

Before you study...
Do your research!



Your Gateway to Global Recognition

**Planning to study in Barbados,
overseas, by correspondence
or online?**

THEN READ THIS FIRST!

Be aware of Diploma Mills and Accreditation Mills and Fraudulent Providers

Be sure you know whether the institution at which you have chosen to study is accredited, that is, it is a legitimate provider of diplomas, certificates or degrees, and it is NOT a Diploma Mill. Taking the time to check first can save you a lot of time, money, and effort. It is worth it, in the long run!

What is Accreditation?

- ❑ Accreditation is a process in which a programme of study or institution is assessed for its standard and given official recognition. At the *programme* level, accreditation is concerned with the quality of a specific course or programme of study; while *institutional accreditation* is concerned with the evaluation of an entire institution.
- ❑ The accreditation process is intended to strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of educational provisions, making it worthy of public confidence.

What is a Diploma Mill?

A Diploma Mill sells qualifications with very little or no quality assurance. Diplomas are issued by an unaccredited institution of tertiary/higher education, and these degrees are granted without ensuring that the students are properly qualified.

What is an Accreditation Mill?

This is accreditation with low educational standards and without recognition from government and other competent authorities. Accreditation mills give the public the impression that the institution has met the required standards.

For more information on fraudulent accrediting agencies, institutions and diploma mills see www.osac.state.or.us/loda/unaccredited.html. (Also see the **Barbados Accreditation Council** pamphlet on Websites that provides information on Accredited and Non-accredited Institutions)

Thinking of studying locally?

When you are choosing an institution, ensure that it is registered with the **Barbados Accreditation Council**. Registration with the Council guarantees that the institution has met certain standards.

Therefore, it is important to choose a **registered institution** when considering post-secondary or tertiary education and training in Barbados.

Thinking of studying abroad?

If you are thinking of studying overseas, for example, in the USA, it is vital that you check the accreditation status of the college/university with the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) at www.chea.org

In addition, you might want to visit the website of the United States Department of Education at <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation> (*Also see our pamphlet on **Websites that Provide Information on Accredited and Non-accredited Institutions for other countries***).

How to recognise fraudulent providers?

The best safeguard against fraudulent providers is to check with the **Barbados Accreditation Council** to ensure that the institutions and programmes of study are either recognised or accredited by an authorised accreditation agency or body.

If you are studying towards a profession that requires a license for admission to practise, then you must also check the accreditation status of the programme.



Benefits of Accreditation

Students

- Highlights the capabilities/competencies of the institution;
- Assures recognition of qualifications and transferability locally, regionally and internationally;
- Improves education/training and learning achievement as the quality of the institution's provision is assured;
- Provides assurance that an individual is getting value for money for time spent on a programme of study;
- Facilitates the transfer of learner credits from one institution to another; and
- Provides recognition for entry into higher education, profession and business.

Institutions

- Provides national, regional and international recognition of quality, accountability, and public trust;
- Verifies the quality of the educational provision to potential students, businesses and governments;
- Facilitates access to support and services designed to continually improve the quality of education and training;
- Lends prestige to the institution;
- Highlights strengths and capabilities of the institution;
- Aids with student recruitment efforts; and
- Provides credibility by enhancing the image of the institution.


Employers

- Assures the quality of human capital;
- Assures the quality of qualifications and credentials presented;
- Increases productivity and performance which may lead to increased profitability; and

- Provides benchmarks against which educational provision can be measured against employment requirements.

Nation

- Assures a highly skilled workforce, which should enhance international competitiveness;
- Increases the global competitiveness of local institutions;
- Provides assurance to taxpayers of the quality of educational provision; and
- Assures government of positive returns on investment in the educational sector.



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

For further information please contact:



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