There seems to be agreement that national accreditation bodies should be established as statutory bodies to allow for autonomy but with government "steering"; that accreditation bodies should conduct program but could also choose to conduct institutional accreditation, and that these bodies should work along with professional accreditation bodies. There seems to be agreement also that funding of the bodies should be mixed with contributions from governments as well as from the institutions that are being served. All seem to agree to the voluntary involvement by institutions in accreditation.

More specifically, one institution, the University of the West Indies has adopted quality audit as its preferred approach. Two national accreditation bodies, UCJ and CORD have adopted the self-study and accreditation visit. Inspections have been mooted as a feasible approach for single institution states but that is yet to be accepted. Accreditation bodies also seem committed to the roles of validation of all qualifications, setters and guardians of the standards, the authority on equivalence, the agent for the registration and regulation of institutions and for the issuing of awards. Perhaps in response to national needs, the third national accreditation body in the region, the National Accreditation Council of St Christopher and Nevis (St Kitts/Nevis), focuses mainly on the accreditation of overseas providers.

There are two outstanding policy issues that have not been specifically addressed. The first is the relationship between the TVET Councils or National Training Agencies and the National Accreditation Bodies, particularly in situations like Barbados where they will report to different government Ministries. In other similar situations, there seems to be peaceful co-existence with administrative and technical collaboration and mutual recognition. The second is the matter of the University of the West Indies and its relationship with national accreditation bodies in the three campus countries - Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados. An emerging position is that the regional mechanism should have some quality assurance oversight of the university.

CHAPTER 3

CURRENT LEGAL FRAMEWORKS SUPPORTING ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION

There are three legally established and functioning accreditation bodies in the seventeen countries under study. Therefore, there are fourteen other countries or territories without National Accreditation Bodies or specific Acts. However, they have operational tertiary institutions. Additionally, the provisions of the countries' Education Acts and Regulations seem to enable Ministries of Education to carry out certain accreditation functions including recognition of tertiary institutions, establishment of equivalence of foreign qualifications and validation of local qualifications.

Tertiary institutions located in the latter group of fourteen countries are not accredited as such but are recognized and their programs are validated in different ways. Some of these validation methods have a legal basis in the form of Memoranda of Understanding or Articulation Agreements with universities. Other validation methods are informal and have a moral rather than a legal basis. It was felt that in spite of the fact that these are not strictly legal, they should be identified and included because they represent an important basis for the recognition and portability of qualifications locally, regionally and even internationally.

Program Validation

In order to establish this current legal/ institutional framework, two questionnaires were sent to the Principals or Presidents of the following tertiary institution:

- ❖ Antigua State College (ASC);
- ❖ College of Bahamas (COB);
- ❖ Barbados Community College (BCC);
- ❖ Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP), Barbados;
- ❖ University of Belize (UB);
- ❖ H Lavity Stoutt Community College, BVI;
- ❖ Community College of the Cayman Islands (CCCI);
- ❖ Dominica State College, (DSC);
- ❖ T. A. Marryshow Community College (TAMCC), Grenada;
- ❖ University of Guyana (UG);
- ❖ Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica, (CCCJ);

- ❖ Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College, (CFBC), St Kitts & Nevis;
- ❖ Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (SALCC), St Lucia;
- ❖ St. Vincent & the Grenadines Community College (SVGCC);
- ❖ University of Suriname (U of S);
- ❖ College of Science Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT);
- ❖ Turks & Caicos Islands Community College (TCICC).

The first institutional questionnaire (**Appendix II**) attempted to identify

- formal articulation agreements with local and foreign universities;
- formal links with validating professional associations;
- recognition of the institution's qualifications by professional accrediting/ regulating agencies for practice;
- recognition of qualifications by Ministries of Education for employment or study;
- recognition of Ministries of Civil Service or Services Commission for employment or promotion.

Responses were received from 14 of the 17 institutions and the findings are summarized in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Comparison of Institutional Program Validation Arrangements by Country

COUNTRIES	VALIDATION METHOD							
	Extra Regional Articulation	Extra Regional Validatioin	Approval by Extra Regional Association	Regional Articulation	Recognition by Ministry of Education	Recognition by Professional Associations	Recognition by National Accreditation Body	Recognition by Ministry of Civil Service
ASC (ANT)	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓
COB (BAH)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
BCC (BAR)	✓	De Facto	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
SJPP (BAR)	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
UB (BEL)	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
HLSCC (BVI)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
CCCI (CAY)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
DSC (DOM)	In Progress	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
TAMCC (GREN)	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓
UG (GUY)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
CCCJ (JAM)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Soon	✓
CFBC (SKN)	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	Some
SALCC (STL)	Informal	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
SVGCC (SVG)	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓
UOS (SUR)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
COSTAATT (T&T)	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓ Some	Some
TCICC (T&C)	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	✓

KEY: ✓ = Yes; _ = No

The following observations are note-worthy:

1. The majority of institutions (9) have established extra-regional articulation arrangements.
2. Few (5) are involved in extra-regional accreditation.
3. Few (6) have validation arrangements with extra-regional associations.
4. The large majority (14) have articulation arrangements mainly with UWI but also with University of Technology and St. George's University.
5. Their qualifications are generally recognized by the Ministries of Education and the Civil Service, some by professional bodies, and by accreditation bodies in the cases of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and St Kitts and Nevis.

Stage of Institutional Quality Assurance

Given that institutional quality assurance is an integral part of national and regional accreditation processes, even though not a legal requirement, it was felt important to identify the stage of institutionalization of internal quality assurance. To this end, the second questionnaire sought information on the existence within the institution of:

- a quality assurance framework including standards consistent with regional norms
- quality assurance manuals for staff, students and senior administration
- guidelines for curriculum development and renewal; evaluation, examination and certification, and quality assurance
- self study instruments
- training opportunities for the use of self study instruments.

Table 4 summarizes the responses from institutions.

Table 4: Stage of Institutional Quality Assurance Development by Country

Institution and Country	Framework	Manuals for:			Guidelines for:			Self Study Instruments	Training in Application of:			
		Staff	Students	Administration	Curriculum	Evaluation Exams	Quality Assurance		Standards	Manuals	Guidelines	Self Study Instruments
ASC (ANT)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
COB (BAH)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BCC (BAR)	Draft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SJPP (BAR)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
UB (BEL)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HLSCC (BVI)	In progress	In progress	In progress	-	-	-	-	In progress	-	-	-	-
CCCI (CAY)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DSC (DOM)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TAMCC (GREN)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
UG (GUY)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CCCJ (JAM)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CFBC (SKN)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SALCC (STL)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SVGCC (SVG)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
UOS (SUR)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
COSTAATT (T&T)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TCICC (T&C)	In progress	In progress	-	-	-	-	In progress	In progress	-	-	-	-

KEY: _ = Exists; _ = Does not exist

In summary,

- Eight (8) institutions have or are working on a quality assurance framework.
- Some have manuals for staff (7), students(5) and administration (6).
- About 50% have guidelines for curriculum development and renewal, quality assurance and examinations.
- Five are either working on or have in place self assessment instruments.
- The majority (11) have had training in the application of standards, and about 50% have had training in the use of guidelines and self study instruments.

National Accreditation Legislation

As indicated earlier, there are three functioning accreditation bodies and it is recognized that the other countries are at different stages of a process which is leading toward the establishment of a sub regional body in the OECS countries, national bodies in the other countries and eventually a regional mechanism applicable to all. A third questionnaire was sent to the Ministries of Education to identify their current role in accreditation processes and to locate their progress in the process of establishing a national accreditation body. The questionnaire asked about the Ministry's current:

- Validation of local, regional and international qualifications;
- recognition for remuneration or ranking in an accepted qualification framework of local, regional and international qualifications;
- registration for practice of local, regional, international or virtual institutions;
- use of the Provisions of the Education Act by Ministry official, ad hoc or standing committee;
- use of approved indexes and registers for approving foreign credentials;
- application of the Provisions of the TVET or NTA Act by official, ad hoc or standing committee;
- use or reference to Regulations of Professional regulatory bodies e.g. Nursing, Medical, Legal, Accounting bodies;
- stage of establishment of national accreditation body including adoption of CARICOM recommendations, draft act, established act, invited council members, established council, established secretariat.

Table 5 summarizes the responses from the Ministries of Education.

Table 5: Accreditation Functions of Ministries of Education & Stage of National Accreditation

Countries	Validation of Qualifications	Recognition of Qualifications	Registration of institutions	Application of Education Act	Use of indexes/ Registers	Application of TVET Act	Stage of Accreditation	Locus of Control	Funding
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA	–	–	–	–	–	--	Draft Act	Statutory	Mixed
BAHAMAS	–	–	Local Regional & International	By Council	Yes	–	Draft Act	–	–
BARBADOS	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	Local International	By Ad Hoc Committee	Yes	by TVET Council	Draft Act	Statutory	Mixed
BELIZE	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	Local	–	–	By TVET Act	Draft Act	Other	Govt
BVI	–	–	–	–	–	--	Interest in Sub-regional body	–	–
CAYMAN ISLANDS	–	–	Local	by Ad hoc Committee	Yes	Being Established	No National Council to be established	–	–
DOMINICA	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	Local	by Official	Yes	–	Interested in Sub-regional body	Government	–
GRENADA	–	–	–	–	–	–	Interest in sub-regional body	–	–

Table 5: Accreditation Functions of Ministries of Education & Stage of National Accreditation (contd)									
Countries	Validation of Qualifications	Recognition of Qualifications	Registration of institutions	Application of Education Act	Use of indexes/ Registers	Application of TVET Act	Stage of Accreditation	Locus of Control	Funding
GUYANA	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	Local	By Standing Committee	No	Standing Committee	Draft Act?	Statutory	Mixed
JAMAICA/UCJ	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	-	Yes	By HEART/ NTA	Established Body	Statutory	Mixed
MONTSERRAT	Local Regional International	Local	--	By Official	--	--	--	--	--
ST. KITTS & NEVIS	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	Local Regional International Virtual	By Standing Committee	Yes	Yes	Established Council	Governmental	Mixed
ST. LUCIA	Local Regional International	Local regional International	Local regional International	By Standing Committee	Yes	Yes	Draft Act	Governmental	Mixed
ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES	--	--	--	--	--	--	Interested in sub-regional	--	--
SURINAME	Local	Local Regional International	Local Regional International Virtual	By Ad Hoc Committee	Yes	Standing Committee	Draft Act	Statutory	Govt.
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO/ CORD	Local Regional	-	Local Regional soon	CORD	Yes	-	Draft Act for new Body	Independent	Mixed

	International		International						
TURKS & CAICOS	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	Local Regional International	By Official	-	--	Cabinet Paper	-	-

From **Table 5** it can be seen that:

- Eleven (11) Ministries of Education reported that they validate qualifications.
- Ten (10) recognize local, regional and international qualifications.
- Twelve (12) register institutions.
- Three (3) apply National Accreditation Acts, eight (8) apply their Education Acts by ad hoc committees or individual officials.
- Nine (9) use international registers and indexes to determine equivalencies.
- In seven (7) instances TVET/NTA Regulations are used in the country for program validation.
- There are established Acts in Jamaica and St. Kitts/Nevis, Draft Acts in Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, St Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname; Cabinet Paper in Turks and Caicos Islands. Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, BVI and Grenada indicate interest in the sub-regional body.
- Five (5) governments propose statutory bodies, Trinidad proposes an independent body and three (3) ministries suggest a governmental arrangement.
- Belize and Suriname provide government funding only; all others propose government funding along with user fees.

The drafting of The National Accreditation Council (Agency) Bill 2002, (Appendix IV) with assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat has been a useful initiative by the CARICOM Secretariat.

The draft bill:

- provides for the establishment of the National Accreditation Council/Agency
- itemizes the general and specific functions of the Council
- spells out the staffing and gives guidelines for the remuneration of staff of the Council
- gives guidance on staffing by way of secondment, and on the transfer of super-annuation benefits to transferred staff
- identifies the reports of the Council
- makes provision for the financial resources of the Council, use of funds, exemptions from taxes, accounting and auditing of accounts
- empowers the council to make regulations and review its operations.

This is normative and provides a basic structure which could be adopted or adapted by different States. It suggests wide ranging functions for the National Accreditation Body including the establishment of standards, validation of qualifications, registration of institutions, promotion of quality enhancement through research and training, networking with regional and international accreditation bodies, advising on the issuance of charters and licences, and the establishment of examination councils. The Draft Act also anticipates the evolution of the accreditation bodies from existing tertiary sections/departments of Ministries of Education and addresses therefore problems of appointments on transfer from the Civil Service and offers strategies to deal with those matters. It tackles the matter also of funding and sustainability including the facility to borrow and gain tax exemption.

CHAPTER 4

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: THE CHALLENGE OF FINDING LEGITIMACY

As early as 1988, concerns were formally expressed by regional Heads of Governments about the increasing variability in tertiary education offerings in the region.. These concerns would have stemmed from a perceived threat to the validity of the newer qualifications, the quality of the various offerings in the region, the portability of qualifications, the realization of efficiency gains through harmonization, and the free movement of trained human resources. In 1992, the two-year-old ACTI accepted the mandate from the Heads of Government to avert these threats and work towards regional harmonization of tertiary education through a proposal for the establishment of a regional accreditation mechanism.

It should be noted that the government of Trinidad and Tobago established in the late 1970s a national accreditation body, Committee for the Recognition of Degrees (CORD) with a strong emphasis on the equivalence of qualifications that were being introduced into the national arena either by students studying in Trinidad or by returning nationals with foreign credentials. The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) was established in Jamaica about ten years later no doubt to bring coordination and regulation to an expanding and diversifying local tertiary education environment.

The regional accreditation mechanism has still not been established after 11 years and the only other national accreditation body which has come on stream since UCJ is one established by St Kitts/Nevis in 1999 mainly to deal with the large volume of applications submitted by foreign tertiary education providers. The question arises therefore –What are the factors which have contributed to the slow rate of progress in the institutionalization of accreditation in the region?

There are at least three important considerations. The first relates to the origin of the planned change, the second hinges on the legitimization of accreditation itself and the third relates to the role of mutualism.

