



Barbados Accreditation Council



**GUIDELINES FOR
RECOGNITION
SERVICES**

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Preface

This document has been prepared by the Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC) to assist persons that are seeking to access the recognition services of the Barbados Accreditation Council. It provides individuals with information governing the procedures and criteria for the BAC's recognition services. Policy related questions should be directed to the offices of the BAC.

This document will be reviewed periodically and amended, where necessary.

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 or 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, the Council will work with its stakeholders to foster an environment that promotes shared learning.

QUALITY STATEMENTS

Quality for the 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 the 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 the 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.

The 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 the Council

The main *functions* of the Council include, inter alia to:

- 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 the Council pursuant to paragraph (a) and to;
- c. accredit and re-accrediting 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, the Council's *powers* include, inter alia to:

- 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 the Council, or have their programmes accredited, re-accredited by the Council.

GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION SERVICES

Introduction

The term “recognition” has been defined as the formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the appropriateness of a foreign qualification to access educational and/or employment in the receiving country. It has also been defined as:

- The holistic process which facilitates an understanding of foreign qualifications and the subsequent placement of foreign qualification holders for work or study purposes.
- The formal end result of the above process, constituting the decision taken by an employer or education and training provider, or any other relevant party, to accept the qualification for a particular purpose.
- The formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the appropriateness of foreign qualification, which enables the qualification holder to access educational and/or employment activities in the receiving country. ¹

The recognition services of the Barbados Accreditation Council include:

1. Conferral of Title;
2. Programme Approval;
3. Recognition of Awarding Bodies;
4. Recognition of Institution and/or Programme; and
5. Recognition of Qualification.

These Guidelines relate to the Recognition of Institution and/or Programme and Recognition of Qualification services.

¹ Criteria and Guidelines: Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications-South Africa, http://www.logos-net.net/ilo/195_base/en/init/sa_19.htm

Recognition of Institution and/or Programme

It is recommended that persons seeking to undertake a programme of study ensure that the provider of the programme and/or the programme itself is recognised and/or accredited. This facilitates acceptance of the qualification by employers and other post-secondary/tertiary educational providers.

Procedures

Making an application

A complete application includes the following:

- an **application** form, fully completed and legible
- Identification (ID) – valid national ID, passport or driver’s licence
- **Payment** or **proof of payment**

If any of the above does not comply with the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the application form, the investigation process will not be commenced and the application will be returned to the applicant. The BAC will not be held responsible for the delay.

Post application

Once the investigations have been completed, the applicant is issued with a *Certified Statement* which is valid for one (1) year. The *Certified Statement* is a basic statement which certifies certain specific information related to the institution and/or programme. It clearly outlines the recognition status of the institution and/or programme depending on the applicant’s request at application. Information is also provided regarding the recognition status of the provider and/or programme by the BAC.

Fees

1. A non-refundable application processing fee of BDS\$10.00 plus the service fee is payable upon application for a Request for Recognition of Institutions and Programmes.
2. The correct amounts should be paid for the service required **per institution or programme**.

Bundled Packages

Institution	Programme/Course of Study	Fee (Processing – per one (1) time application) Bds\$	Fee (Bds\$)
Institution(s) only	No request	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee for Certified Statement x per institution
No request	Different Programmes/courses	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee for Certified Statement x per programme/course
Same Institution	Different Programmes/courses	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee for Certified Statement x per programme/course
Different Institutions	Same Programme/course	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee for Certified Statement x per institution
Different Institutions	Different Programmes/courses	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee for Certified Statement x per programme/course

3. Refer to the Fees for Services pamphlet for other fees.

Processing

Processing time starts on the date that **all** information is received by the BAC from the applicant. **Applicants should be aware that timely service delivery is only possible when all the required information is readily available.**

The BAC will make every effort to make results available within the shortest possible time. Processing time can however, be impacted upon by various factors outside the control of the BAC. Applicants should therefore be mindful of the **possibility of delay**.

The processing time for applications is a minimum of 20 working days.

In the event of an extra-ordinary circumstance causing undue delay, applicants will be informed by the BAC by telephone, email or letter.

