



CARIBBEAN  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

# CXC

## CARIBBEAN VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION



**REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND PRINCIPALS**



## Our Vision

To ensure the global intellectual competitiveness of the Caribbean through the provision of quality assurance in education and comprehensive certification.

## Our Vision

To provide the region with:  
syllabuses of the highest quality; valid and reliable examinations and certificates of international repute for students of all ages, abilities and interests;  
services to educational institutions in the development of syllabuses, examinations and examinations' administration, in the most cost-effective way.





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## Introduction

Competency-Based Education Training and Assessment (**CBETA**) is built on the philosophy that “*almost all learners can learn equally well if they receive the kind of instructions they need*”. To make this philosophy work, CBETA requires significant changes in the development and the administration of the modularized/unit-based programmes. Although technical vocational education has always been concerned with the practical demonstration of the skill, CBETA places a new and systematic emphasis on this principle. In this approach, the systematic development and delivery of the training is guided by five essential elements:

- i. The tasks to be taught are identified by the experts in the occupation and verified by employers in the marketplace.
- ii. The programme allows each learner to have the opportunity to develop and to be evaluated on the competencies achieved.
- iii. Assessment of competency is not only based on knowledge and attitude but primarily on the actual **demonstration** of the competency.
- iv. Occupational standards or unit competency standards should be used as the basis for assessing achievement and students/trainees should be aware of them.
- v. Students progress through the programme by demonstrating the attainment of specified competencies.

CBETA also dictates a change in the role of the teacher which changes from the conventional information-giver to that of a resource person. Hence, the students will have more responsibility for their own learning and progress. Student involvement is critical to CBETA. Therefore, at the start of the training programme, students should be made aware of the key elements of CBETA. These are:

- How the programme operates
- The role of the teacher
- The responsibility of the trainee
- The qualification and units within the programme
- The standards that are to be attained
- How and when competencies will be assessed

## Important Elements of the CVQ in Schools

School administrators must be aware of the requirements for a successful competency-based programme in schools. These requirements are the foundation of good practice in delivery of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification. These are listed below:

- i. A variety of teaching methods and aids are used.
- ii. Adequate materials, space and equipment are available.
- iii. An environment that simulates the work place and work experience opportunities is available to students.
- iv. Students are informed about criteria and attitudes important to the occupation.
- v. As far as possible each student's training programme should be individualized and self-paced.
- vi. Learning activity is repeated and reinforced until competence is achieved.
- vii. Programme completion is based on satisfactory achievement of all specified competencies.
- viii. Individual student records are maintained and should reflect the student's progress.
- ix. Continuous and detailed feedback is given to students/trainees on their progress.
- x. Students' rating should reflect the level of competency achieved.

### **Before you start**

#### **1 Familiarize yourself with the CVQ Framework**

Become familiar with the regional qualifications framework, the 5-tiered certification levels, the occupational qualification standards and the curriculum guides (where they exist). Regional occupational standards are in use and can be acquired from National Training Agencies (NTA Trinidad and Tobago and H.E.A.R.T Trust/National Training Agency Jamaica).

## 2 Evaluate your existing resources

The second step is to evaluate your existing training and learning resources against the facility standard. The facility standards will outline what are necessary for the delivery of the training programme in terms of work areas, equipment needed, and physical space. These are the required standards for the development of skills and are derived from industry requirements for the particular occupation or job. The school should have an adequate library or learning centre and information technology facilities with Internet connectivity.

### Review your arrangements against the standards to ensure they comply

#### 1. Relevant questions to ask

- (a) Do members of staff have access to all the instructional delivery material?
- (b) Do teaching staff hold appropriate industry and teacher qualification?
- (c) Are sufficient people familiar with internal quality assurance methodologies?
- (d) Are teachers familiar with competency-based education and training assessment methodologies?
- (e) Are teachers familiar with assessment methodologies for competency-based education?

#### 2. Understanding competency-based occupational standards and assessment

Teachers need to be confident that they understand the structure, content and outcome of the qualifications they will be delivering. Teaching staff should spend premium time familiarizing themselves with the occupational standard, and the curriculum guides.