Top Down and Inside out Change

The suggestion for the introduction of accreditation bodies came from the top of a hierarchical management system and from outside the institutional walls. The institutionalization of national and regional accreditation depends, however on the convictions, support and effort of a number of stakeholders. These include governments,

education administrators, educators, students and their parents, the private sector and professional associations. The success of implementation will rely therefore on clear articulation of the idea by the proponents, selling of the idea to key stakeholders, motivating and mobilizing change agents, and disseminating the idea to the wider public. A wide cross section of persons need to understand the desired change, agree that the change is desirable and beneficial, and perhaps through the encouragement by incentives, move at an orchestrated pace towards observable milestones.

Another perspective is that of Fullan (2001) who asserts that initiation of innovations is a multi-faceted process including many factors shown in the **Figure 1**. He asserts that the order is not important but different combinations of factors are. He suggests that “community pressure combined with a problem solving orientation will have quite different consequences than community pressure combined with a bureaucratic orientation. It is these complex interactions that are important in analyzing reasons for the delays in implementation of national accreditation.

Legitimacy of Quality Assurance

It is a truism that position determines perspective. From the perspective of the Heads of governments in 1988, diversity was probably seen as a serious threat to efficiency in terms of the development of human resources, the movement of human resources, as well as in terms of the cost of uncoordinated tertiary education. On the other hand, from their vantage point, tertiary education leaders were perhaps more excited by the opportunities to be creative, responsive and autonomous than they were disturbed by possible threats to program validity and graduate mobility.

This is not reflective of insensitivity on the part of the education administrators but of their environmental or positional realities. It is likely that they saw the mobility threat as a political issue, the cost threat as economic and the validity threat would be regarded as unfounded. The basis for rejecting the validity threat lies in the fact that accreditation was never regarded by the majority as the primary instrument for quality assurance and the concept of accreditation is still not well understood or articulated even by practitioners in tertiary education. Stated differently, from the perspective of the educators and perhaps from that of other stakeholders, the case for the establishment of accreditation bodies was new, unconvincing and lacking legitimacy.

As indicated earlier, legitimacy can be seen as the right to exist and perform an agreed function. Its bases may be pragmatic, moral and/or cognitive. Pragmatic legitimacy comes from the acknowledgment of stakeholder benefit for example, the creation of order and equity in a chaotic system where institutions may also earn due recognition and competitive advantage for the qualifications that they offer. Moral legitimacy derives from the acceptance that the change is good in itself and will be beneficial to tertiary education in general, contributing perhaps to the widening of access, the democratization of education or economic development. Cognitive legitimacy comes out of stakeholder understanding and support for the purpose and value of the change so that among the stakeholders, there are common understandings and consistency in both language and meaning. In common parlance, there is cognitive legitimacy when there is evidence that interest groups are “on the same page” or “speaking the same language.”

In his analysis of the conditions which led to the demise of the Council on Postsecondary Education (COPA) and the challenges leading to the introduction of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in the United States, Boland's (2001) observation is extremely relevant. He suggests that in creating new organizations like CHEA, “the founders must create and sustain a plausible future for the new organization, convincing others that the potential organization will contribute a vital function to the context in which it is created, that it will be able to command sufficient resources to sustain itself, and that it will operate in an appropriate manner to fulfill its purposes.”

Perhaps an apt example of Caribbean accreditation's lack of legitimacy is reflected in an observation by London (2002) about the countries in which she held consultancies. It is significant that the Education officials made their comments after having exposure to several CARICOM and ACTI workshops, reports and consultations and even after the preparation by the same Ministries of cabinet papers to make the case for the establishment of national accreditation councils. The consultant stated in her report that:

- *Chief implementers were not prepared conceptually and psychologically for undertaking what is perceived as a mammoth task and in some cases, an unnecessary one.*
- *They are not aware of operational issues such as how an accreditation body functions (criteria, self study, external assessment, site visits, team selection etc.)*
- *They are uncertain about procedural issues, for example how to set up the body, how to conduct reviews, how to do a self-study.*

It must be noted that the education officials had knowledge of accreditation. However, all three observations signal a lack of cognitive legitimacy. The perception of accreditation as unnecessary denotes, in addition, lack of moral and pragmatic legitimacy.

It can be argued that in the region, the case for quality assurance is well made and legitimized. However, quality assurance is not seen as synonymous with accreditation since for most institutions, quality assurance is a wider issue and a more familiar concept. Quality Assurance is a part of their daily experience. In the absence of accreditation bodies, many institutions have had to search for other means of validation. On the other hand, accreditation is a relatively new idea to the region and it is still struggling to find legitimacy. In as much as there is a nexus between the two, perhaps legitimacy can also be gained for accreditation by focusing on its links with the better understood validation processes.

Figure 2 illustrates the legitimization of quality assurance. It shows that institutional quality assurance has emerged in three distinctly different ways; acquired or extrinsic, self generated or intrinsic, and shared. Extrinsic quality assurance is well established and derives from isomorphism in that newer institutions, by adopting the policies and structures of a reputable institution vicariously acquire respectability. More specifically in this regard, institutions gain credibility through affiliation and articulation arrangements. Validation by a reputable institution of another institution's courses or programs through external examinations is a second form of extrinsic quality assurance.

On the other hand, credibility earned through the track record of the institutions' outputs is intrinsic legitimization of quality assurance. Similarly, respectability earned through transparency in operation and through the clear and concise documentation of mission, goals, purposes, policies and procedures emerge from common understandings and is evidence of intrinsic legitimization of quality assurance.

Unlike purely extrinsic or purely intrinsic modes of validation, accreditation can be seen to combine and build on aspects of both intrinsic and extrinsic validation. In that way its role in validation and quality assurance can be clarified. This can be a lever for legitimizing accreditation.

Legitimizing National Accreditation

Figure 3 looks at the legitimization of accreditation and points to possible contributions from pragmatic, moral, and cognitive considerations as well as from isomorphism. These are by no means mutually exclusive. In fact they can add up to strengthen overall legitimacy. In addition, the conditions which are necessary for institutionalization of accreditation require that action be taken by a variety of stakeholders- educators, professional bodies, students and employers. . In this regard the persistent questions for those seeking to find pragmatic legitimacy include: How will accreditation benefit my institution, my country, the region or myself as employer, teacher, administrator or student? Those seeking moral legitimacy would wish to know how accreditation would make tertiary education more effective, more responsive, more inclusive, more available or more relevant.

Stakeholders seeking to find cognitive legitimacy would like to have answers to such questions as: What does accreditation really mean? How does it relate to other existing quality assurance arrangements? What value will it add? There are also those who seek to relate local accreditation to established operations so they enquire about best practice and existing models. Appropriate answers to these questions of individual stakeholders and their collective action out of their individual conviction and understandings are the necessary conditions for the legitimization of accreditation.

Figure 3

Legitimizing Regional Accreditation

The legitimization of regional accreditation is plagued with the same issues as national accreditation but in addition, there are political realities of nationalism. Different sponsors of regional accreditation have at different times advanced different arguments for its establishment. Educators have highlighted the advantages of a seamless tertiary education system enabled by portable qualifications. Accreditation officials have focused on the benefits of speaking internationally with a common voice buttressed by standardization. Regional governments and CARICOM have pointed to the facilitation of the free movement of skilled personnel to support a Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME).

However, in the absence of political union and with the existence of sovereign states, countries have different agendas and different time frames for the implementation of those agendas. Political support is therefore not only uneven but also uncertain. As is the case with other regional initiatives, regional accreditation enjoys the questionable position of being projected sometimes as an outcome of regionalism and at other times as an instrument of regionalism. This duality retards its progress.

Additionally, there is consensus that national accreditation bodies, many of which are yet to be established, will support the regional accreditation mechanism. However, there is indecision about whether the mechanism will be a virtual or actual entity. There are divergent views about whether it will function under the auspices of CARICOM, ACTI or even whether it will be an independent mechanism. It is seen by Peters (2002) also as an accreditation body for states without national accreditation but it is seen by London (2003) as strictly a coordinating and regulating body for national accreditation bodies but without any direct role in accreditation. In fact she argues that the RAM could function in a similar way to the Council for Higher Education in the United States (CHEA). It is true that the divergence of views has emerged over time in response to experience gained. However, it is also indicative that cognitive legitimacy is still some way off.

Mutualism

One of the current metaphors for the operation of the proposed regional accreditation mechanism is one of mutual recognition. It is worth noting however that although mutualism would result in efficiency gains, in a system of unequal partners, it is also fraught with challenges and contradictions. Welch (2000) points to the fact that mutualism ultimately reduces the power differential. Where there are differences among prospective partners in terms of knowledge, esteem, wealth and power, as there is among the Caribbean states

under discussion, mutualism involves trade offs and loss of power in the interest of the common good. Mutualism in this case requires commitment to regionalism over nationalism and parochialism.

Conclusion

A useful analysis of the institutionalization of evaluation and accreditation in the region can be undertaken in the framework of the locus and direction of change, the players and the orchestration of the change process from its origins to its beneficiaries. It appears also that an important challenge in the institutionalization of accreditation has been that of finding legitimacy. Of significance also is the idea of adding to the legitimacy of accreditation by linking it with the known processes of validation and quality assurance. The concept of mutualism is useful in the discussion of regionalism but it is noteworthy that it carries with it its own internal contradictions and the challenge of power sharing.

CHAPTER 5

EXISTING COORDINATING AND SUPERVISING ENTITIES

This chapter identifies some existing entities that directly or indirectly coordinate tertiary education evaluation and accreditation at the national and regional levels. These include:

- national accreditation bodies
- professional associations such as ACTI, through consultation, policy development and training
- regulatory occupational and professional bodies, through registration
- CATVET regional training agencies and its successors- National Training Agencies or NCTVET, through validation of technical/vocational qualifications
- the regional university, through bilateral articulation arrangements
- foreign universities, through bilateral articulation arrangements
- international professional organizations, through assessment and validation of courses and programs
- The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), through its syllabuses and external examinations
- the emerging regional accreditation mechanism, through its proposed supervision and co-ordination.

National Accreditation Bodies

National accreditation bodies are primarily involved in the coordination of tertiary offerings in their specific countries. An illustration of this supervisory and coordinating role can be seen not only in UCJ's registration of institutions but also in its work on Jamaica's development of a tertiary qualifications framework (2002)). This initiative serves to "provide a comprehensive, coherent, consistent yet flexible framework for the diversity of qualifications in the tertiary education and training system in Jamaica. (It) is critical to the development of a system for the transfer of credits from one institution to another, an important part of the process of an integrated and coherent tertiary educational system." Another approach taken by CORD in Trinidad and Tobago is that of research and training of the staff of TLIs in areas of collaborative program development and quality assurance.

In Jamaica, UCJ (2003) has registered 42 local institutions and training units as well as 8 foreign institutions with degree programs in Jamaica, accredited 52 programs (associate, bachelors and masters) in 21 local institutions and 8 programs provided by 4 foreign providers in Jamaica. <http://www.ucjamaica.com/credit/registered.htm> (Appendix III).

The Accreditation Board of St Kitts/Nevis (2003) has accredited six institutions as follows:

- The Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College – the National college
- Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine - Fully accredited
- Berne University International Graduate School – Fully accredited, due for review
- International University of Health Sciences (IUHS)- provisional accreditation, due for review
- Windsor University School of Medicine- provisional accreditation, due for review <http://www.stkittsnevis.net/accreditation.html>

The Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI)

ACTI was established in 1990 as a professional association to:

- *facilitate co-operation and collaboration between member institutions in a wide range of academic, administrative and other areas.*
- *promote more effective utilization of scarce resources in seeking to enhance access, mobility and quality in tertiary education*
- *improve articulation among the institutions*
- *encourage the development/ delivery of particular programs and services*
- *assist in identifying and meeting the ongoing tertiary education needs of the region and individual territories*
- *provide a professional for discussion and problem solving forum.*

Membership of ACTI is voluntary and is not granted automatically on application. There are very general criteria that are used to determine eligibility. These include evaluation of institutional documents and satisfaction of the Council that the institution is a bona fide tertiary institution. Membership does not indicate accreditation but, to the extent that membership involves evaluation, it is indicative of a certain standing in the tertiary education community. There is currently a membership fee based on institutional size.

Currently, ACTI has 64 registered full members, 22 associate members and 10 honorary members. (<http://acti.uwichill.edu.bb>.)

Regional Regulatory Bodies

Over the years a number of regional regulatory bodies have emerged and these play an important role in the determination, dissemination and monitoring of standards for registration for practice. In many cases quality control is conducted at the institutional level to ensure that the training includes specific content and competencies. In that event, successful completion at the institution and sometimes a required internship make

graduates from approved programs eligible for registration nationally. There is often mutual recognition of national registration. Some of these bodies include:

- Regional Nursing Body (RNB)
- Caribbean Association of Medical Technologists (CASMET)
- Caribbean Association of Pharmacists (CAPHI)
- Legal Council
- Caribbean Council of Engineering Organization
- Architects
- Land Surveyors
- Physicians
- Agriculturalists

The Regional University, University of the West Indies (UWI)

The University of the West Indies conducts evaluation of institutions and programs to allow it to make determinations about applications for affiliation, articulation and franchise arrangements. This is akin to but is not accreditation. From the perspective of the general public, an institution which enters into any of these bilateral arrangements with the university is seen to have reached a level of operation which meets the approval of the regional university. It is not unusual therefore for institutions to make reference to these arrangements in their brochures. Additionally, by virtue of its regional nature and its offerings in different countries, there is regional acceptance of the university's offerings. The university also plays a validation role by endorsing certain certificates for example those issued by the Teachers' Colleges.

The university has entered into a **number** of articulation arrangements and has franchised programs. <http://www.uwichill.edu.bb/tliu/>. (Roberts 2003). It is noteworthy that of the 17 institutions which have been surveyed, all except University of Suriname, Turks and Caicos and St Vincent and the Grenadine Community College have some kind of articulation relationship with UWI. The university does not charge fees for any of these services since they are generally considered to be a part of its responsibility for providing leadership in the Caribbean tertiary education environment.

The university is not itself accredited across the board but traditionally, professional programs like medicine, law and engineering have enjoyed international accreditation to allow for continuing education and practice in the countries of the Commonwealth and sometimes in the United States. Recently, perhaps related to the membership of the U K in the European Community, the Caribbean is being advised to look after its own professional accreditation, and regional professional accreditation bodies have been established.