Factors causing delay

- Considerably more research and/or consultation than usually required for determining the recognition status for the institution or programme.
- Lack of information needed to complete the evaluation resulting in the need to contact the country of origin of the institution or programme. Completion of an evaluation will be dependent upon a reply from the source as well as the quality from the source in these instances. Processing will commence immediately upon receipt of a reply.
- A marked imbalance between available human and other resources in the BAC and service demand.
- Service demand/volume of applications exceeds available capacity.
- Factors related to the applicant which applicants can avoid by
 1. making the necessary enquiries before making the application
 2. following carefully the guidelines and procedures set out in this document when preparing applications
 3. making sure the application form is completed in its entirety and legible, and all necessary information are included
 4. making ample provision for meeting personal deadlines e.g. commencement of studies or employment
 5. giving clear instruction on the handling of recognition results, whether they are to be posted and to whom or whether they will be collected
 6. ensuring that all addresses are correct
 7. hand-delivering applications - **do not fax or email** applications (as processing begins on payment of appropriate fee)
 8. allowing time for postage after the expected date of completion as this is not included in the timelines of the BAC
 9. waiting to be contacted for collection of results, if results are to be prepared for collection.

Recognition of Qualification

Recognition of Qualification, commonly referred to as *Equivalency of Qualification*, involves the evaluation of a foreign-based qualification to determine its equivalency or comparability with locally offered qualifications.

The Council applies a number of criteria when evaluating qualifications. The most important are the length of the programme, the level at which subjects were studied, entry requirements, structure of the programme and the objectives of the programme. The postsecondary/tertiary education and/or training provider that offered the course of study must have been recognised by the authorised educational authorities of the country concerned or some corresponding organisation. The following criteria guide the evaluation process:

1. **The applicant** for evaluation may be a citizen of Barbados or a citizen of another country who has completed education or covered a part of it in a foreign education and training institution and wishes to continue in a Barbadian higher education institution or to start work in Barbados.
2. **Purpose of the evaluation** is to provide information about the possibilities and give access to study in Barbadian higher education institutions at the appropriate level to the applicant and to provide information about the possibilities and give holders of foreign qualification access to the Barbadian labour market.
3. **Required documents** – the applicant should present the following documents for evaluation:
 - a. Application form, complete and legible;
 - b. Original and copy of credential/qualification;
 - c. Certified translation of the credential/qualification in English, if the original document is not in English;
 - d. Original of the academic transcript or other transcripts accompanying the document to be sent directly to the BAC by the institution(s) attended;
 - e. Documentation of course(s) e.g. curriculum, syllabus, course descriptions, hours of study/units/credits, exam results, and so forth;
 - f. All other relevant documents attesting the path of education; and
 - g. Documentation of change of name, e.g. marriage certificate, if your name has changed since the documents were issued.

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain and provide this information with the completed application form to the Council. At any time during the evaluation process, the Council will reserve the right to request additional documents, and/or that documents be sent directly to the Council by the issuing institution(s).

Principles

The Council in accordance with international best practice observes the following general principles for the recognition of qualification service:

1. *A comparative approach* – the general approach to evaluating foreign qualifications to a particular system should consider the diversity of educational systems in the world. Assessment criteria for the evaluation of foreign credentials are based on the structural comparison of indicators in education and training systems and the features of qualifications within those systems. Recommendations will be expressed in terms of the closest (minimum) comparable Barbadian qualification that can be identified.
2. *Access to the evaluation service* - the evaluation service is conducted such that holders of foreign qualifications have adequate access to an assessment of their qualifications upon request.
3. *Evaluation without prejudice* - applications are considered and processed without any form of racial, religious, political or sexual discrimination, respecting the confidential nature, within legal confines, of the information pertaining to the applications. The only consideration is the merit of the qualification(s) for which recognition is sought.
4. *Fair, transparent, coherent and reliable procedures and criteria* - transparent, rational and reliable procedures and criteria are used and applied honestly and consistently to ensure **all** applicants receive a fair consideration of their applications. Criteria and procedures are periodically reviewed to maintain best practice and eliminate, when possible, any undue complications in the procedure.
5. *Professional integrity* - The staff of the Council will maintain the highest degree of professional integrity, treating all clients and evaluations fairly and consistently. Staff will resist offers of reward, compensation or personal benefit, to influence the contents and outcomes of evaluations to suit a particular purpose.²

² Criteria and Guidelines: Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications-South Africa, http://www.logos-net.net/ilo/195_base/en/init/sa_19.htm

Procedures

Making an application

A complete application includes the following:

- an **application** form, fully completed and legible
- a complete set of **documentation** (see overleaf)
- Identification (ID) – valid national ID, passport or driver’s licence
- **Payment or proof of payment**

If any of the above does not comply with the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the application form, the evaluation process will not be commenced and the application will be returned to the applicant. The BAC will not be held responsible for the delay.