#### 3. Liaise with external bodies

There will be times when you may have to refer to external bodies. These include industry personnel, employees and professional bodies in your locality to expose students to the world of work and to gain competence with industry standards.

In any event, it is extremely important that careful selection of the skill area/occupational area is undertaken. It is recommended that schools pursue **only** those areas where facilities are in place to undertake skills training, or there are facilities (e.g. Industries) in close proximity where students will have the opportunity to have 'hands on' exposure to industry standard.





## Organisational Issues

There are a number of steps that schools should go through to develop competency-based qualifications within the school curriculum.

These are:

- I. finding out about the industry in your local area
- II. knowing your students and their interests
- III. making sure you have the appropriate physical and human resources available
- IV. building a profile in the school and the community
- V. building strong partnerships with industry

### **Management Support**

School principals and managers of training institutions have a significant role to play in ensuring transition from the traditional teaching of Tech-Voc subjects to competency-based training and assessment.

In schools where a good transition is made, the senior staff has:

- (a) displayed an accurate understanding of the nature of CBETA
- (b) ensured that staff has adequate time to explore and discuss the qualifications and the qualification framework
- (c) organized the staff to think creatively and holistically about the core delivery issues:
  - the student group
  - the organization of classes
  - the need to acquire or develop resources
  - the need to plan appropriate methodologies and systems of delivery
  - the need to build relationships with relevant employers/industry partners and/or create suitable work simulation environments
  - the need to ensure supportive administrative processes and structures are in place (e.g. records storage and retrieval)

### **Staffing Arrangements**

In many respects, staff is the key to the successful implementation of the curricula. If they understand and support the changes, and possess the knowledge and skills to manage the learning programme, then the transition should flow relatively smoothly.

Within this context, it is important to consider the school's staffing arrangements. Is there a mix of a solid core of permanent staff supplemented by part-time industry-based staff who will deliver specific aspects of the programme? Are staff primarily long-term and permanent with solid theoretical/academic backgrounds, but without recent industry experience?

Although there is no correct staffing formula, beyond ensuring that staff has the appropriate industry and teacher qualifications, the nature of the workforce you want to create will impact significantly on the preparation required to successfully introduce CBETA in your school. If you employ a high percentage of part-time teachers with industry currency, you will need to consider questions relating to:

**a) The extent of their responsibilities, that is:**

Are they expected to liaise with employers/organizations, to organize work placements and maintain regular contact with local firms? If they are, what support and information do they need in order to fulfill the role?

**b) The degree to which holistic approaches to delivery and assessment are to be explored and encouraged**

Developing an integrated learning programme takes considerable time and effort; will part-time staff be expected to pursue these activities? Are they familiar with all aspects of the programme, or do their skills and abilities relate to specific areas of training?

**c) Staff Development**

What information, knowledge and skills do part-time teachers need to deliver competency-based training? What support do they require in terms of quality assurance?

Conversely, if staff is permanent, then a significantly different set of issues may arise in relation to:

**I. Industry currency:** Are all staff familiar with current industry practices?

**II. Relationships with employers.** Are teaching staff required to organize work placements and monitor learner performance, or do industry liaison officers or workplace/placement coordinators fulfill this role? If this is to be part of a teacher's responsibility, have they established and maintained contact with local firms and organizations in the past, or is time required to develop appropriate networks?

**III. Existing attitudes and values.** Are teaching staff prepared for the shift to competency-based education or do they view the change from a cautious, hostile or defensive perspective?

## Embedding Underpinning Knowledge in Learning Programmes

One of the challenges schools face with competency-based training is effectively integrating theory and practice. Competence is not just the performance of tasks but the application of skills to new and different contexts. For this to occur, students must be able to apply and transform knowledge in different workplace situations.

What is the relationship between theory and practice in a competency-based training programme? Is competence best achieved through separation or integration? Delivering outcomes-based training suggests that teaching and learning should mutually reinforce the interdependence between knowledge and skill. This may raise questions about the structure of the delivery, the nature of learning activities, the location and content of learning and the role of teachers where different discipline areas may combine under the umbrella of competence.

In theory, embedding underpinning knowledge within a particular qualification sounds relatively easy. The challenge for teachers and schools, however, lies in the practicalities. Although the units describe the underpinning knowledge required to develop competency, a significant number of teaching staff have argued that core concepts and skills have been overlooked or under emphasized. This raises a number of questions, not least of which is where and how such material will be delivered, a query that relates to the inclusion of all underpinning knowledge.