Articulation and Validation by Foreign Universities and Associations

Many colleges currently deliver associate degree programs, some of which are intended for immediate employment but others are geared towards bachelor's degree completion. Because the associate degree is better understood in the United States, it has proved easier for the institutions to negotiate articulation arrangements with US universities in order to create opportunities for students to continue their education without having to repeat work already covered. This has led to the establishment of many formal articulation arrangements as indicated in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Current Articulation Arrangements with Foreign Universities

REGIONAL INSTITUTION	OVERSEAS UNIVERSITY
College of Bahamas	Acadia University Alabama A & M Bethune Cookman College, Florida Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia Florida International University George Mason University Kent State University, Ohio Shaw University, New York St Thomas University, New Brunswick Towson University, Maryland University of Miami University of Tampa The Franciscan University, Florida <u>Local</u> Royal Bahamas Police Force Omega Educational Institute. Nassau <u>Virtual</u> Western Governor's University
Barbados Community College	Penn State University, USA Mount Allison University Monroe College, New York University of North Carolina, Wilmington University of Miami Howard University Johnson and Wales University Wilberforce University Florida Institute of Technology

	Shaw University
Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic	New England Institute of Technology, USA

Table 6: Current Articulation Arrangements with Foreign Universities (cond)

REGIONAL INSTITUTION	OVERSEAS UNIVERSITY
H. Lavity Stoutt Community College	University of Rhode island University of the Virgin Islands Wright State University Missouri Southern College City College Birmingham, U.K. New England Culinary Institute Howard University Oxford University State University of New York, Buffalo
Community College of the Cayman Islands	University of Miami University of Tampa
University of Guyana	Wayne State University University of the Virgin Islands York University University of Florida Ross University International Distance Learning, Florida
Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica	Munroe College, USA City College, Birmingham, UK Iowa Wesleyan College, USA New Hampshire University, USA Barry University, USA American Systems Education and Technology
Turks and Caicos Community College	Wilberforce University Talladega College, Alabama, USA

Other institutions gain validation of their qualifications by being members of associations such as the American Council on Education (ACE) which assesses, validates and enters these courses in a database which can be accessed by member institutions. A list of such Associations follows.

Table 7: Extra-regional Validation by TLIs through Associations

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REGIONAL INSTITUTION	INTERNATIONAL BODY
College of Bahamas	American Council on Education (ACE)
Community College of the Cayman Islands	ACE World Education Service, USA International Qualifications Assessment, Canada
H. Lavity Stoutt Community College	MTCI

Table 8: Registers/Indexes Used by Ministries of Education for Programme Validation

ACRONYMS	
AACRO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars
ACE	American Council on Education
AIU	Association of Indian Universities
WAD	World Academic Database
ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
BAC	British Accreditation Council
UCJ	University Council of Jamaica
ABET	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
ABA	American Bankers Association
IAU	International Association of Universities
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QCA	Qualification and Curriculum Authority
OUVS	Open University Validation Services
UWI/TLIU	University of the West Indies/Tertiary Level Institutions Unit
Baron's Guide to American Colleges and Universities	

Peterson's College Guide

Table 9 - Regional Validation through Articulation Arrangements

INSTITUTION	REGIONAL ARTICULATION
Antigua State College	University of the West Indies University of Technology, Jamaica
College of the Bahamas	University of the West Indies University of Technology, Jamaica St George's University, Grenada University of Belize University of Guyana Northern Caribbean University
University of Belize	University of the West Indies
H. Lavity Stout Community College, BVI	University of the West Indies St George's University University of the Virgin Islands
University of Guyana	Suriname Antom de Kom The Federal University of Roraima, Boa Vista, Brazil Association of Caribbean Universities and Research Institutes
Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica	University of the West Indies University of Technology
T. A. Marryshow Community College, Grenada	University of the West Indies St George's University
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, St Lucia Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College, St Kitts & Nevis Barbados Community College Dominica State College College of Science, Applied Arts and Technology of Trinidad and Tobago Community College of the Cayman Islands	University of the West Indies

The Caribbean Examinations Council

The Caribbean Examinations Council began its operations in 1972. For the next few years, its main focus was the development of syllabuses and examinations for secondary school (Grade 11 or fifth form) completion. Over time, these examinations replaced the traditional Cambridge and London General Certificate of Education (GCE). It is true to say that CXC has played a very significant and normative role in the setting and maintaining of Secondary School standards across the English speaking Caribbean through its Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC).

Since 1980, CXC has extended its mandate to include the development of syllabuses and examinations for sixth form and college education in the form of the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). CAPE has, to a large extent, replaced the examinations of the Cambridge GCE Advanced Level Certificate but, by its modular nature, it has also provided optional courses for inclusion in college programs such as associate degrees. It also makes available its pool of experts for assistance with program development and particularly assessment. Because of its regional reach, it therefore plays a small but important co-coordinating role in the lower tier of tertiary education.

The following countries deliver CAPE in the sixth form of secondary schools or in their colleges either as stand-alone courses or as part of their associate degree packages:

- Antigua
- Barbados
- Belize
- BVI
- Guyana
- Jamaica
- Montserrat
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Turks and Caicos Islands CHECK

The Regional Accreditation Mechanism

There is consensus among the leading authorities that there is need for a regional accreditation mechanism. There is divergence, however over the details of its function, staffing and administration.

At the outset, Ashton (1996) proposed wide ranging functions including

- *Co-ordination of all higher education accreditation initiatives in the region, the evaluation of foreign qualifications;*
- *Definition of the regional characteristics of accreditation/ quality assurance.*

He recommended further that there should be a governing council of about 15 to 20 persons representing national accreditation bodies, universities, CARICOM, professional bodies and the public. The proposed secretariat called for a staff of at least 5 persons. It would be headed by a Chief Executive, and staffed by an Accounts Officer, a documentalist /database manager, a secretary/ clerk typist and ancillary staff.

Peters (2000) indicated that the regional mechanism for articulation, equivalency and accreditation should:

- *provide for common understanding among tertiary educators, institutions, professional bodies, and accreditation agencies (national and regional) as to what is required of graduates of both academic and career educational programs in terms of certifiable knowledge, skills and competencies;*
- *provide an agreed tertiary education qualifications framework and criteria and standards as a means of assessing program/ course comparability to ensure quality, credibility and recognition in what is learned at the tertiary level of education across the region;*
- *encourage and promote increased interinstitutional relationships among the different types of tertiary level institutions resulting in more efficient student access and unimpeded mobility across the spectrum of tertiary education throughout the region.*

London (2002) suggests that the mechanism should be co-coordinating but should not accredit institutions.

CARICOM (2002) proposed to the Council for Human and Social Development (COSHOD) the establishment of the Caribbean Community Regional Accreditation Agency for the:

- *establishment in the Caribbean of a seamless, efficient, internationally recognized system of post-secondary and tertiary education;*
- *promotion and facilitation of the movement of adequate numbers of persons with high level skills within the community;*
- *enhancement and acceleration of economic and social development in the community through the promotion and development of high level skills*

- *securing and maintaining international recognition and negotiating and concluding international agreements within third party state entities for mutual recognition.*

It was also proposed that the agency comprise a Board of Governors composed of representatives from national accreditation bodies, ACTI, CXC, the universities, and one each from Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce, Caribbean Congress of Labour, the Caribbean Conference of Churches and Caribbean Consumers Association. It also articulated guidelines for the Secretariat which should be staffed by an executive director and support staff. A budget of Bd\$250,000 was proposed in 2002 by ACTI to cover the projected annual operating costs of such a secretariat.

It is noteworthy that legitimization of this accreditation body hinges on the recognition by supporting governments of the importance of co-coordinated regional tertiary education to facilitate regional movement of skills for economic development and to foster international comparability of standards in a global community.

CHAPTER 6

PROSPECTS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN THE CARIBBEAN

The paper has looked at the tertiary education system with its division into separate and unequal legal entities: independent states and British dependencies. Collectively, they are being confronted with similar threats from the external environment but individually the internal threats are slightly different. Each state is therefore being simultaneously pulled in two different directions – nationally and regionally. This is not peculiar to educational issues nor is it a recent occurrence in the region. It has been in existence since colonial times and is described by some as schizophrenic.

It is true to say that these countervailing forces of regionalism and nationalism manifested themselves through a failed political federation in 1962 and persist in a Caribbean Community which is trying to find unity in diversity through formal social, economic and educational arrangements. The pattern has been however that while governments take time to negotiate and legislate, people find ways and means to informally co-operate and collaborate across the region. The emergence of accreditation is no different. All stakeholders share the vision not only of quality assurance but also of quality enhancement. While policy determination for national and regional accreditation is taking place at the formal level, policies, guidelines and practices are being put in place sometimes informally mainly to support institutional quality but inevitably also to create the necessary conditions for national and regional accreditation.

This chapter looks at the prospects for evaluation and accreditation. What are the prospects for institutional quality assurance, national accreditation and regional accreditation in light of the prevailing environmental threats and opportunities?

Institutional Quality Assurance

This study has shown that all institutions have existing program validation methods in their national setting and that many have taken steps to establish articulation arrangements regionally. Few have established institutional quality assurance frameworks but many have proceeded with the preparation of manuals for staff, administration and students. Many have also begun the development of guidelines for curriculum development and renewal as well as for examinations but only a few institutions have developed guidelines for quality assurance. The development of self-study instruments is rare although persons from a few institutions have received training in the use of self-study instruments.

At the local level and particularly for newer institutions, the prevailing threats include credibility of qualifications, institutional reputation, recognition of graduates for employment and further study, and external control through accountability pressures. In spite of these threats and the moderate and uneven development of quality assurance systems, the prospect for the rapid development of institutional quality assurance is excellent for a number of reasons.

First, the strengths in the system vastly outweigh the weaknesses which include small size, limited resources, pockets of resistance to change, limited information and skills. Second, the cognitive, pragmatic and moral legitimacy which institutional quality assurance enjoys provides the motivation for concerted action by the institutions themselves. The locus of the change which is emanating from within institutions provides an effective catalyst to drive the process. Third, the flexibility of new institutions, clarity of their missions, responsiveness of their staff, creativity in gaining program validation, and the opportunities which are emerging through the assistance of funding agencies are enablers of the process.

Finally, the opportunities which are presenting themselves are clearly developmental, offering obvious benefits to individuals and institution. Institutional Quality Assurance is a sure path for the development of transparent administrative policies which can only enhance institutional efficiency and competitive advantage. Faculty professional development will improve competence, confidence and autonomy. All of these result in improved learning and will therefore be readily embraced by institutions.

National Accreditation

The prospects for the institutionalization of national accreditation are good but uneven among the country groups identified in Chapter 1. Generally, the major threats to the institutionalization of national accreditation are legitimacy and cost. However, for each country, the prospects for national accreditation can be examined in relation to its viability in terms of demand, sustainability in light of resources and organization, and acceptability as regards relevance of functions. It is this assessment which will indicate whether there is emerging pragmatic, moral or cognitive legitimacy. To gauge legitimacy, the questions which need to be asked particularly in settings where national accreditation bodies do not already exist will be: Is there really a need for a national accreditation body? What will be its functions? Who will be its clients? How much will it cost and who will pay? What will be its benefits to tertiary education, the country and the individual institutions?

The current situation as indicated by the country responses is that Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and St. Kitts have national bodies but in Trinidad there is a review and reform taking place to establish an Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago to replace CORD, the de facto accrediting body. It is envisaged that after completion of this exercise, the three bodies will have different compositions, reporting relationships and scope of

functions. This pattern will continue. It is unlikely therefore that the national accreditation bodies will be replicas of each other because resources available and projected workload and roles will impact on organization.

In Chapter 1, the seventeen countries were classified into groups based on the distribution pattern of public and private institutions. For convenience the prospects can be looked at for these groupings. The countries identified as Group A – Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have many public, indigenous private and in the case of the former two many overseas providers. There is pragmatic, moral and cognitive legitimacy for a national accreditation body since the need for co-ordination and regulation is clear; the potential for tertiary education improvement is obvious and an actual working model has been seen and understood in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Cost may be a factor for the delay in Guyana.

Group B which includes Bahamas, Suriname and Belize has a single dominant public institution and single digit indigenous private and relatively few overseas providers. It is relatively easy to justify the value of and the associated expenditure for the establishment of a national accreditation body. Bahamas with its Draft Act is well on its way. The activities in the universities of Belize and Suriname signal their anticipation of such a body and the remarks from the Ministries indicate political will. Belize has indicated however that the University of Belize will be expected to play a key role in national accreditation.

Group C must be divided into sub-groups. St Kitts/ Nevis already has a council but its scope is limited when compared to the CARICOM Draft Act (Appendix IV). St Lucia has a Draft Act which compares more favorably with the CARICOM position but it appears that there is scope, intent and good economic reasons for both countries to subscribe also to the recommended sub-regional accreditation body for the OECS countries as a whole. The Cayman Islands is very definite that it will not establish a body and would be prepared to buy services from University Council of Jamaica (UCJ). Turks and Caicos has indicated that it has developed a cabinet paper but its proximity, potential demand and cost would justify a similar arrangement to that of the Cayman islands. Barbados is well ahead with its Act and has identified the resources and activities for a sustainable and fully employed national accreditation body.

The Regional Accreditation Mechanism

For its detractors, the Regional Accreditation body is still only an ideal and is yet a dream. However, its advocates continue to construct and seek support for changing scenarios. In the meantime, national accreditation bodies are being established and the functioning national accreditation councils and the tertiary institutions themselves are quietly laying the groundwork to support regional accreditation as soon as it materializes. To this end, work has been done in all countries to different degrees in all of the areas identified by ACTI as necessary for the functioning of the regional accreditation mechanism. These include:

- standardization of program nomenclature,

- introduction of a common credit system,
- introduction of college owned qualifications including the associate degree
- development of a qualifications framework encompassing technical/vocational and academic qualifications
- design of relevant courses of high quality.

It is agreement on these matters that will make possible the portability of diplomas and certificates and other awards. As indicated earlier, the actual operation of the mechanism seems somewhat unclear since different stakeholders continue to present different scenarios so there is still a cognitive legitimacy challenge.

However, CARICOM governments have agreed on the Mechanism for Equivalency and Accreditation as one of the planks for the operation of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME). (<http://www.sice.oas.org/Trade/CCME/Carictab.asp>). The CSME was conceived in 1989 and is expected now to come into effect by December 2004 – a period of 15 years which the Prime Minister of Barbados compares with the 30 year gestation period of the European Union.. The CSME will enable the free movement of goods, services, labour and capital across the region and is seen by governments as an instrument for economic development in a globalized world. The rate of progress of the implementation of the Regional Mechanism is expected to be accelerated by but at the same time moderated by its link with this initiative.