Verification of Documents

The BAC maintains the right to refer fraudulent documents to the Fraud Department of the Royal Barbados Police Force for further investigation.

Post application

Once the investigations have been completed, the applicant is issued with a *Certified Statement* or *Standard Evaluation Report*, depending on the applicant’s request at application. The *Certified Statement* is a basic account which certifies certain specific information related to the qualification. The *Standard Evaluation Report* is a comprehensive assessment statement which includes an overview of the issuing country’s educational system; description of the qualification; employment related information; comparability of the award and description of the comparable level.

Processing

Processing time starts on the date that **all** information and relevant documentation have been received by the BAC from the applicant and/or the institution that awarded the qualification. **Applicants should be aware that timely service delivery is only possible when all the required information is readily available.**

The BAC will make every effort to make results available within the shortest possible time. Processing time can however, be impacted upon by various factors outside the control of the BAC. Applicants should therefore be mindful of the **possibility of delay**.

The processing time for applications is a minimum of 20 working days.

In the event of an undue delay as a result of extra-ordinary circumstances, applicants will be informed by the BAC by telephone, email or letter.

Factors causing delay

- Considerably more research and/or consultation than usually required for evaluation of the qualification(s) submitted.
- Lack of information needed to complete the evaluation resulting in the need to contact the country of origin of the qualification. Completion of an evaluation will be dependent upon a reply from the source as well as the quality from the source in these instances. Processing will commence immediately upon receipt of a reply.
- A marked imbalance between available human and other resources in the BAC and service demand.
- Service demand/volume of applications exceeds available capacity.
- Factors related to the applicant which applicants can avoid by
 10. making the necessary enquiries before making the application
 11. following carefully the guidelines and procedures set out in this document when preparing applications
 12. making sure the application form is completed in its entirety and legible, and all necessary documentation are included
 13. making ample provision for meeting personal deadlines e.g. commencement of studies or employment
 14. giving clear instruction on the handling of evaluation results, whether they are to be posted and to whom or whether they will be collected
 15. ensuring that all addresses are correct
 16. hand-delivering applications - **do not fax or email** applications
 17. allowing time for postage after the expected date of completion as this is not included in the timelines of the BAC
 18. waiting to be contacted for collection of results, if results are to be prepared for collection.

Required Documentation

- Application form, completed and legible
- Original and copy of credential(s)/qualification(s)
- Certified translation of the credential/qualification in English, if the original document is not in English
- Official academic transcript(s) to be sent directly to the Barbados Accreditation Council by the institution(s) attended
- Documentation of courses/programmes e.g. curriculum, course descriptions, assessment method(s), syllabus, course content, hours of study/credits, grade descriptions, etc.
- All other relevant documents attesting the path of education
- Documentation of change of name, e.g. marriage certificate or deed poll, if your name has changed since the documents were issued

PLEASE NOTE:

As it relates to personal documentation of the courses completed (official transcript/transcript of record/statement of results, examination book, etc.), you are responsible for requesting that an official copy be sent **directly** to the BAC from the institution(s) you attended. Such documents should also indicate the duration of the course(s) taken, for instance by indicating the number of hours and/or credits. Your personal information is confidential and may not be disclosed without your written consent.

The BAC reserves the right to charge a cancellation fee of BBD\$75 in all cases where money needs to be refunded *not as a result of an oversight by the BAC*.

Appeal

An individual may appeal the decision of the BAC concerning the outcome of the recognition of qualification process in relation to that individual. The recognition decision resulting from the evaluation undertaken of the qualification and reported in the Certified Statement or Standard Evaluation Report shall remain unchanged until a final decision is made on the appeal. The BAC will record and maintain a database of appeals received and decisions reached.