But focusing on the identification of 'missing' underpinning knowledge and where and how it can be included, as some teachers have done, can lead to a pre-occupation with 'what the curriculum has left out' rather than ensuring teachers focus on what is needed to achieve competency. If material that featured strongly in your previous curriculum or training programme has been diminished, it is important to determine whether the knowledge is actually critical to the development of competency.

In some instances, the information you have identified, information you may have taught for many years, is no longer relevant; or it will have far less significance with the change in emphasis. In determining the theoretical information required within training programmes, schools have found it easier to begin by asking, 'what knowledge and information do learners need to achieve competency?' rather than focusing on their existing materials and endeavouring to match competencies with curriculum.

Irrespective of whether there are gaps you wish to rectify or not, there are a number of general questions and options you may find it useful to consider in determining the delivery of underpinning knowledge.

- Do learners need this information *before* they begin studying a particular module or units of competency? If yes, is it possible to:
  - A. Provide a session with supportive learning materials focusing on background information? Or
  - B. Develop a bridging programme?
  
- Do learners need this information as they proceed through the qualification? If so, does the information relate to one particular competency or a cluster of competencies? If it is the latter, would it be appropriate to develop a discrete unit or set of resources that address these issues? Can the information be incorporated within a number of modules or units of competency without duplication or material being inadvertently overlooked? Would it be best to link a particular section of underpinning knowledge to one competency? If so, what implications might this have for learners in terms of transfer arrangements and recognition of competence particularly if they need to move from one school to the next?
  
- Is it necessary to present the underpinning knowledge as theory or can it be developed through learning experiences? Can activities be created to enable student to acquire the required knowledge and skills? Are there alternative strategies members of the teaching team can adopt across their particular subject areas to ensure learners cover the underpinning material?

Underpinning knowledge can be delivered in a multitude of ways. Your strategy will be influenced by the particular competency/ies, students need, resources, timetabling, teaching approach and form of delivery.

## Criteria for Schools

It is expected that on completion of training, schools will facilitate the assessment leading to, at minimum, a Level 1 vocational qualification. All schools should meet the criteria in the following areas (Appendices 11-14)

1. Administration
2. Staffing
3. Training Programme (Curriculum)
4. Training Facilities
5. Provision for on-the-job training
6. Assessment
7. Record Keeping

## **1. Administration**

- (a) The school or centre should have a vision and mission that facilitates competency-based education, training and assessment;
- (b) The school or centre must be led by an administration that is committed to the objectives of competency-based education and training assessment (CBETA);
- (c) The school or centre must have or cultivate a culture of teamwork integrated into its programme delivery;
- (d) The school or centre shall demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity to its students;
- (e) The school or centre shall be a part of a national TVET mechanism for the coordination of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ);
- (f) Since there are significant benefits in terms of coherence, a senior member of staff should co-ordinate the CVQ programme;
- (g) The school or centre must demonstrate a knowledge of, and commitment to relevant occupational health and safety standards.

## **2. Staffing**

- (a) The school or centre shall provide and maintain adequately trained staff at a level to support the training requirements for the CVQ;
- (b) Staff providing vocational training must in addition to their technical qualifications, also have relevant industrial experience.

## **3. Training Programme**

- (a) The school or centre shall ensure the progressive development of core skills;
- (b) The school or centre shall ensure that Employability Skills-Communication (English-written and oral), Application of Numbers (Math-basic numeracy, arithmetic operations, and application of formulae) and problem-solving skills are integrated in the training programme (CXC's CCSLC Programme provides these skills and competencies);
- (c) The school or centre must have access to the competency standards, curricula and assessment materials for the occupational areas being offered.

## **4. Training Facilities**

The school or centre shall have access to required physical resources (outlined in the Facilities Standard) that will be used to support the training services. These may include and are not limited to:

- A learning resource centre or library
- Information Technology facilities (with Internet connections)
- Relevant books, periodicals and software

**5. Provision for on-the-job training**

- (a) The school or centre must have an active collaborative relationship with the private sector community to facilitate the on-the-job training component of the programme;
- (b) The school or centre must make provision for the systematic monitoring of the on-the-job training component of the programme;
- (c) If appropriate on-the-job training cannot be facilitated, the school or centre must make provision for related simulated job training to be carried out at the centre or school.