With respect to the CSME and free movement of persons, Brewster (2003) comments that:

“All States with two exceptions (and the Bahamas that does not participate in the Common Market) have implemented legislation enabling the movement without work permits of certified tertiary graduates (skills). Movement is nevertheless subject to constraints, the severity of which varies from State to State, such as national certification requirements, immigration procedures, administrative delays, the rights and status of family members, and other contingent rights. Most States have not yet put into effect legislative and administrative arrangements for the movement of media workers, artistes, musicians and sportspersons. Although the skills legislation has been adopted in most Member States for more than 5 years, relatively few skilled persons have actually moved to other Community States (statistics are not available). Ironically, there seems to have been more movement among unskilled persons though they are not included in the ‘free movement’ legislation.”

It is within this context that the RAM has to be viewed.

There is also progress being made in the harmonization of standards for professional/occupational groups with a view to having mutual recognition of national standards in the

areas of Engineering, Land Surveying, Tourism, Information Technology and Agriculture (<http://www.sice.oas.org/Trade/CCME/imp.asp>).

In addition to the regionalism threat, there is the matter of cost. The establishment of all institutions requires resources. Acquiring resources to support and sustain national accreditation bodies in small countries with small tertiary systems and with competing demands from other sectors is no doubt a challenge. The reality becomes more stark in systems which must also receive a significant portion of their budget from fees for service – a service which involves the accreditation and re-accreditation of the programs of only a few institutions. Attracting resources to support a regional mechanism to coordinate the work of independent states separated by bodies of water is even a greater challenge. Although the use of modern technology may reduce the need for inter-island travel, the technology itself has a cost. If the regional body is set up to accredit national and sub-regional bodies, its constituents would be few in number – Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Guyana, Suriname and the OECS. The individual subventions would be substantial. If its work also includes institutional accreditation services for states without a national body, its constituents would be greater, its funding base larger but its technical requirements would also increase.

On the other hand, the provision of consultancy services and the procurement of funds from international donors and foundations would also be appropriate options. The role of the RAM in the harmonization of standards for education and training is evident and documented. Its role in the credentialing of skills and experiences is not. There is a large pool of uncertified but skilled persons who need to move freely through the Caribbean. These include entertainers, musicians and service providers of various kinds. This may provide an opportunity for the RAM to improve its efficiency and broaden its mandate to address this related need for prior learning assessment.

The establishment of an accreditation body costs more than money. It costs also re-alignment of power relationships and authority. At the national level, autonomous tertiary education institutions may be reluctant to give away their autonomy and submit to the authority of a new institution which is still finding its legitimacy. At the regional level, unequal partners are likely to need a long negotiating time to ensure that their interests are well served.

Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are at an advanced stage in their national accreditation process and are relatively well resourced. The same cannot be said about the current situation in Barbados and the OECS, for example. By virtue of the respect which UCJ and CORD enjoys internationally and in the community, it will be difficult to immediately establish a relationship of parity with the emerging bodies. A mentor – mentee relationship would probably emerge. Striving for immediate mutuality is likely to create tension. A

regional body will need to create an environment where parity of esteem and the regional good will diffuse power differences and promote overall development.

The prospects for the implementation of the regional mechanism are fairly good. However, the speed of implementation relies on the commitment of the individual countries to the implementation of a national or sub-regional body and on the consensus and financial commitment of regional governments to making this a lever for regional integration.

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APPENDIX I: INSTITUTIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY AND SECTOR

COUNTRY	PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	INDIGENOUS PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	FOREIGN PROVIDERS FREE STANDING (F) OR IN LOCAL HOST (L)
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA	Antigua State College (C) (1977)		University of Health Sciences, School of Medicine (F)
	Antigua Hotel Training Centre (S) (1981)		Skidmore University (L)
	Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Technology (S) (2000)		
BAHAMAS	College of Bahamas (C) (1975)	Bahamas Baptist Community College (C)	Nova Southeastern University (F)
		Success Training College (C)	St. Thomas Moore University (F)
		McHari Institute (On-Line)	University of New Orleans (F)
		Benedictine University College (C)	University of Miami (L)
		Atlantic College and Theological Seminary (S)	Kent State University (L)
BARBADOS	Barbados Community College (1968)	Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (S) (1971)	Carnegie Mellon University (L)
	Erdiston Teachers Training College (S) (1948)	Codrington College (S) (1755)	The Surrey European Management School (L)
	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (S) (1969)	Caribbean Meteorological Institute (S)	University of Wisconsin (L)
BELIZE	University of Belize (C) (2000) <i>Derived from:</i> <i>Belize Technical College (1952)</i> <i>Belize School of Nursing (1963)</i> <i>Belize Teachers College (1965)</i> <i>Belize College of Agriculture (1980)</i> <i>Belcast (1968)</i> <i>University College of Belize (1994)</i>		School of Medicine, Central America (F) Health Sciences University (F) St. Matthews University (S) Galen School of Medicine (F)

	St. John's College (C) (1952)		
	Corozel Junior College (C) (1986)		
COUNTRY	PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	INDIGENOUS PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	FOREIGN PROVIDERS FREE STANDING (F) OR IN LOCAL HOST (L)
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (C) (1990)		Commonwealth Open University (F) Wright State University (L) University of the Virgin Islands (L) New England Culinary Institute (L) Arkansas Tech. University (L)
CAYMAN ISLANDS	Community College of the Cayman Islands (C) (1985)	International College of the Cayman Islands Cayman Islands Law School	University of Liverpool Law School (F)
DOMINICA	Dominica State College (C) (2002). <i>Formerly Clifton Dupigny Community College (1983)</i>		Ross University School of Medicine (S)
GRENADA	T. A. Maryshow Community College (C) (1986). <i>Formerly Grenada National College (1988)</i>	St. George's University (C)	
GUYANA	University of Guyana (C) (1963)	Burrowes School of Art (S)	American International School of Medicine (F)
	The Cyril Potter Teachers' College	College of Accountancy, Business and Science Studies (S)	
	College of Education (S) (1928)	Critchlow Labour College (S)	
	Guyana Industrial Training Centre (S) (1969)	Kuru Kuru Cooperative College (S)	
	Carnegie School of Home Economics (S) (1993)	Shivita Business College (S)	

	Georgetown School of Nursing (S) (1906)	Krishna's College of Business (S)	
	Glendon School of Nursing (S) (1966)		
	REPAHA (S) (1975)		
COUNTRY	PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	INDIGENOUS PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	FOREIGN PROVIDERS FREE STANDING (F) OR IN LOCAL HOST (L)
GUYANA (contd)	Guyana School of Agriculture (S) (1963)		
	GUYSUCO Training Centre (S) (1957)		
	Linden Technical Institute (S) (1958)		
	Critchlow Labour College (S)		
	Essequibo Technical Institute (S)		
JAMAICA	University of Technology (C) (1994). <i>Formerly College of Arts, Science and Technology (S) (1958)</i>	B & B Institute (S)	Barry University (L)
	Mico Teachers College (S) (1836)	Bethel Bible College (S)	Florida International University (L)
	Shortwood Teachers College (S) (1885)	Caribbean Graduate School of Theology (S)	Mount St. Vincent University (L)
	Bethlehem Teachers College (S) (1861)	The Catholic College of Mandeville (S)	Temple University (L)
	Church's Teachers College (S) (1965)	College of Accountants Training (S)	University of South Florida (L)
	St. Joseph's Teachers College (S) (1897)	Dental Auxiliary School (S)	Nova Southeastern (F)
	Sam Sharpe Teachers' College (S) (1975)	Individual Systems Ltd. (S)	University of New Orleans (L)
	College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) (S) <i>Formerly Jamaica College of Agriculture (1982)</i>	Infoserv Institute of Technology (S)	
	Excelsior Community College (C) (1974)	Institute for Theological and Leadership Development (S)	

	Portmore Community College (C) (1992)	Institute of Computer Technology (S)	
	Knox Community College (C) (1975)	Institute of Management Sciences	
	Montego Bay Community College (C) (1976)	Institute of Management and Production (S)	
COUNTRY	PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	INDIGENOUS PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	FOREIGN PROVIDERS FREE STANDING (F) OR IN LOCAL HOST (L)
JAMAICA (contd)	Moneague College (C) (1956)	Insurance College of Jamaica (S)	
	Brown's Town Community College (C) (1975)	Jamaica Institute of Bankers (S)	
	Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (S) (1976)	Jamaica Institute of Management (S)	
	G. C. Foster College of Physical Education (S) (1980)	Jamaica Theological Seminary (S)	
	Jamaica Maritime Institute (S) (1990)	Liberal Arts College of Jamaica (C)	
	Jamaica Constabulary Staff College (S) (1984)	Northern Caribbean University (C). <i>Formerly West Indies College.</i>	
	Management Institute for National Development (S) (1994). <i>Formerly Administrative Staff College.</i>	Software Training College (S)	
	School of Medical Radiation Technology (S) (1965)	The Jamaica Open College (C)	
	Toolmakers' Institute (S) (1971)	PBS Training College (S)	
	University Hospital of the West Indies Department of Nursing Education (S) (1949)	St. Michael's Seminary (S)	
	University Hospital School of Physical Therapy (S) (1972)	Vector Technology Institute (S)	
	Vocational Training Development Institute (S) (1970)	Vicariate of Mandeville College (S)	
MONTserrat			

ST. LUCIA	Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (C) (1985)		Spartan Health Sciences University School of Medicine
			University of Sheffield (L)
COUNTRY	PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	INDIGENOUS PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	FOREIGN PROVIDERS FREE STANDING (F) OR IN LOCAL HOST (L)
ST. KITTS/ NEVIS	Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College (C) (1988)		Berne University (F)
			International University of Health Sciences (F)
			Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine (F)
			Windsor University School of Medicine (F)
			Medical University of Americas (F)
ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES	St. Vincent & the Grenadines Community College (C) (1997)		St. George's University (F)
	St. Vincent Technical College (S) (1971)		
	St. Vincent Teachers' College		
SURINAME	Anton de Kom University of Suriname		
	Central School for Nurses and Allied Professionals (S) (1982)		
	Institute for Youth Dental Care (S) (1976)		
	Institute for Advanced Teacher Training College (S) (1971) Academy for Higher Education in Arts and Culture The Poly Technic College		
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	Cipriani College of Labour (S)	British School of Computing and Commerce (S)	University of London

	College of Science, Technology & Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (C)	Caribbean Nazarene Theological College (S) (1951)	University of Sunderland
	National Energy Skills Centre (S)	Civil Aviation Training Centre (S)	University of Leicester
	Trinidad and Tobago Institute of Technology (S)	Caribbean Union College (S) (1927)	University of Greenwich
	Trinidad & Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (S)(1975)	HI-TEK Educational Institute (S)	University of New Brunswick
	Valsyn Teachers College (S)	Institute of Law and Academic Studies (S)	Heriot Wyatt University
COUNTRY	PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	INDIGENOUS PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	FOREIGN PROVIDERS FREE STANDING (F) OR IN LOCAL HOST (L)
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO (contd)	Corinth Teachers College (S)	Institute of Tertiary Tutors (S)	Glamorgan
	University of Trinidad and Tobago (S) (2003)	Institute of Training and Development (S)	
		Lenore's Business School (S) (1964)	
		Omadeen School of Accounting (S)	
		Philip's Comprehensive Educational Institute (S) (1987)	
		Professional Institute of Marketing and Business Studies (S)	
		Ramjattan's School of Accountancy (S)	
		Royal Bank Institute of Business and Technology (S)	
		School of Accounting and Management (S)	
		School of Business and Computer Studies (S)	
		Trinidad and Tobago Insurance Institute (S)	
	Academy of Insurance (S)		

		West Indies School of Theology (S)	
		West Indies Theological College (S) (1950)	
TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS	Turks & Caicos Islands Community College (C) (1994)		St. Clements University (F)
REGION	University of the West Indies (C) (1962). <i>Formerly University College of the West Indies (1948).</i>		

**APPENDIX II:
 QUALITY ASSURANCE QUESTIONNAIRES 1 AND 2 FOR INSTITUTIONS**

QUESTIONNAIRE I

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROGRAMME VALIDATION

☛ PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY TICKING () "YES" OR "NO" OR BY FILLING IN THE BLANKS.

Does the institution have:		YES	NO
1.	Articulation arrangement(s)/agreement(s) with any extra-regional college or university?		
	If yes, please give examples:		
2.	Assessment and approval of courses or programmes by extra-regional accreditation agency?		
	If yes, please give examples:		
3.	Assessment and approval of courses or programmes by international association, e.g. American Council on		

	Education (ACE).		
	If yes, please give other examples.		
Does the institution have:		YES	NO
4.	Articulation arrangements with universities within the region? <i>E.g.:</i>		
	University of the West Indies		
	University of Technology, Jamaica		
	St. George's University, Grenada		
	University of Belize		
	University of Guyana		
	Northern Caribbean University		
5.	Recognition of College qualifications for any one of these purposes: for professional entry, employment, increased remuneration, award of scholarships by:		
	(i) Ministry of Education		
	(ii) National Accreditation Body, or		
	(iii) Professional Association		
6.	Recognition of College qualifications by Ministry of the Public Services or Services Commission for appointment to or promotion within the Civil Service.		
THANK YOU.			

QUESTIONNAIRE II

PRESENT INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY INITIATIVES

Institutional Quality Assurance assures students and other interest groups of the quality of the institution's offerings and assists the institution to continually improve the quality of these offerings. Please indicate which of these quality assurance activities/processes have been introduced in your institution by answering **Yes or No** or **filling in the blanks**.

The institution has completed:		YES	NO
1.	The development of a quality assurance framework including the development and adoption of institutional standards consistent with regional norms.		
2.	The development of quality assurance manuals for:		
	(i) staff		
	(ii) students		
	(ii) senior administration		
3.	The development of guidelines for:		
	(i) curriculum development and renewal		
	(ii) evaluation, examinations and certification		
	(iii) quality assurance.		
4.	The development of self study instruments including a self study questionnaire.		
5.	Training in:		
	(i) the interpretation and application of standards		
	(ii) the interpretation and use of manuals		
	(iii) the interpretation and use of guidelines		
	(iv) the use of self study instruments and preparation of institutional report.		

