



Barbados Accreditation Council



**A PROVIDER'S GUIDE TO THE
COLLABORATIVE PROVISION
OF POST-SECONDARY OR
TERTIARY EDUCATION AND
TRAINING**

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Preface

This document has been prepared by the Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC) to assist educational providers involved in or seeking to offer programmes/courses in Barbados through collaborative provision. It provides educational providers with information governing BAC's recognition process, principles, parameters and procedure.

Any related questions should be directed to BAC.

The Barbados Accreditation Council

The Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC) was established by an Act of parliament, the Barbados Accreditation Council Act, 2004. It is a statutory body currently under the portfolio of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development.

Vision Statement

A coherent system of post-secondary and tertiary education and training which assures excellence and integrity to all its stakeholders.

Mission Statement

To be a high quality provider of registration, accreditation and related services in post-secondary or tertiary education and training in Barbados and beyond.

CORE VALUES

Quality

The Barbados Accreditation Council will have a positive impact on the quality of post-secondary or tertiary education and training by its commitment to high standards that will sustain and advance excellence, efficiency, reliability and competence in higher learning. It will be forward thinking and proactive, responding to trends and changes in the national, regional and international environment.

Integrity

The Barbados Accreditation Council will place fairness, honesty, objectivity, accountability and transparency at the forefront both with regard to its own policies and practices, as well as in the implementation of registration, accreditation and related processes in order to establish integrity as central to educational quality.

Inclusiveness

The Barbados Accreditation Council will be an autonomous regulatory advisory body that will commit to inclusiveness by developing structures and processes that enable participation by a wide range of stakeholders. It will recognise and be responsive to the needs of its clients.

Customer Service

The Barbados Accreditation Council will be a customer friendly service-oriented organisation. Its staff will be dynamic, flexible, team-oriented, technology-oriented, communicative and people-centred.

Learning

The Barbados Accreditation Council will seek continuous feedback and insight from its stakeholders and use the collected information to improve its operations and support teamwork, and to provide learning opportunities for its staff and other stakeholders. At the same time, BAC will work with its stakeholders to foster an environment that promotes shared learning.

QUALITY STATEMENTS

Quality for BAC is the provision of effective and efficient services that are:

- ❖ geared towards the enhancement of post-secondary/tertiary education and training;
- ❖ fit for purpose, add value and exceed stakeholders' expectations;
- ❖ benchmarked against regional and international standards.

Quality for BAC is guided by:

- ❖ a developmental approach;
- ❖ accountability to stakeholders;
- ❖ integrity of practise;
- ❖ excellence in service; and
- ❖ a commitment to national and regional development.

Quality for BAC is demonstrated by:

- ❖ demand for non-mandatory services by its clients;
- ❖ respect of peers through mutual recognition;
- ❖ positive feedback from internal and external stakeholders;
- ❖ efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness.

BAC perceives quality in institutions as:

- ❖ effective governance
- ❖ clearly stated and appropriate mission
- ❖ efficient and effective administration
- ❖ qualified, competent and engaged faculty and staff
- ❖ timely and customer-friendly services
- ❖ relevant, current, well-documented and appropriately assessed programmes
- ❖ established, documented, functional and well-managed quality assurance system
- ❖ responsiveness to change
- ❖ system for formative and summative evaluation and reform
- ❖ a culture which embraces integrity and ethical conduct
- ❖ prudent financial management
- ❖ effective and diversified learning and teaching experiences
- ❖ adequate and appropriate student services and support
- ❖ committed and motivated students

Functions and Powers of BAC

The main *functions* of BAC include:

- a. register local, regional and foreign based institutions that offer educational courses in Barbados;
- b. maintain a record of all institutions that are registered and accredited by BAC pursuant to paragraph (a) and the
- c. accredit and re-accredit programmes of study and institutions operating in Barbados;
- d. provide for the validation of new educational courses and programmes of study being offered by institutions operating in Barbados;
- e. promote a programme of accreditation and registration;
- f. advise on the recognition of foreign based institutions and their awards;
- g. enhance the quality of post-secondary and tertiary education and training in Barbados;
- h. provide to the public, information on the quality and recognition of programmes of study and institutions, including the annual publication of a list of accredited programmes and institutions in order to protect the interests of the public;

To exercise its functions, BAC's *powers* include:

- a. undertake assessments and evaluations of programmes of study and educational institutions on their own initiative or in co-operation with other bodies as may from time to time be considered necessary for the discharge of its functions;
- b. establish the requirements that institutions must satisfy in order to be registered with BAC, or have their programmes accredited, re-accredited by BAC.