**6. Assessment**

- (a) The school or centre shall provide an adequate system for written assessment (testing);
- (b) The school or centre shall provide an adequate system for competency assessment both internally and on-the-job if necessary;
- (c) The school or centre shall liaise with their local Ministry of Education, National Training Agency, National TVET Council or TVET Apex Body to make adequate provisions for assessment, and the monitoring and verification of the assessment outcomes;
- (d) The school or centre shall effectively maintain, file, store, protect and ensure easy access and retrieval of candidate records;
- (e) The school or centre shall ensure that there is an effective candidate appeal system in assessors' assessment decisions.

**7. Record Keeping**

The following record-keeping guidelines should be noted by schools:

- (a) Recording of data should be simple and efficient;
- (b) Records of assessment should specify what evidence is collected, when it is collected and the method of assessment used;
- (c) Assessment records should reflect all areas of performance, that is, knowledge, skills and attitude;
- (d) Records should specify clearly the competencies assessed and the degree of competence achieved. This is critical in determining if assessment for the unit/ cluster of units is complete.





## Quality Control Procedures

*(Adapted from CANTA Quality Assurance Criteria and Guidelines for the CVQ – March 2009)*

It is important that the quality assurance system which is implemented is of a consistently high standard, transparent and can withstand repeated rigorous audit. As such, the principles of quality assurance involved in implementing the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) are applied throughout the entire process of training, assessment and certification. The areas under consideration are:

- The development of training outcomes that reflect workplace requirements (Approved CARICOM Occupational Standards)
- Training delivery
- Assessment
- Certification

The adherence to best practice by the awarding body is central to the quality assurance process.

### **Training Delivery and Approval of Assessment Centres**

One major area of quality assurance is in the delivery of training. This can be work-based, institutional-based, distance or a mix of training modalities. In each case, standards are defined for the delivery of training and assessment and providers are required to be approved.

Approval covers:

- Statutory compliance
- Staff resources
- Physical resources
- Learning resources
- Assessors
- Internal verification procedures
- External verification procedures
- Management of information (record management, security and storage)

All assessment centres must satisfy the minimum requirements for competence-based training, assessment and certification.

### **Assessment**

Assessment within the framework is defined as the process of collecting evidence and making judgements about whether or not competence has been achieved when measured against the occupational standards. The assessment system promotes authentic assessment and ensures a valid, reliable, and fair process. Assessment instruments are validated and assessors who conduct assessments are trained and certified in competence-based assessment methodology.

In order to ensure there is reliability in assessors' judgements, internal and external verification (audits) are done periodically. The verification report and results are documented as part of the quality assurance strategy.

In the context of the CVQ, internal verification of the assessment of candidates is a quality assurance process carried out by a school or education institution offering CVQ. The purpose is to ensure the quality and consistency of assessment of candidates for CVQ awards.

External Verification (EV) can be defined as a quality assurance process undertaken by the awarding body to ensure that a school or education institution maintains the quality standards established by the awarding body.

The following monitoring arrangements for the delivery of CVQs are stipulated:

1. Assessments are conducted by trained assessors;
2. Assessments are conducted within approved centres (*Schools or Education Institutions*);
3. Verification of assessments is regularly conducted with the involvement of trained verifiers and occupational experts;
4. Moderation of assessment results is conducted to maintain consistency.

### **Certification**

Candidates are issued a CVQ on the basis of having met the requirements for certification. This is done on the basis that the training/assessment centre:

- i. Subscribes to the regional qualifications framework;
- ii. Has adhered to the standards-driven, competence-based approach to training and assessment; and
- iii. Has adhered to the quality assurance principles.