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX III:

STAGE OF ACCREDITATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN QUESTIONNAIRE

The following terms are used in the questionnaire based on the following definitions:

1. **ACCREDITATION:** A process by which an institution evaluates its educational activities, in whole or in part, and seeks an independent judgment to confirm that it substantially achieves its objectives and is generally equal in quality to comparable institutions or specialised units.

2. **QUALITY ASSURANCE** is shared commitment of the entire institution to a process of maintaining and enhancing desired outcomes through the application of agreed standards about inputs, process and outputs.

3. **THE FUNCTIONS OF NATIONAL ACCREDITATION** may include:
 - 3.1 validation (giving a seal of approval) and classification (within a qualifications framework) of educational programmes offered locally, regionally and internationally
 - 3.2 recognition of these programmes for the purpose of further studies, occupational entry or remuneration
 - 3.3 assessment and registration of public and private, local and overseas institutions.

4. **LOCAL** means within the country.
REGIONAL means within the CARICOM community.
INTERNATIONAL means outside CARICOM.

5. **AD HOC** means assembled as needed and with variable composition.
STANDING means of fixed composition but not excluding the option to vary by co-opting.

QUESTIONNAIRE

☛ PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY TICKING () “YES” OR “NO”
 OR BY FILLING IN THE BLANKS.

1	Which of the following accreditation functions does the Ministry of Education carry out?				
				YES	NO
	1.1	Validation (approval) of:			
		(i)	local qualifications		
		(ii)	regional qualifications		
		(iii)	international qualifications		
	1.2	Recognition (for remuneration or ranking in an accepted qualifications framework) of:			
		(i)	local qualifications		
		(ii)	regional qualifications		
		(iii)	international qualifications		
	1.3	Registration of (confirmation for practice that minimum standards are met)			
		(i)	local institution		
		(ii)	regional institution		
		(iii)	international institution		
		(iv)	virtual institutions		
2	Which of the following legal or other instruments are used (or accepted by the Ministry) in the accreditation process?				
	2.1	Provisions of the Education Act applied by Ministry of Education official(s).			
	2.2	Provisions of the Education Act applied by Ministry of Education official(s) and <i>ad hoc</i> committee.			
	2.3	If yes, please list members by category (<i>no name</i>).			
	2.0 [contd]. Which of the following legal or other instruments are used (or accepted by the Ministry) in the accreditation process?			YES	NO

	2.4	Provisions of the Education Act applied by Ministry of Education official(s) and Standing Committee.		
	2.5	If yes, please list committee members by category (<i>no name</i>).		
	2.6	Indexes or registers compiled by national or international accreditation bodies or associations, e.g. Association of Commonwealth Universities or American Council of Education.		
	2.7	If yes, please list other Indexes, registers used.		
	2.8	Provision of the TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) or NTA (National Training Authority) Act applied by government official(s).		
	2.9	Provision of TVET or NTA Act applied by <i>ad hoc</i>		
	2.1	If yes, please list:		
	2.11	Provisions of TVET or NTA Act applied by standing		
	2.12	If yes, please list members:		
	2.0 [contd]. Which of the following legal or other instruments are used (or accepted by the Ministry) in the accreditation process?		YES	NO
	2.13	Regulations of professional regulatory bodies, including:		
		(i) Nursing Association		

	(ii)	Medical Council		
	(iii)	Legal Council		
	(iv)	Architects		
	(v)	Accountants		
	(vi)	Secretaries		
2.14	Please add others which are used:			
3	At what stage is the legislation for the establishment of a National Accreditation			
3.1	Adopted recommendations from CARICOM Study.			
3.2	Cabinet Paper prepared.			
3.3	Draft Act prepared.			
3.4	Established Act.			
3.5	Invited Council members.			
3.6	Established Council with members in place.			
3.7	Established Council with Secretariat.			
3.8	Other.			
3.9	If other, please specify:			
4	What is the status of the planned or established National or Sub-regional Accreditation Body?		YES	NO
4.1	Governmental			
4.2	Statutory			
4.3	Independent			
4.4	Other			

	4.5	If other, please specify:		
5	To whom will the Chief Executive report?			
	5.1	Government Minister or official.		
	5.2	Other. e.g. OECS. CARICOM. ACTI. College President.		
	5.3	If other, please specify:		
6	How will the Council be funded?			
	6.1	Government only.		
	6.2	Government and other stakeholders.		
	6.3	If answer to 6.2 is yes, please list stakeholders which will contribute:		
	6.4	Other.		
	6.5	If other, please specify.		
7	Please enclose a copy of any documentation (Cabinet Paper, Draft Act, Act). This would be greatly appreciated since it would illustrate your specific approach to the establishment and operation of the National Accreditation Body.			

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

APPENDIX IV:

THE NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL [AGENCY] BILL No. 2002

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

PART I

Preliminary

- _ Short title and commencement Interpretation
- _ Interpretation

PART II

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL [AGENCY]

- _ Establishment of the NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL [AGENCY]
- _ Functions of the Council [Agency]
- _ Appointment of the Executive Director and other staff of the Council [Agency]
- _ Transfer on secondment to the service of the Council [Agency]
- _ Superannuation benefits of officers and other employees of the Council [Agency]
- _ Reports by the Council [Agency]
- _ Power of the Minister to give directions

PART III

FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

- _ Funds and resources of the Council [Agency]
- _ Application of the funds of the Council [Agency]
- _ Use of surplus funds
- _ Power to borrow
- _ Exemption from taxes
- _ Accounting of the Council [Agency]

"credit" means a unit of academic measurement for a prescribed course or set of courses for which a particular qualification is awarded;

"equivalence" means an evaluation to determine the status, level and comparability of different programmes of study;

["equivalence" means formal assurance that a programme or course is approved by a validating authority as being of comparable standard in weight, level and quality [in level and quality];

"Executive Director" means the executive Director of the Council [Agency] appointed pursuant to section 5;

"institution" means an organization with a developed structure providing for the administration, governance, delivery and certification of a range of programmes leading to the granting of awards or credits;

"Minister" means the Minister assigned responsibility for [education] [the Council/Agency];

"polytechnic" or technical college" means a post~secondary/tertiary institution that offers programmes that prepare graduates for technical occupations and grants sub-baccalaureate qualifications in applied disciplines;

"programme" means an approved curriculum composed of a series of courses in an academic or vocational specialty leading to a particular kind of certification in such form as a certificate, diploma, associate degree or bachelor's degree;

"provider" means a person a person or group of persons or an institution offering one or more programmes for award or credit;

"re-accredited" means to appraise in order to determine whether an institution and its awards that have been accredited continue to meet the recognized standards for accreditation;

"technical university" means a post-secondary/tertiary institution that offers programmes that prepare graduates for technological occupations and grants as its major qualifications, baccalaureate and post graduate degrees and also conducts research with an emphasis on applied research;

"tertiary education" means the teaching and learning process that occurs following completion of secondary schooling or its equivalent and leads to the award of sub-baccalaureate qualification, baccalaureate and [post graduate degrees and conducts pure and applied research;

"validate" means to determine after assessment whether a new course leading to an award satisfies the recognized standards for that award.

PART II

Establishment of the National Accreditation Council [Agency]

3(1) There is hereby established for the purposes of this Act the National Accreditation Council [Agency] which shall be a body corporate.

(2) The provisions of the schedule shall have effect with respect to the constitution of the Council [Agency] and otherwise in relation thereto

4(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the Council [Agency] shall be the principal body in [] for conducting and advising on the accreditation and recognition of educational and training institution, providers, programmes and awards, whether foreign or national and for the promotion of the quality and standard of education of education and training in []

(2) The functions of the Council [Agency] shall be as follows -

- (a) to provide the advancement in [] of education, learning skills and knowledge;
- (b) to ensure that the quality of all post-secondary education delivered in [] meets the standards set by the Council [Agency] to the qualifications and certificates conferred or awarded;
- (c) to ensure that the appropriate standards set by the Council [Agency] are being maintained and improved;
- (d) to protect the interest of students
- (e) to promote the free movement of skills and knowledge within the Caribbean Community;

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions of this section, the functions of the Council [Agency] shall be -

- (a) to register institutions within and outside [] which offer courses in []

- (b) to maintain a register of approved institutions, providers and courses in []
- (c) to accredit and re-accredit the programmes of institutions operating in [...]
- (d) to validate and recognize new courses and programmes of institutions operating in []
- (e) to advise on the recognition of foreign institutions of education and training and their awards;
- (f) to determine equivalency of programmes and qualifications in accordance with the framework established for the Caribbean Community;
- (g) to develop and maintain a unified credit base system for the tertiary education sector;
- (h) to grant credits at the appropriate level for learning assessed by the Council [Agency];
- (i) to accept credits granted by other bodies towards its own awards;
- (j) to establish relationships with national and external accrediting and quality assurance bodies and to keep under review their systems of accreditation, procedures and practices;
- (k) to provide authoritative advice on accreditation and related matters, including the conferment on institutions of such titles, as "university", "college", "polytechnic", "community college", "technical college", or "technical university";
- (l) to seek to enhance the quality of tertiary education and training in () and to disseminate good practice by conducting research and training;
- (m) to promote quality assurance culture in]];
- (n) to fix and collect fees in connection with the exercise of its functions;
- (o) to provide the public with information on the quality and recognition of programmes and institutions in order to protect the public interest;
- (p) to undertake audits, reviews and evaluations independently or in co-operation with other bodies as the Council [Agency] may consider necessary for the discharge of its functions
- (q) to establish the requirements and the regulations with which institutions and providers must comply in order to be registered with, have their programmes accredited, reaccredited or validated, or have their awards recognized by the Council [Agency];
- (r) to advise the Minister on the issuance of charters, licences or other authorizations to institutions and providers to operate or to continue their operations or to alter their existing operations on the basis of an appropriate evaluation;

(s) to establish and administer examinations councils and award in its own right or jointly with any national or international body degrees, certificates, diplomas and other evidence of competence;

(t) to accept courses successfully completed by students in partial fulfillment of programmes and examinations recognized by the Council [Agency];

(u) to acquire, hold, sell or otherwise dispose of any property;

Appointment of the Executive Director and their staff of the Council [Agency]

(v) to accept gifts or donations whether or not subject to any trust; (w) to withdraw or cancel approval, recognition or title granted to, or conferred on any institution or provider for good and sufficient cause in the opinion of the Council [Agency];

(x) to deprive persons of awards or distinctions granted to or conferred on them if the Council [Agency] considers that there is good and sufficient cause to do so;

(y) to perform such other related functions as the Minister may, from time to time, assign to the Council [Agency];

(z) to do or cause to be done such other things as the Council [Agency] considers expedient or necessary for the performance of its functions under this Act.

(4) The decision of the Council [Agency] shall prevail in any dispute regarding assessments conducted by other bodies of the accreditation, or recognition of institutions, providers, programmes and awards.

5 (1) There shall be an Executive Director of the Council [Agency] who shall be appointed by the [President] Governor-General][Minister] for a term not exceeding five years and the Executive Director shall be eligible for re-appointment.

(2) The Executive Director shall be paid such remuneration (including allowances) and the appointment shall be on such other terms and conditions as the [President][Governor-General][Minister] may determine.

(3) The Council [Agency] shall appoint a Secretary and such other officers and employees as the Council may deem necessary and at such remuneration (including allowances) and on such other terms and conditions as the Council [Agency] may determine.

(4) No salary exceeding [] dollars per annum shall be assigned to any post and no appointment shall be made to any post to which a salary exceeding [,] dollars per annum is assigned, without the prior approval of the Minister.

Transfer on Secondment to the Service of the Council (Agency)

- 6(1) Any officer in the public service or the teaching service or any person in the employ of any public body or authority or any private body, with the approval of the appropriate authority or body and with the consent of the officer or other employed person, be transferred on secondment to the service of the Council [Agency] and any person employed in the service of the Council [Agency] may, with the consent of the Council [Agency], be transferred on secondment to the public service or teaching service or to the service of any public or private body.
- (2) Where any such transfer on secondment is effected the Council [Agency] shall make with the appropriate authority or body such arrangements as may be necessary to preserve the rights of the officer or other employed person to superannuation benefits for which the officer or employed person would have been eligible had that officer or other employed person remained in the service from which the transfer on secondment was effected.
- (3) Except where the Council [Agency] may decide otherwise, a period of transfer on secondment shall not in any case exceed five years.

[Alternatively, insert here the appropriate provision adopted in national legislation to enable the secondment of officers in the public service or the teaching service for service with the Council [Agency].

Superannuation benefits of officers and other employees of the Council (Agency

7 The Council [Agency] shall, with the approval of the Minister, enter into or make arrangements by means of an insurance policy or by regulations of the Council [Agency] making provision for the superannuation benefits of officers and other employees of the Council [Agency] or their dependants or their legal representatives.

OR

[(1.) Unless other provision is made by the Council [Agency], for the payment of superannuation benefits in respect of their service with the Council [Agency], to the officers and other employees of the Council [Agency] on their retirement therefrom the amount of superannuation benefits payable by the Council [Agency] to any such officer or employee in respect of such service shall be computed in accordance with the law or other rules applicable to the grant of superannuation benefits to officers in the public service as if for that purpose the service of the officer or other employee with the Council [Agency] were service in the public service.

2.) Where a person is transferred to or is seconded temporarily to the service of the Council [Agency], the Council [Agency] and the former employer of that person shall establish arrangements satisfactory to the Minister for preserving the superannuation benefits of that person].

8(1) The Council [Agency] shall report to the Minister tendering advice on the quality and standards of post-secondary educational provision in [] and the fitness or otherwise of institutions 10 offer educational and training provision, to receive public funds and otherwise practice in [

(2) The Council [Agency] shall not later than 30 June in every year submit to the Minister a report containing -

(a) an account of the activities of the Council [Agency] during the preceding calendar year in such detail as the Minister may require;

(b) a statement of the accounts of the Council [Agency] audited pursuant to section 16.

(3) The Minister may require the Council [Agency] to submit a report on any matter within the competence of the Council [Agency].

(4) The Minister shall, as soon as practicable, lay before the [House of Representatives}{National Assembly} a copy of the Report submitted to the Minister pursuant to subsection (2).

9 (1) The Minister may give to the Council [Agency] directions of a general character as to the policy to be followed by the Council [Agency] in the exercise and performance of its functions and the Council [Agency] shall give effect to any such direction.

(2) The Council [Agency] shall provide such facilities to the Minister as will enable the Minister to verify information furnished in pursuance of this section.