GUIDELINES FOR COLLABORATIVE PROVISION OF POST-SECONDARY OR TERTIARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING¹

Terms Defined

- A. *Awarding institution* - a post-secondary or tertiary institution that awards post-secondary and/or tertiary qualifications such as certificates, diplomas, and degrees in its own name.
- B. *Collaborative provision* - all arrangements in which the awarding institution makes an award (solely or jointly) or gives credit towards an award on the basis of education provided by another institution or organisation in the home country or overseas.
- C. *Cross-border higher education* - “higher education² that takes place in situations where the teacher, student, programme, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders. Cross-border higher education may include higher education by public/private and not-for-profit/for-profit providers. It encompasses a wide range of modalities, in a continuum from face-to-face (taking various forms such as students travelling abroad and campuses abroad) to distance learning (using a wide range of technologies and including e-learning).”
- D. *(Educational) Provider* – any individual, institution or organisation offering education and/or training programmes of study/courses at the post-secondary/tertiary level in Barbados.
- E. *Overseas institution* - an institution that is operating outside of its home country.
- F. *Partner* - an institution/organisation/individual that collaborates with an awarding institution offering post-secondary and tertiary programmes that lead to either an award in the name of the awarding institution or joint awards in the names of both the awarding institution and the partner.
- G. *Provider country* - the source country of the educational programme or qualification that is delivered in another country.
- H. *Providing institution* – an institution or organisation which is delivering all or part of a study programme.
- I. *Receiver country* - the host country to which the educational programme or qualification sourced overseas is delivered.

¹ These guidelines apply to local, regional and foreign/overseas/transnational institutions and providers.

² Higher education shall mean post-secondary or tertiary education and training in the Barbadian context.

- J. *Transnational/foreign institution* - an institution that has its origin and main campus or establishment in an overseas country or territory and is operating in another country.

Recognition Process

In addition to the existing registration system, to enable BAC to effectively respond to the challenges of collaborative arrangements, the recognition system for post-secondary or tertiary educational providers in these instances will be as follows:

- (a) A foreign institution wishing to offer post-secondary or tertiary educational programmes in Barbados through collaborative arrangements must register with BAC.
- (b) Where the foreign institution is not accredited in its home country and the collaborative provision is the only programme being offered by the local institution, then the local institution will not be registered. However, if other programmes are being offered by the local institution, the local institution will be required to register.
- (c) BAC will take into consideration any agreements signed by the parties.
- (d) The roles and responsibilities of each party to the collaborative arrangement will be considered.
- (e) The foreign qualification/award must be recognised by BAC. Recognition will be granted based on the recognition/accreditation given by the legitimate External Quality Assurance Agency (EQAA) in the country of origin.

The recognition process outlined above will be applicable to overseas providers using the following delivery modes for provisions:

1. Partnership with a local institution for delivery of its courses; and
2. Provision of its curricula, teaching and assessment materials to the local institution, with delivery at the discretion of the local partner.

Principles

All collaborative arrangements should:

- protect the interests of the learner
- enhance the quality of learning
- enhance the quality and credibility of qualifications
- reflect the cultural context of both parties and their learners

- align with national funding requirements, where applicable
- align with quality assurance arrangements
- recognise institutional autonomy

These principles must be reflected in a written and legally binding agreement which sets out in detail the rights and obligations of the parties identified as the *transnational/foreign institution* (awarding institution) and the local provider (*partner*).

Parameters

- The written agreement should specify, as a minimum, the following:
 - names and parties to the agreement
 - name of the qualification and/or unit standards
 - parties that will appear on awards/qualifications
 - ownership of any intellectual property covered by the collaboration
 - terms of the agreement, for example:
 - duration of agreement and review arrangements,
 - termination and arbitration provisions,
 - financial arrangements on termination,
 - risk assessment/minimisation practices.