### **Awarding Body Best Practice**

There are hallmarks of best practice in the delivery of CVQs with respect to:

#### **Leadership and Management**

- a. Provide an effective risk management strategy
- b. Provide clear lines of governance and accountability
- c. Provide an organizational structure to deliver the business objectives

#### **Awarding and Assessment**

Provide an assessment and awarding service that is fit for purpose

#### **Customer Service**

Demonstrate a commitment to meeting and exceeding customer expectations

#### **Design and Development**

Demonstrate a strategy for promoting diversity and inclusion

#### **Continuous Improvement**

Demonstrate a culture of continuous improvement

## Administration of **CVQ**

### **Registration**

Registration will be completed via the Online Registration System (ORS) by 15 December of each year.

### **Request for Awards**

Requests for awards will be submitted via data file by 30 June, 30 November and 31 March each year.

### **Request for Reviews**

Requests for Reviews are to be made by 15 July, 15 December and 15 April of each year.

### **Ascertaining your Readiness**

Schools can determine their readiness by ensuring that they have met all the criteria on the **Checklist for Readiness** on page 18.

If you are ready, please see the list of Approved Occupational Standards on our website at [www.cxc.org](http://www.cxc.org) and forward the information required by the **CXC/CVQ/001 Form** on page 17 of this handbook to:

**The Pro-Registrar**  
**Caribbean Examinations Council**  
Western Zone Office  
37 Arnold Road, Kingston 5, Jamaica  
Telephone: 876-630-5200  
Facsimile: 876-967-4972  
E-mail: [cxcwzo@cxc.org](mailto:cxcwzo@cxc.org)

# EXAMPLES OF SOME OF THE CARICOM - APPROVED OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS Levels 1 to 2

- Community Tour Guiding
- Community Tourism
- Youth Development Work
- Property and Facilities Maintenance
- Auto Mechanics
- Food Preparation
- Masonry
- Electrical Installation
- Food and Beverage
- General Office Administration
- Light Metal Fabrication
- Welding
- Cosmetology
- Early Childhood Care, Education and Development
- Industrial Security Operations
- Metal Work Engineering
- Data Operations
- Mechanical Maintenance
- General Construction
- Secretarial Skills
- Soft Furnishing
- Agro-Food Processing
- Horticulture
- Interior Decorating
- Carpentry
- Rigging
- Auto Parts Sales and Distribution
- Crop Production
- Housekeeping
- Upholstery
- Beauty Therapy
- Bus Driving
- Consumer and Domestic Electronics
- Garment Construction
- Inland Aquaculture
- Poultry Rearing
- Retail Selling
- Scaffolding
- Sewing Machine Mechanics
- Sewing Machine Operation
- Accounting
- Attraction Operations
- Drywall Construction
- Electrical Installation
- Electrical Line Distribution
- Entertainment Management
- Pig Rearing
- Drapery Making
- Information Technology Usage and Support
- Joinery
- Art and Craft Production
- Printing and Graphic Art – Computer Graphic Art
- Furniture Making
- Call/Contact Centre Operations
- Pipefitting
- Motor Vehicle Air Conditioning Systems
- Concreting
- Motor Vehicle Chassis Systems
- Instrumentation and Control
- Front Office
- Painting and Decorating
- Rabbit Rearing

# CARIBBEAN VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (CVQ)

COUNTRY

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NATIONAL TRAINING AGENCY

---

PERSON RESPONSIBLE for CVQs/MOE:

---

OR OTHER CONTACT PERSONS

---

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONTACT PERSON(S):

---

---

SCHOOLS/CENTRES	PROGRAMMES	OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS	# OF STUDENTS

SIGNATURE

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DATE

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## CHECKLIST FOR READINESS

### **You are ready to pursue the CXC CVQ programmes if...**

- 1. You have a National Training Agency(NTA)/TVET Council
- 2. You have the CARICOM Approved Standards
- 3. You have identified the
  - a. Programmes
  - b. Schools/institutions
- 4. You have completed training of the
  - a. Assessors
  - b. Internal Verifiers
  - c. External Verifiers
- 5. Your institutions have the
  - a. Trained teachers
  - b. Required resources (tools, equipment, workspace)
  - c. Curriculum guides
  - d. Assessment tools
- 6. You have identified contact persons
  - a. Ministry of Education
  - b. Persons responsible for Tech/Voc
  - c. Persons responsible for IT

Once most or all of these are in place, you are ready to sign a contract with CXC.





CARIBBEAN VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION



[www.cxc.org](http://www.cxc.org)