PART III

Financial Provisions

10 The funds and resources of the Council (Agency) shall consist of:

- (a) such monies as may be appropriated by Parliament
- (b) special grants or other funds as may, from time to time, be provided by the Government or any other entity or agency, whether national, regional or international, for the financing of special projects and activities;
- (C) monies received by the Council [Agency] in connection with the performance of its functions;
- (d) all other property and assets duly acquired by the Council.[Agency].

Applications of the Funds of the Council

11 The funds of the Council [Agency] shall be applied in defraying the following expenditure -

- (a) the remuneration, fees and allowances of members of the Council [Agency]; and Members of committees established by the Council [Agency];
- (b) the emoluments, allowances, fees and superannuation benefits of officers and other employees of the Council [Agency];
- (c) the capital and operating expenses, including maintenance and insurance, of the property of the Council {Agency};
- (d) the making and maintenance of investments of the Council [Agency].;

(e) any other expenditure authorised by the Council [Agency] in the discharge of its functions.

Use of surplus funds 12 The Council [Agency] may accumulate reserves and such reserves and all other funds of the Council [Agency] not immediately required to be spent in meeting obligations of the Council [Agency] or the discharge of any of its functions may be invested, from time to time, in such securities as the Council [Agency] may deem fit.

Power to borrow 13 The Council [Agency] may, for the purpose of discharging its functions under this Act, borrow such sums of money not exceeding in the aggregate (.....) Dollars.

Protection of members of the Council [Agency]

Offences

Exemption from taxes 14 The Council [Agency] shall be exempt from stamp duty, corporation tax, customs duties, purchase taxes, value-added taxes, motor vehicle taxes and all other taxes, charges, levies and imports on its income or profit or on assets which it acquires for its own use in carrying out its functions under this Act.

Accounting of the Council [Agency] 15 The Council [Agency] may by resolution make rules for the proper control of the systems of accounting of the Council [Agency] and for its finances.

use the word "university", "college", "polytechnic", "community college", "technical college", or "technical university" in its title without having the authority to do so by the Council [Agency] or any internationally recognized body or authority or by any enactment;

(d) misrepresent to the public the recognition claimed for it or for its courses or awards.

(3) An offence under this section is punishable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [] dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding [] years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

19 (1) The Council [Agency], with the approval of the Minister, may make regulations for the better carrying out of the provisions of this Act.

(2) Regulations made under this section shall be laid as soon as practicable before the [National Assembly]. [both Houses of Parliament] and shall be subject to [negative][affirmative] resolution.

20 (1) The Council [Agency], with the approval of the Minister at intervals of six years, shall cause a review to be undertaken of the functions of the Council [Agency] in order to assess the impact of the operations of the Council [Agency] on the society and its efficiency and effectiveness.

(2) The review pursuant to subsection (1) shall be undertaken in collaboration with the Regional Accreditation Body established for the Caribbean Community and with other recognized like competent authorities.

21 (1) Institutions and providers lawfully performing their functions in [] at the commencement of this Act shall, for the period of six months thereafter, be deemed to be authorized to continue to perform their respect functions: Provided that no new course shall be undertaken or advertised to the public by any such institution or provider without the prior approval of the Council [Agency].

(2) Any regulations governing the registration of institutions and providers and in force immediately before the commencement of this Act shall, in so

far as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, continue in force.

SCHEDULE

Section 3(2)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-----|---|
| Constitution of the Council | 1 | (1) | The Council [Agency] shall comprise not less than [ten] nor more than [] members appointed by the [President] [Governor-General] [Minister] one of whom shall be appointed the Chairperson and another the Deputy Chairperson. |
|-----------------------------|---|-----|---|
- (2) The members of the council [Agency] shall include -
- (a) Three persons representing tertiary institutions, including a representative in [. ..] of the body known as the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions and a representative in [] of the Technical Vocation Education and Training Sector;
 - (b) Two persons representing bodies established to promote the Interest of members of the teaching profession;
 - (c) two persons representing bodies espousing the interests of employers;
 - (d) one representative of the Ministry responsible for matters falling within the competence of the Council [Agency];
 - (e) Two persons appointed by the [President] [Governor-General] [Minister];
 - (f) The Executive Director who shall be an ex officio member of the Council [Agency].
- | | |
|-----|---|
| (3) | The appointment of every member of the Council [Agency], other than the Executive Director, shall be made by instrument in writing which shall state the term of office of that member being not more than [three] years. |
| (4) | Every appointed member of the Council [Agency] shall be eligible for re-appointment. |

- (5) In the case of the absence or inability of the Chairperson to act, the Deputy Chairperson shall perform the functions of the Chairperson and, in the case of the absence or inability of both of them to act, the [President] [Governor-General] [Minister] may Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson
- (6) A member of the Council [Agency] may, at any time, in writing resign membership of the council [Agency] which shall take effect from the date of receipt by the [President] [Agency] [President] [Governor-General] [Minister] of the communication.
- (7) Where a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Council [Agency] by reason of death, resignation or termination of the appointment by any other cause the [President] [Governor-General] [Minister] shall appoint another person to fill the vacancy for the unexpired portion of office of the member who has vacated office and in the same manner in which the appointments to the Council [Agency] are required by this Act to be made.
- (8) No act nor proceeding of the Council [Agency] shall be questioned on account of any vacancy in the membership thereof; and no defect in the appointment of any member of the Council [Agency] shall vitiate any proceedings thereof.
- (9) The seal of the Council [Agency] shall be authenticated by the signatures of the Chairperson or the Deputy Chairperson and any other member of the Council [Agency] authorized to act in that behalf and such seal shall be officially and judicially noticed.
- (10) The Council [Agency] shall pay to the members of the Council, other than the Executive Director, such remuneration and allowances as the [President] [Governor-General] [Minister] may determine.
- (11) The names of all members of the Council [Agency] as first constituted and every change in the membership thereof shall be published in the Gazette.

- Meetings of the Council 2
- (1) The Chairperson shall preside at meetings of the council [Agency] and, in the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy chairperson shall preside; in the absence of both of them from any meeting the other members present shall elect one of their member to preside at the meeting.
 - (2) The quorum of the Council [Agency] shall be one-half of the membership thereof and one or two additional members in order to attain an uneven number.
 - (3) Minutes in proper form of each meeting of the Council [Agency] shall be kept by the Secretary and shall be confirmed by the person

presiding at the next meeting and a copy of the confirmed minutes shall be transmitted to the Minister within seven days of such confirmation.

Declaration of interest 3 A member of the Council [Agency] or a committee thereof who is in any manner, whether directly or indirectly, interested in a contract or proposed contract or has any interest in a matter under consideration by the Council [Agency] or any committee thereof shall disclose that fact at the next meeting of the Council [Agency]/or Committee and shall not participate in the consideration of, or vote on, any question relating to that matter.

Appointment of committees and power to delegate

4 (1) The council [Agency] may appoint such number of committees as the Council [Agency] may deem fit and may delegate any of its functions to such committees.

(2) Membership of a committee may include persons who are not members of the Council [Agency]

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

This bill seeks to establish for [] a national body responsible for the accreditation and recognition of qualifications acquired elsewhere.

The accreditation body will have a strong working relationship with the regional accreditation body which is to be established for the Caribbean Community. The national accreditation body will report to the appropriate Minister annually ensuring that its operations are consistent with policy directives of the Government.

Clause 3 of the Bill provides for the establishment of the national accreditation body for 1 and Clause 4 sets out extensively the functions of the Council [Agency].

Clause 4(1) of the Bill seeks to provide that the national accreditation body to be established by the legislation will take precedence over any existing body exercising the function of evaluating professional awards or qualifications acquired or conferred in [] or elsewhere.

Part III of the Bill (Clauses 10-16) seeks to make provision for the financial resources of the Council [Agency], for exemptions accorded the Council [Agency] from certain taxes and for the financial accountability of the Council [Agency].

Clause 20 in Part IV of the. bill seeks to provide for a review to be undertaken of the functioning of the Council [Agency] and the impact of its operations at intervals of six years.

Clause 21 seeks to provide for the enactment of transitional provisions governing the operations of existing institutions and persons offering programmes for awards or credits.

Minister of _____

APPENDIX V: THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY ACCREDITATION AGENCY - DRAFT CARICOM RECOMMENDATION

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES,

Recalling the provisions of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (hereinafter called "The Community") signed at Nassau, The Bahamas, on 5 July 2001;

Desirous of establishing an intergovernmental organisation linking national accreditation bodies of the Community as a means of facilitating the movement of skills in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy;

Recognising the important role of regional educational infrastructure, particularly post-secondary and tertiary institutions, in promoting, developing and enhancing various skills required for the economic and social development of the Community;

Bearing in mind relevant regional and international trends relating to the establishment of standards of the accreditation, validation and equivalency of post-secondary and tertiary institutions, programmes and courses;

Aware that the uncoordinated nature of post-secondary and tertiary education initiatives in the Community militates against the establishment of effective regional accreditation, validation, equivalency and quality assurance systems;

Conscious that the rationalisation of post-secondary and tertiary educational initiatives is a prerequisite for establishment of a seamless system of higher education in the Community, operating on the basis of a uniform credit accumulation and transfer system;

Conscious further that the primary focus of accreditation and quality assurance initiatives in the Community must be on improvement in the quality of delivery of relevant institutions, programmes and courses;

Convinced that the regional economic integration initiative, driven by globalisation and liberalisation, underscores the importance of international comparability in higher education and the need to develop a quality assurance ethos in the Community based on enduring indigenous values and effective leadership at the national and regional levels;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Use of Term

In the Agreement, unless the context otherwise requires:

"accredit" means the according of recognition by a competent authority on the basis of an informed evaluation, that the programmes and courses offered by an institution or service provider and its awards, satisfy regionally prescribed or recognised standards and "reaccredit" and "accreditation" shall be construed accordingly;

"Agency" means the Regional Accreditation Agency established by Article 2;

“award” means a degree, diploma, certificate or other evidence [of competence] [that prescribed studies have been successfully completed];

“college” means a post-secondary or tertiary institution offering a range of programmes or courses leading to awards mainly at the sub-baccalaureate level;

“community college” means a post-secondary or tertiary institution offering a range of programmes or courses leading to awards mainly at the sub-baccalaureate level and designed to satisfy the needs of a community;

“competent authority” means the body duly authorised to accredit or reaccredit, as the case may require, post-secondary and tertiary institutions or to validate or accord equivalence to awards, programmes or courses as the case may be;

“Contracting Party” means a Member State for which this Agreement is in force;

“course” means a defined body of knowledge, skills and attitudes designed to be inculcated over a specified period, at the successful completion of which one or more credits may be awarded;

“equivalence” means a determination by the competent authority that a particular programme or course has attained a comparable recognized standard;

“executive director” means the executive director of the Agency appointed pursuant to Article 7;

“institution” means an educational entity with a clearly defined structure providing for the administration, governance, delivery and certification of a range of programmes or courses leading to the grant of awards or credits;

“Member State” means a Member State of the Community;

“Minister” means the Minister of Government of a Contracting Party having responsibility for education;

“polytechnic” or “technical college” means a post-secondary or tertiary institution which prepares graduates for technical occupations and grants awards at the sub-baccalaureate level in the applied disciplines;

“programme” means a curriculum comprising a series of academic or vocational courses leading to an award;

“provider” means a person or body offering programmes or courses leading to an award or credit;

“quality assurance” means [a system or process incorporating policies, attitudes, actions and procedures necessary to ensure that the quality of education and scholarship, including research, is being maintained or enhanced] [a system or process of ensuring that awards, programmes or courses granted or offered by post-secondary or tertiary institutions satisfy standards prescribed or recognised by the competent authority];

“standard” means a clearly defined level of academic achievement employed as a measurement of the quality of education;

“technical university” means a post-secondary or tertiary institution which prepares graduates for technological occupations and grants baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate awards in the applied disciplines or conducts research in those areas;

“tertiary education” or “post-secondary education” means the teaching and learning process following the completion of secondary education or its equivalent and leading to awards at the sub-baccalaureate, baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate level;

“university” means a post-secondary or tertiary level institution which conducts pure and applied research and grants awards mainly at the baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate levels;

“Validate” means to determine that a programme or course offered by an institution satisfies a prescribed standard.

Article 2

Establishment of the Agency

There is hereby established the Regional Accreditation Agency having the objectives, powers and functions set out in this Agreement.

Article 3

Objectives of the Agency

The Agency shall have the following objectives:

- (a) establishment in the Community of a seamless, efficient, internationally recognised system of post-secondary and tertiary education;
- (b) promotion and facilitation of the movement of adequate numbers of persons with high-level skills within the Community;
- (c) enhancement and acceleration of economic and social development in the Community through the promotion and development of high-level skills;
- (d) securing and maintaining international recognition and negotiating and concluding international agreements with third state entities for mutual recognition.

Article 4

Composition of the Agency

The Agency shall comprise:

- (a) the Board of Governors (hereinafter called “the Board”); and
- (b) the Secretariat.

Article 5

Composition of the Board

1. The Board shall consist of the following members:
 - (a) one representative each from the national accreditation agencies of the Contracting Parties;
 - (b) one representative from the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI);
 - (c) one representative from the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC);
 - (d) one representative each from the University of the West Indies (UWI); University of Haiti; the University of Guyana and the University of Suriname; and
 - (e) one representative each from the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC); the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL); the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC) and the Caribbean Consumers Association (CCA),

and such other representatives as may be determined by the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD).

Article 6

Procedures of the Board

1. The Board shall convene in ordinary session once in every year and in special session as often as circumstances may require. Special sessions of the Board may be convened only where two-thirds of the members make a request in that behalf.
2. At every ordinary session the members of the Board shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman both of whom shall hold office until the next ordinary session. The chairman and vice-chairman shall be eligible for re-election.
3. Determinations of the Board shall be made by a majority of two-thirds of the members of the Board. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.
4. Where circumstances warrant the Board may make determinations without meeting in formal session.
5. Subject to this Article the Board shall establish its rules of procedure.

Article 7

Powers and Functions of the Board

1. Subject to general policy directions of the Council for Human and Social Development, the Board shall perform such functions as may be required for the achievement of the objectives set out in Article 3.

2. Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 1, the Board shall *inter alia*:

- (a) determine and define the essential characteristics of accreditation/equivalency/quality assurance in the Region in the light of changing trends and developments regionally and internationally;
- (b) maintain close links with the Caribbean Community and other relevant regional bodies in order to promote and facilitate the development of an accreditation/quality assurance ethos;
- (c) develop guidelines for good practices in higher education and assist national accreditation/equivalency/quality assurance bodies in exercising their responsibilities;
- (d) develop core criteria for a regional post-secondary/tertiary education system and coordinate national initiatives in this area;
- (e) collaborate with national accreditation bodies, professional bodies and other relevant bodies to develop training programmes designed to create a regional cadre of trained assessors;
- (f) coordinate higher education accreditation initiatives in the regional institutional and specialised areas;
- (g) act as a coordinating body in the evaluation of foreign qualifications;
- (h) approve arrangements and systems for accrediting programmes and courses;
- (i) accredit institutions and accord equivalency to programmes and courses where involvement of the Agency is considered to be necessary;
- (j) withdraw, as appropriate, accreditation of institutions and equivalency from programmes and courses where involvement of the Agency is considered necessary;
- (k) establish and maintain relations with accreditation/equivalency/quality assurance bodies in third states.

Article 8

The Secretariat

1. The Secretariat shall consist of the executive director and such professional, administrative and other staff as may be required to carry out its functions.

2. The executive director shall be appointed by the Board for a term of three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

3. In the recruitment of staff of the Secretariat, consideration shall be given to securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, bearing in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution. In the performance of their duties the staff of the Secretariat shall neither seek nor receive instructions from the Government of any Contracting Party nor from any other authority external to the Agency. The staff of the Secretariat shall refrain from any action which might reflect adversely on their position as officials of the Agency responsible only to the Agency.

Article 9

Functions of the Secretariat

In addition to any functions which may be assigned to it by the Board, the Secretariat shall, *inter alia*:

- (a) carry out investigations and development projects in areas where improvements have been determined by the Board as necessary;
- (b) undertake such research as may be required to establish the comparability of regional qualifications;
- (c) conduct research in accreditation, equivalency and quality assurance to ensure the responsiveness of relevant regional initiatives in the area of higher education;
- (d) provide, on request, technical assistance to national accreditation agencies to facilitate implementation of determinations of the Board;
- (e) initiate and develop proposals for consideration and determination by the Board;
- (f) prepare and submit for consideration and decision by the Board the draft budget of the Agency;
- (g) prepare and submit for the consideration and approval by the Board the staff regulations and financial regulations of the Agency;
- (h) establish data bases and exchange information in the areas of accreditation, equivalency and quality assurance;
- (i) provide secretarial services for the meetings of the Board and bodies of the Agency.

Article 10

The Budget

1. The draft Budget of the Agency shall be prepared by the Secretariat and presented to the Board for approval.

2. The draft Budget shall be so prepared as to ensure financing of the Work Programme of the Secretariat.
3. The draft Budget shall be approved by the Board.
4. The draft Budget shall comprise:
 - (a) annual contributions from Member States [and Associate Members];
 - (b) grant funds received from regional and international donor agencies;
 - (c) funds paid by donor agencies to the Agency for project execution services provided by the Agency with respect to projects funded by the donor agencies;
 - (d) earnings above cost for special services provided by the Agency to commercial institutions and to other bodies;
 - (e) income derived from the sale or the licensing of intellectual property created and owned by the Agency;
 - (f) any other source of funding.

Article 11

Provisional Budgetary Measures

1. The Agency is authorised to commit provisionally and pending approval of the Budget, expenditure not exceeding one-fifth (1/5) of the regular Budget for the previous year.
2. The Agency is also authorised to obtain overdraft facilities to this end.

Article 12

Sanctions for Non-Payment of Contributions

1. Subject to paragraph 2, a Member State whose contributions to the regular Budget of the Agency is in arrears for more than two years, shall not have the right to vote.
2. In exceptional circumstances to be determined by the Board, a defaulting Member State may be permitted to vote pending the payment of its arrears of contributions.

Article 13

Status, Privileges and Immunities

Member States shall accord to the Agency within their jurisdictions, the status, immunities, exemptions and privileges set out in Articles 16 to 22 in order to enable it to effectively fulfil its objectives and carry out the functions entrusted to it.

Article 14

Legal Status of the Agency

1. The Agency shall possess full juridical personality and, in particular, full capacity to:
 - (a) contract;
 - (b) acquire and dispose of moveable and immoveable property;
 - (c) institute legal proceedings.
2. The Agency may enter into agreements with Member States, third States and other international organisations for the achievement of its objectives.
3. In any legal proceedings, the Agency shall be represented by the Executive Director.

Article 15

Legal Process

1. The Agency shall be immune from every form of legal process, except in cases arising out of or in connection with the purchase of land, securities or merchantable commodities, in which cases actions may be brought against the Agency in a court of competent jurisdiction in the territory of a Member State in which the Agency has an office or in a third State where the Agency has appointed an agent for the purpose of accepting service or notice of process.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, no action shall be brought against the Agency by a Member State or any agency thereof, or by any entity or person directly or indirectly acting for or deriving claims from a Member State. Member States shall have recourse to such special procedures for the settlement of disputes between the Agency and its Member States as may be provided for in this Agreement.
3. The Agency, its property and assets wheresoever located and by whomsoever held, shall be immune from all forms of seizure, attachment or execution before delivery of final judgment against the Agency.
4. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as disentitling a person aggrieved by a motor vehicle accident from instituting legal proceedings against the Agency, its officials, representatives or experts.

Article 16

Immunity of Assets and Archives

1. Property and assets of the Agency, wherever located and by whomsoever held, shall be immune from search, requisition, confiscation, expropriation or any other form of taking or foreclosure by executive or legislative action.

2. The archives of the Agency and, in general, all documents belonging to or held by the Agency, shall be inviolable, wherever located.

Article 17

Freedom of Assets from Restrictions

To the extent necessary to achieve the objectives and perform the functions of the Agency effectively, and subject to the provisions of this Agreement, the Agency:

- (a) may hold assets of any kind and operate accounts in any currency;
- (b) shall be free to transfer its assets from one country to another or within any country, and to convert any currency held by it into any other currency, without being restricted by financial controls, regulations or moratoria of any kind.

Article 18

Privilege for Communications

Official communications of the Agency shall be accorded by each Member State, treatment not less favourable than it accords to the official communications of any similar inter-governmental organisation.

Article 19

Privileges and Immunities of Agency Personnel

1. Members of the Board, officials of the Secretariat and experts performing missions for the Agency:
 - (a) shall be immune from legal process in respect of acts performed by them in their official capacity;
 - (b) shall, unless they are nationals of the host country, be accorded such immunities from immigration restrictions, alien registration requirements and national service obligations, and such facilities as regards exchange regulations as are not less favourable than those accorded by Member States concerned to the representatives, officials and experts of comparable rank of any other Member States;

- (c) shall be granted such repatriation facilities in time of international crisis as are not less favourable than those accorded by the Member States concerned to the representatives, officials and experts of comparable rank of any other Member State.

2. The executive director shall notify Member States of the officials and experts to be accorded the immunities and privileges set out in paragraph 1.

Article 20

Exemption from Taxation

1. The Agency, its assets, property, income, operations and transactions shall be exempt from all direct taxation and from all customs duties on goods imported for its official use.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article, the Agency shall not claim exemption from taxes which are no more than charges for public utility services.

3. The Agency shall not normally claim exemption from excise duties and from taxes on the sale of movable and immovable property which form part of the price to be paid. Nevertheless, where the Agency is making important purchases for official use of property on which such duties and taxes have been charged or are chargeable, Member States shall, whenever possible, make appropriate administrative arrangements for the remission or the return of the amount of duty on tax.

4. Articles imported under an exemption from customs duties as provided by paragraph 1 of this Article, or in respect of which a remission or return of duty or tax has been made under paragraph 3, shall not be sold in the territory of the Member State granting the exemption, remission or reprieve except under conditions agreed with the Member State.

5. No tax shall be levied on or in respect of salaries and emoluments paid by the Agency to the officials or experts performing missions for the Agency. However, Member States reserve the right to tax their own citizens, nationals or persons permanently resident in the territories of such Member States.

Article 21

Waiver of Immunities, Exemptions and Privileges

1. The exemptions, immunities and privileges provided in Article 15 to 21 are granted in the interest of the Agency. The Board may waive to such extent and upon such conditions as it may determine, the immunities, exemptions and privileges provided in the said Articles in cases where such action would, in its opinion, be appropriate in the best interest of the Agency.

2. The executive director shall have the right and duty to waive any immunity, exemption or privilege in respect of any official or expert performing a mission for the Agency where, in his opinion, the immunity, exemption or privilege would impede the course of justice and could be waived without prejudice to the interests of the Agency.

3. In similar circumstances and under the same conditions, the Board shall have the right and duty to waive any immunity, exemption or privilege in respect of the executive director.

Article 22

Questions of Interpretations and Application

1. Any question of interpretation or application of the provisions of this Agreement not otherwise expressly provided for shall be submitted to the Board for decision.

2. In any case where the Board has given a decision under paragraph 1 of this Article, any Member State may require that the question be referred to an arbitral tribunal whose decision shall be final. Pending the decision of the arbitral tribunal, the Agency, as it considers necessary, may act on the basis of the decision of the Board.

Article 23

Constitution of Arbitral Tribunal

1. Each Party to a dispute shall be entitled to appoint one arbitrator. The two arbitrators chosen by the parties shall be appointed within fifteen days following the decision to refer the matter to arbitration. The two arbitrators shall, within fifteen days following the date of their appointments, appoint a third arbitrator who shall be the Chairman. As far as practicable, the arbitrators shall not be nationals of any of the parties to the dispute.

2. Where either party to the dispute fails to appoint its arbitrator under paragraph 1, the Secretary-General shall appoint the arbitrator within ten days. Where the arbitrators fail to appoint a Chairman within the time prescribed, the Secretary-General shall appoint a Chairman within ten days.

3. Where more than two Member States are parties to a dispute, the parties concerned shall agree among themselves on the two arbitrators to be appointed within fifteen days following the decision to refer the matter to arbitration and the two arbitrators shall within fifteen days of their appointment appoint a third arbitrator who shall be the Chairman.

4. Where no agreement is reached under paragraph 3, the Secretary-General shall make the appointment within ten days and where the arbitrators fail to appoint a Chairman within the time prescribed the Secretary-General shall make the appointment within ten days.

5. Notwithstanding paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4, Parties to a dispute may refer the matter to arbitration and consent to the Secretary-General appointing a sole arbitrator who shall not be a national of a party to the dispute.

Article 24

Rules of Procedure of Arbitral Tribunal

1. Subject to the relevant provisions of this Agreement, the Arbitral Tribunal shall establish its own rules of procedure.

2. The procedures shall assure a right to at least one hearing before the Arbitral Tribunal as well as the opportunity to provide initial and rebuttal written submissions.

3. The Arbitral Tribunal's hearings, deliberations and initial report, and all written submissions to and communications with the Arbitral Tribunal, shall be confidential.

4. The Arbitral Tribunal may invite any Member State to submit view orally or in writing.

5. The award of the Arbitral Tribunal shall be confined to the subject-matter of the dispute and shall state the reasons on which it is based.

6. Where the parties cannot agree on the interpretation or implementation of the award, either party may apply to the Arbitral Tribunal for a ruling within thirty days of the award. The term of the Arbitral Tribunal shall come to an end unless an application for a ruling has been received, in which case it shall continue for such reasonable time, not exceeding thirty days, as may be required to make the ruling.

7. Decisions of the Arbitral Tribunal shall be taken by a majority vote of its members and shall be final and binding on the Parties to the dispute.

Article 25

Third Party Intervention

A Member State which is not a party to a dispute, on delivery of a notification to the parties to a dispute and to the Secretary-General, shall be entitled to attend all hearings and to receive written submissions of the parties to a dispute and may be permitted to make oral or written submissions to the Arbitral Tribunal.

Article 26

Additional Information from Experts

Where proceedings have commenced, the Arbitral Tribunal may, on its own initiative or on the request of a party to the dispute, seek information and technical advice from any expert or body that it considers appropriate, provided that the parties to the dispute so agree and subject to such terms and conditions as the parties may agree.

Article 27

Expenses of Arbitral Tribunal

1. The expenses of the Arbitral Tribunal, including the fees and subsistence allowances of arbitrators and experts engaged for the purposes of a dispute, shall be borne equally by the Member States Parties to the dispute unless the Arbitral Tribunal, taking into account the circumstances of the case, otherwise determines.

2. Where a third party intervenes in the proceedings, the party shall bear the costs associated with the intervention.

Article 28

Entry into Force

This Agreement shall enter into force upon the signature by any [7] of the States mentioned in paragraph 1 of Article 3.

Article 29

Registration

This Agreement and any amendments thereto shall be registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter.

Article 30

Accession

1. Any country to which paragraph 1 of Article ... applies may accede to this Agreement.
2. Instruments of Accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General.

Article 31

Withdrawal

1. A Contracting Party may withdraw from this Agreement by giving one year's notice in writing to the Depository who shall promptly notify the other Contracting Parties accordingly and the withdrawal shall take effect one year after the date on which the notice has been received by the Depository, unless the Contracting Party before the withdrawal becomes effective notifies the Depository in writing of the cancellation of its notice of withdrawal.

2. A Contracting Party that withdraws from this Agreement undertakes to honour any financial or other obligations duly assumed as a Contracting Party; this includes any matter relating to an appeal filed before withdrawal becomes effective.

Article 32

Implementation

The Contracting Parties shall take all necessary action, whether of a legislative, executive or administrative nature, for the purpose of giving effect to this Agreement. Such action shall be taken as expeditiously as possible, and the executive director shall be informed accordingly.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned duly authorised in that behalf by their respective Governments have executed this Agreement.

DONE at _____ on the
____ day

of _____ 2002.

APPENDIX VI: SURINAME REPORT

MINISTERIE VAN ONDERWIJS EN VOLKSONTWIKKELING

VRT/3080

Committee Preparation National Accrediting Body

Foreword

Suriname does not yet have a national Quality Assurance System and as regards Accreditation, matters have not progressed beyond the introduction of the term into the educational system.

Quality assurance and Accreditation were introduced into Higher Education in 1997/1998 through the Bureau for Higher Education of the Ministry of Education (MINOV).

Both in CARICOM and in Europe, in particular the Netherlands from whence came our educational system, there are ongoing educational developments which compel us to work nationwide on establishing a quality assurance system and an accrediting body.