These do not preclude any additional contractual clauses that may reflect the individual nature of each collaborative arrangement.

- Each programme must have a separate agreement or contract relating to the arrangements for that programme.
- The awarding institution is responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name.
- Clear documentation of the precise responsibilities of the local partner and awarding institution.
- Educational provider must be able to provide proof of accreditation in its home country. BAC reserves the right to investigate the accreditation process within the country.
- Overseas institutions must show that the provision of programmes will contribute to the development of post-secondary education and training in Barbados, as well as its long-term commitment to the local operation. For example,

- programmes offered must be relevant to the economic and cultural context of Barbados;
 - courses should have full equivalence with comparable courses at the overseas institution;
 - strategies should be in place for capacity building of local partners and development of local staff, where utilised; and
 - inclusion of information showing intent to maintain the operations of the local institution in its strategic, financial and operating plans.
- g. The primary responsibilities of the parties to the collaborative arrangement are as follows:
- i. The *awarding institution*:
 - a. Quality Assurance and Enhancement
 - b. Learner Entry and Support
 - c. Programme Delivery, Assessment and Reporting
 - d. Teaching/Instruction Quality
 - e. Intellectual property considerations, that is, agreements on rights of ownership of printed works such as course materials, lecture notes, etc..
 - f. Centralisation of well-maintained and up-to-date records (student, faculty, etc.)
 - g. Clearly defined communication and reporting procedures with partner
 - ii. The *partner*:
 - a. Learner Entry and Support
 - b. Programme Delivery, Assessment and Reporting
 - c. Teaching
 - d. Quality management at operational level
 - iii. *Both* awarding institution and partner:
 - a. Resources
 - b. Review of Agreements

Where differences occur in the programme(s) offered in Barbados and the awarding institution's home country, the transnational institution **must** provide BAC with a clear statement on any variation in the programme(s). A rationale for and the consequences of the variation should be provided for the recognition of the qualification awarded. Such variations may result in an in-depth evaluation of the programme by BAC.

Procedure

The procedure for collaborative provision of post-secondary or tertiary education and training in Barbados will follow international and regional trends whilst taking into account the local context. As such the following will be done:

1. Both local and foreign providers must register with BAC.
2. An overseas institution and its local partner must submit to BAC a joint proposal for each programme.
3. All arrangements will be reviewed individually through the internal processes of BAC.

Recognition of the programme and qualification should be sought in writing by the end of the first year of operation. Recognition will be granted based on the recognition/accreditation given by the legitimate EQAA in the home country. However, should accreditation be sought from BAC, the time period for applying for accreditation of programmes should be:

- (a) Bachelor's programmes - within 3 years of start up date
- (b) Master's programmes - within 2 years of start up date
- (c) Doctoral programmes - within 3 years of start up date

Withdrawal or Cancellation of Recognition

The grounds for withdrawal or cancellation of recognition of the programme and qualification include:

- i. Removal of the institution from the *Register of Post-secondary or Tertiary Educational Providers*
- ii. Loss of accreditation/recognition by the overseas institution in its country of origin
- iii. Loss of authorisation to operate an extension site, where applicable
- iv. Evidence that the information provided to BAC was deliberately falsified or misrepresented

- v. Breach of the terms and conditions under which the recognition was granted. The recognition process for the programme should be:
1. A letter signed by both parties requesting recognition must be submitted to BAC.
 2. The letter *must* provide evidence (from the competent authority/ies in the home country) of the foreign institution's legal establishment; recognition/accreditation status; and authorisation or approval to set up an extension site outside the home country. BAC retains the right to conduct an evaluation of any educational provider and/or programme prior to determining its recognition in Barbados. The cost of the evaluation will be borne by the providers.
 3. BAC's recognition process for providers involved in collaborative provisions will apply.
 4. All documentation submitted by the providers will be reviewed by BAC. Consultant evaluators may be used by BAC during this process.
 5. BAC will inform the providers of the outcome of its application for recognition and the conditions under which recognition is granted.

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- 3) Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)
- 4) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation/Council of Europe
- 5) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
- 6) UNESCO/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
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