

The Mona School of Business recently received accreditation for its programmes from the Association of MBAs (AMBA).

Will the accreditation be accepted outside of Jamaica/the region?

Answer: Yes. The accreditation will be accepted locally, regionally and internationally.

How long does accreditation last and will it have to be renewed?

Answer: Accreditation is normally granted for a period of five – seven years and is renewable.

Is UWI's degree recognised internationally now? How will lack of accreditation affect persons who have already graduated?

Answer: UWI's degree is, and will continue to be, recognised worldwide due to the stringent quality control measures already in place and the fact that the regional institution was authorized by Royal Charter, as part of the Commonwealth system.

If a student enters the programme prior to the start of the accreditation process, or the University is accredited after the student completes the degree will the degree still be accredited on completion?

Answer: Yes, the degree will be accredited since the University itself will have received accreditation.

What do staff/students need to do in order to assist in the accreditation process?

Answer: Staff and students should cooperate with members of the accrediting body when they visit the Mona Campus over the period **January 31, 2012** to **February 3, 2012**. They may wish to ask questions and get your views.



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MONA, JAMAICA

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Accreditation

& You

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Accreditation - frequently asked questions



The University of the West Indies since its inception has adopted the route of internal quality assurance measures for its programmes

What is Accreditation?

Answer: Accreditation is a voluntary process through which an institution becomes officially certified as meeting agreed standards and providing services of a reasonably good quality.

Who performs the accreditation?

Answer: For many institutions, particularly those in the United States of America, accreditation is conducted by independent accrediting agencies. In other countries, higher education institutions must receive the permission of the government to operate, and thus accreditation is performed by the government. In Jamaica, accreditation is done through the University Council of Jamaica, which is a statutory body currently under the portfolio of the Ministry of Education.

What is involved in the accreditation process?

Answer: The accrediting agency visits the institution under review and examines areas including the university's academic programmes, financial status, governance and administration, admissions and student services procedures, available resources, student academic achievement, and organizational effectiveness. On completion of this exercise, the accrediting agency certifies that the institution meets agreed standards.

Why is UWI seeking accreditation at this time?

Answer: Accreditation has become increasingly relevant in an environment in which the liberalization of higher education will become effective under the terms of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Given the current competitive structure of the regional market for tertiary education, this development means that more

than ever before, institutions of higher education will have to become more accountable to their various stakeholders.

How were UWI's programmes assessed before this?

Answer: The University of the West Indies since its inception has adopted the route of internal quality assurance measures for its programmes, including those which are not subject to professional accreditation.

Currently, all academic departments at The UWI are subject to a periodic and formal process of quality reviews and quality assurance, which are implemented through the Office of the Board for Undergraduate Studies (OBUS). These reviews include a self-assessment report which is considered by a review team which typically comprises a representative from the same discipline on another UWI campus, together with at least one senior academic from an extra-regional university, and a professional with expertise in the area, usually from the Caribbean but external to the UWI.

The review team visits the campus to test the validity of the self-assessment report and meets with academic staff, students, programme graduates, relevant employers and management personnel. The team then provides feedback to the academic staff, which identifies issues for further consideration and/or action and reports the results to the faculty and campus academic boards.

The OBUS review is supported by course and programme approval and the use and approval of first and second examiners, including university examiners, for most

university examinations. There are also external examiners for all postgraduate courses and some undergraduate courses as well. The external examining system relies heavily on external academics invited from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and, in a few cases, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. In other words, although The UWI has not previously been accredited by an external body, there are checks and balances in place to ensure that standards are maintained.

Are any of UWI's programmes accredited now?

Answer: Yes. The UWI, through its St. Augustine Campus, has already received accreditation from the local accreditation body in Trinidad & Tobago. The UWI has also had a long experience with the accreditation of certain of its professional programmes. The Faculty of Engineering is accredited by the relevant regulatory professional bodies which from time to time carry out intensive quality reviews to ensure that the programmes being offered meet international standards.

The medical programme was formerly accredited by the United Kingdom General Medical Council, however when it was announced that the Council would cease to perform the function of an accreditation body for medical schools in the Commonwealth countries, The UWI successfully lobbied for the establishment of a regional accreditation body for the medical and other health sciences. That body is the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions which was established and launched in 2004. It has accredited the UWI medical programme.