To this end, on 02 September 2002 the Minister of Education appointed a Committee responsible for preparing the establishment of an accrediting body.

The present report is the result of the performance of the mission contained in the order CB/SO/No. 3497 of 6 September 2002.

It is hoped that this report, although not exhaustive, will give the commissioning authority a better idea of our country's commitment to international accreditation matters and an insight into the preparations for a National Accrediting Association to be established.

Activities have only just begun and we will need everyone, more in particular the stakeholders, to accomplish the task at hand successfully.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation are the concern of every one of us, if we want to raise Education to a qualitatively higher level in order to survive in a competitive world which is becoming ever smaller.

**The Committee for the preparation of the QAA,
Paramaribo, February 2003**

INTRODUCTION

Early in 1998, the Higher Education Bureau took the initiative for a project aimed at the introduction of a quality assurance system into Surinamese Higher Education.

Higher Education comprises the Anton de Kom University (ADEK), the Institute for Advanced Teacher Training (IOL), the Academy for Higher Education in Arts and Culture (AHKCO), the Central Training for Nurses and Related Professions (COVAB), the Youth Dental Care Training (JTV), and the Poly Technic College (PTC).

The objectives of the project were:

- to promote the introduction of an internal quality assurance system within higher education establishments;
- to gain experience with internal and external evaluation;
 - to set up an Accrediting Board.

At first, this project focussed on promoting quality assurance within the establishments proper, yet it also wanted to respond to the developments in the region, in which external assessment and accreditation would play an important role.

In order to realize these objectives, the Bureau has compiled the “HANDBOEK KWALITEITSZORG VOOR HET SURINAAMS HOGER ONDERWIJS” (manual on quality assurance higher education in Suriname) in three parts, dealing extensively with this matter. Subsequently, an abridged version (see attachments) presents an explanation of the constituent three processes, namely:

- Brochure 1: The self-evaluation
- Brochure 2: The external evaluation and the work of the external committee
 - Brochure 3: The Accrediting Board

Aside from the awareness process relating to Higher Education with respect to quality assurance and accreditation and the need for the introduction of an institute for quality assurance, no national accrediting body was ever established.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE

With the appointment of a committee, the present Minister of Education has revitalized the plan to establish a National Accrediting Association (NAO) (order CB/SO/No. 3497 of 6 September 2002).

The Committee's terms of reference

The Committee shall prepare the establishment of the NAO which shall consist of a National Accrediting Board (NAR) assisted by the National Accrediting Bureau (NAB). It is to identify expressly:

- the tasks
- the powers
- the legal position
- a programme of action

for the institute that is to be established.

The committee consists of:

R. Soetosenojo (chairman)	-	MINOV
ing. O. dos Ramos (member)	-	VSB
Mr. J. Kadipowidjojo (member)	-	ADEK
Drs. A. Li Fo Sjoë (member)	-	ADEK
M. Mahomedradja (member)	-	MINOV

In carrying out this assignment, extensive use has been made of the available material as recorded by the Higher Education Bureau.

THE NEED FOR A QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITING SYSTEM

Surinamese education does yet include a quality assurance system. It need not be argued that such a facility is necessary:

- to offer qualitatively good education that meets the national and international wishes and requirements;
- to maintain and improve the quality of such education;
- to align with secondary education worldwide, in order to increase the mobility of students, teachers and graduates, to facilitate international recognition (identification and acceptance) of diplomas and degrees.

At the level of CARICOM, of which our country is a member, in 1989 during a conference of CARICOM Heads of State in the light of deepening and strengthening the integration of the Caribbean Community, it was decided to establish a CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). This, with a view to the qualitative strengthening of the economy within CARICOM to so confront the adverse effects of the phenomenon of globalization on the economy.

In this process, man is considered the most important factor for the qualitative strengthening and development of the economy. Hence the strong emphasis on Human Resource Development (HRM) as one of the spearheads of this process of strengthening.

One of the ensuing activities is the implementation of arrangements relating to the free movement of skilled and professional personnel within CARICOM. To put into practice such free movement of skilled and professional personnel, it has appeared necessary to establish within CARICOM a regional screening/measuring mechanism to so determine quality standards.

This Regional Accrediting Mechanism (RAM) will be responsible for such measuring of the quality of training institutes operating within the CARICOM member countries and will furthermore ensure the improvement and maintenance of the quality of education in the member countries. This RAM will furthermore serve as a platform for the stakeholders in CARICOM.

The proper functioning of the RAM, however, depends on properly functioning national accrediting mechanisms in the CARICOM member countries. Hence, CARICOM member countries have committed themselves to each establish a national accrediting body within their respective educational system, which body shall align with the Regional Accrediting Mechanism.

Therefore, this Committee's mission also follows naturally from the above-mentioned regional arrangements.

ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL ACCREDITING INSTITUTE (NIVA)

The NAR and the NAB

Quality (and hence quality assurance) is firstly a matter to be dealt with by the institutes themselves. This responsibility can never be taken over by anyone else.

Whereas the emphasis is on the introduction of internal quality assurance within the institutes, aimed at quality improvement, and does not require external legitimacy, the external legitimacy plays indeed an important role in rendering account.

This is also of the highest importance for recognition within the framework of CARICOM, in the light of seeking equivalence for Surinamese courses in comparison with the region and other countries.

The support for the external quality assurance must therefore be guaranteed as well as possible. All relevant actors (political, professional, students, continuous education and the education inspectorate) must have confidence in the system and be able to influence it at crucial moments.

The best way to give shape to the external legitimacy is to organize a platform where all involved can participate in the decision-making on quality assurance. This platform would be the Accrediting Council assisted by the Accrediting Bureau.

The Accrediting Council shall formally determine accreditation on the basis of external assessments by external experts.

THE NATIONAL ACCREDITING COUNCIL (NAR)

Terms of Reference of the NAR

As regards the terms of reference for the Accrediting Council, the manual "*Kwaliteitszorg*" of May 1998 (see annex) has already given the initial impetus.

The main duties can be outlined as follows:

- to determine the protocol for external assessment;
- to grant a quality mark (accreditation) to externally assessed courses;
- to assess home studies forming part of courses which are not assessed by an

- external expert;
- to evaluate progress reports by institutions as to quality assurance;
- to determine the year schedule of the accrediting bureau.

Criteria to be met by the members of the Council could include the following:

- expertise in assessing educational evaluations;
- good insight into the place of education in and its significance for society;
- independent attitude;
- authority over all parties involved.

It is necessary for the members of the Council, and also for the head of the bureau who is yet to be appointed, to receive a thorough training. In this light it is recommended that the persons involved participate in one or more visitations (abroad) to gain experience.

Composition of the NAR

As regards the composition of the Council.

The Council may consist of no more than 15 members, for instance representatives of:

- the health care sector
- the business community
- the university community
- the world of Professional Education
- the Ministry of Education.

Powers of the NAR

The Accrediting Council must be embedded in the law. It is proposed to constitute the accrediting council as a foundation.

Therefore the legal embedding of the Council should be taken up as soon as possible so as to guarantee its independent position and to ensure the legal validity of its decisions.

However, the Council may already take up its activities. In view of the Council's terms of reference and duties, the Council must be as independent as possible.

It is therefore to be strongly recommended that this body be constituted as a foundation (Foundation NIVA = National Accrediting Institute).

For the accreditation decisions, regulations should be developed which, among other things, provide for working sessions and especially voting procedures and also the possibility for the establishment of an appeal authority.

The Accrediting Council is to be an authoritative institution yet it should not be too heavily dressed up. The Council shall meet no more than twice a year, for one day, to give its opinion on the external assessments carried out and the home studies at hand. The Director of the Accrediting Bureau shall act as secretary and arrange for advice to the Council.

THE NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BUREAU

Terms of reference of the NAB

The Accrediting Bureau and the appointment of the director should be realized at the short term.

The Bureau's terms of reference are:

- to run the secretariat of the Accrediting Council and to prepare the meetings;
- to submit the year programme for approval to the Accrediting Council;
- to draft the roster for external assessments;
- to organize external assessments, including to approach members for committees and to prepare a programme of visits;
- to provide a secretary for any visitation committee;
- to respond to activities for the improvement of the quality of education of an institution-transcending nature;
- to keep an accreditation register;
- to organize information meetings for stakeholders and training in relation to the carrying out of internal and external evaluations.

Management and Administration of the NIVA

The NIVA will be run by a board headed by a chairman.

The board shall fall under the NAR, which shall provide the board members.

The NAR shall be staffed by members nominated by the different stakeholders and actors of the sector of Education (education and educational institutions). They shall be appointed by the Minister of Education and must meet the appointment requirements (competencies) to be set by the Minister.

All NAR members shall form part of the Board. They shall recommend from their midst a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer to the Minister who shall charge them with the day-to-day management of the Foundation.

The director (m/f) of the NAB will form part of the NAR because of his/her function and shall act as Secretary to the NAR, without voting right.

COMMENTS ON THE ORGANIZATION

The Committee can concur with the opinion of A.I. Vroeijenstijn (further elaboration of the project "Quality assurance system in higher education" of 18 April 1998) that the Surinamese circumstances must be taken into consideration, the smallness of scale being the biggest obstacle.

Of every type of higher education there is only one institute. The decision to be given by the NIVA in accrediting should therefore be to encourage institutions to achieve quality assurance and maintenance, rather than emphasizing deficiencies.

Furthermore, the teaching staff is relatively small and most experts and teachers know one another. To increase objectivity, especially as concerns the External Evaluation, it is therefore advisable that use be made, as much as possible, of external experts from outside the borders. A system of pooling experts in CARICOM is recommended.

An obstacle to that would be the language. In using e.g. CARICOM experts, this will have to be taken into account.

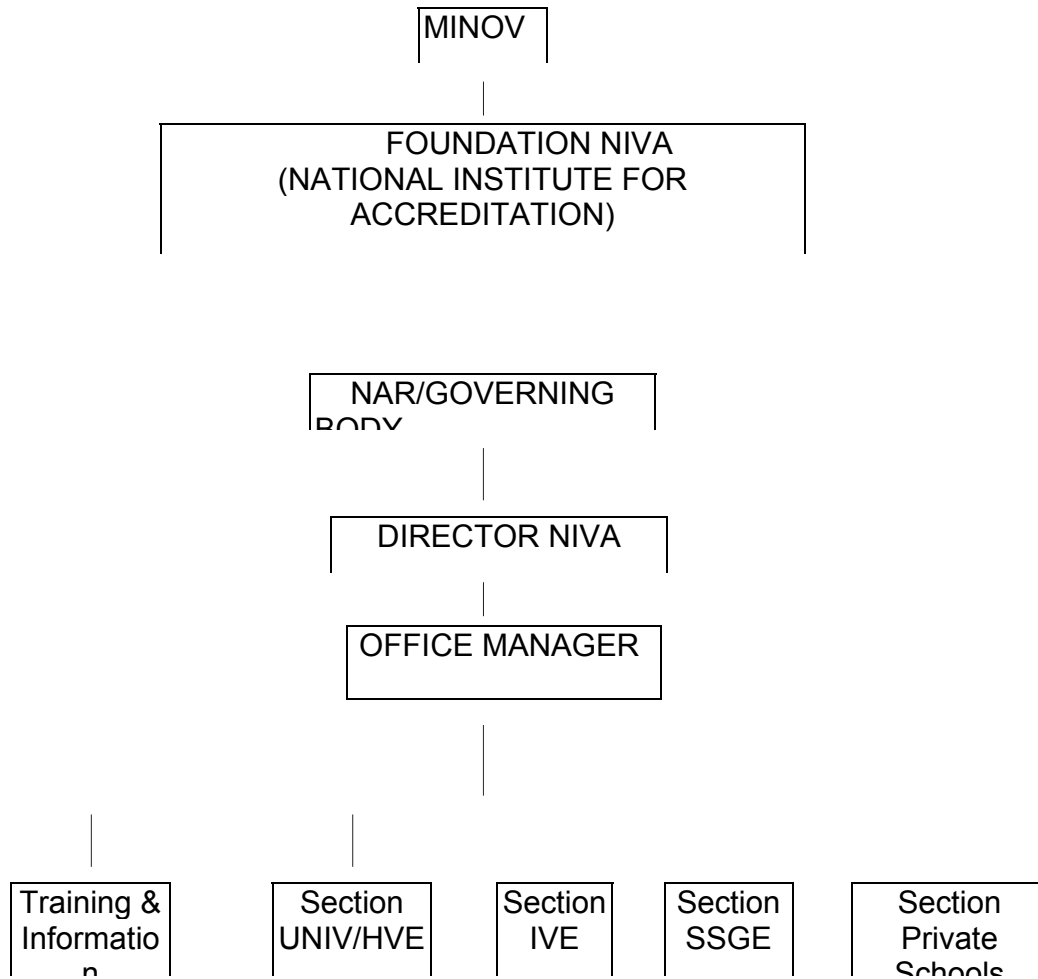
“The emphasis, especially in the initial phase, should be placed on the development of internal quality assurance in as simple, yet effective, a manner as possible. A sophisticated system, such as the one used in the USA and in Europe, would not work for Suriname. Attention should be given to adjustment. It should not be the mere transference of a system from one country to the other.

It must become a Surinamese system that is accepted by Surinamese society and by CARICOM.”

IMPLEMENTING PLAN

DRAFT

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE NIVA



UNIV = university

HVE = higher vocational education

MVE = intermediate vocational education

SSGE = senior secondary general education

Phasing

START	ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTERS	REALIZATION
01 May 2003	Appointment) Committee Training) potential Orientation) members NAR/NIVA	MINOND	June through December 2003
30 May 2003	Draft Articles Foundation + relevant legislation	said Committee in conjunction with ADEK	1 st week of June 2003
15 June 2003	Discuss draft Articles with stakeholders	said Committee	3 rd week of June 2003
15 July 2003	adoption Articles	said Committee + civil-law notary	30 July 2003
01 Aug. 2003	Installation NAR & recruitment general director NIVA + other staff	MINOND	August 2003
15 Aug 2003	Start preparatory activities NIVA: · Training of NIVA staff · Public Awareness Programmes etc.	NAR	August through November 2003
11 Nov 2003	Recruiting NIVA staff	Gen.Dir. NIVA	11 May 2004

MINOND = Minister of Education
 ADEK = Anton de Kom University of Suriname