Grounds for appeal

The grounds for an appeal shall be

- (a) The BAC's decision was arbitrary, capricious or not supported by substantial evidence in the record on which the Board took action;
- (b) The procedures used to reach the decision were contrary to the BAC's established policies, procedures and practises;
- (c) There is clear and convincing evidence that procedural error prejudiced the BAC's consideration;³ and
- (d) There were errors or omissions in carrying out prescribed procedures on the part of the evaluation team or the BAC, which materially affected the BAC's decision.

Time for commencing appeal

An appeal must commence within 10 working days of the initial decision being received by the provider. The initial decision is deemed to be received by the individual on actual receipt, or two (2) days after posting, whichever is sooner. The appeal evidence provided would be subject to

³ The Higher Learning Commission-Institutional Appeals Process, www.ncahlc.org

the submission of additional research findings in addition to the evidence provided to the Board of Directors at the time it made its decision.

Commencing appeal

An appeal is commenced by lodging a notice of appeal and paying the applicable fee. If an appellant fails to file the notice of appeal and pay the required fee, or submit the appeal document(s), in a timely fashion, the appellant shall have waived the right to appeal.

Notice of appeal

The notice of appeal shall be addressed to:

Executive Director
Barbados Accreditation Council
123 A&B Plaza Centrale
Roebuck Street
St. Michael, BB11080
Barbados, W.I.

The notice of appeal must be in writing and signed by the appellant. The notice of appeal must set out the appellant's grounds of appeal succinctly, but in sufficient detail to provide a clear understanding of the basis for the appeal. The burden of proof will be borne by the appellant.

Withdrawal of appeal

An appellant may withdraw his/her appeal by sending a written notice to the Executive Director of the BAC.

Required Documentation

- Details of appeal submitted in writing and signed or
- Application form, completed and legible; and
- Payment of requisite fees

Fees

1. A non-refundable application processing fee of BDS\$10.00 is payable upon application for a Request for Recognition of Qualification.
2. The correct amounts should be paid for the service required **per qualification**.

Bundled Packages

Awarding Body	Qualification/Level	Fee (Processing – per one (1) time application) Bds\$)	Fee (Bds\$)
Same Awarding Body	Same Level	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee x per qualification (fee as stated for Type of Service requested)
Different Awarding Bodies	Different Qualifications/Levels	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee x per awarding body (fee as stated for Type of Service requested)
Same Awarding Body	Different Levels	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee x per qualification (fee as stated for Type of Service requested)
Different Awarding Bodies	Same Qualification	Application fee (currently \$10.00)	Service Fee x per awarding body (fee as stated for Type of Service requested)

3. Refer to the Fees for Services pamphlet for other fees.

APPENDIX

RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATION APPLICATION FOR APPEAL

1 Details of Appellant

(Please note: you **must** provide this information before the Barbados Accreditation Council can consider your appeal.

Name of appellant:

Postal Address:

.....

.....

.....

Telephone: () () ()
Home Work Cell

Email address:

2 Details of Appeal

Write the details of your appeal **as clearly** as possible below. Try to give **specific examples or facts** that support your appeal. *Use extra pages if necessary and remember to clearly mark what the information relates to.*

<p>3 Supporting Documentation</p> <p>Please attach any documents that support your appeal and list these below.</p> <p>Use extra pages if necessary and remember to clearly mark what the information relates to.</p>	<p><i>BAC use only</i></p>
<p>4 Authorisation</p> <p>You must sign this in order for the Barbados Accreditation Council to consider your appeal.</p> <p>I authorise the BAC to proceed with investigating my appeal.</p> <p>Name: _____ Signature: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Print (in block letters)</p> <p>Date: _____</p>	

Please submit the completed form and other evidence to:

The Executive Director
 Barbados Accreditation Council
 123 A&B Plaza Centrale
 Roebuck Street
 St. Michael, BB 11080
 Barbados, W. I.

Acknowledgements

The Barbados Accreditation Council wishes to acknowledge the works of the following organisations which were referenced in the preparation of these Guidelines:

- Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT)
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)
- South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)
- University Council of Jamaica

For further information contact:

**Barbados Accreditation Council
123 A & B Plaza Centrale
Roebuck Street
St. Michael, BB 11080
Barbados, W.I.
Tel: (246) 436-9094
Fax: (246) 429-9233
Email: info@bac.gov.bb
Website: www.bac.gov.bb**