



**ACCREDITATION COUNCIL OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
(ACTT)**

CLASSIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL TITLES

IN

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

CLASSIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL TITLES:

Introduction

Among other functions, the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT), as stated in Chapter 39:06 – Section 8 (2) (i) has responsibility to “ *provide authoritative advice on accreditation and related matters, including the conferment on institutions of such titles as ‘university’, ‘tertiary college’, ‘technical institute’, ‘polytechnic’, ‘community college’, ‘technical college’ and ‘technical university’*” Further, Section 26 (1) states that “*No institution shall carry on the business of post secondary or tertiary education or use any of the words “university”, “tertiary college”, “polytechnic”, “community college”, “technical college”, “technical institute”, or “technical university” in its name unless registered under this Act and any regulations or rules made under this Act.*”

Also included in the Act are brief definitions for each of the institutional titles that is required to be conferred by ACTT. Further, to ensure that international standards are adhered to, ACTT has added to the definitions, information that will be useful to institutions when determining the most appropriate title to be used. The additional information on each institutional type in the classification table was informed by the “Carnegie Classification” produced by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Generally, the major factors that inform the assignment of a title to an institution are the types of programmes offered and levels at which these programmes can be placed on a National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The following represents the terms defined in ACTT’s classification of institutional titles:

1. Technical College, Polytechnic or Technical Institute:

(These three institutional names are synonymous.)

A post secondary institution that offers programmes that prepare graduates for technical occupations and grants sub-baccalaureate (sub-bachelor) awards in applied disciplines. These awards may include certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas and associate degrees.

The technical occupations are mainly those involved in carrying out technological functions in health, engineering, and science. This category includes occupations concerned with providing technical assistance to engineers and scientists in research and testing laboratories and production activities as well as occupations concerned with independently operating and servicing technical equipment and systems. A characteristic of occupations in this category is the requirement for knowledge of scientific, engineering, and mathematical theories, principles and techniques that is less than the knowledge required of professionals but which nevertheless enables the technician to understand how and why a specific device or system operates.

1. Tertiary College, College:

A tertiary institution that offers a range of programmes and grants awards mainly at the sub-baccalaureate (sub-bachelor) level. The awards may include certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas and associate degrees.

2. Community College:

A post secondary or tertiary institution that offers a variety of programmes primarily at the sub-baccalaureate level geared to meeting the needs of the community in which it exists.

The term “community college” is generally used to describe a **publicly funded** institution of higher education that offers instructions that primarily lead to the award of a wide variety of two (2) year associate degrees or terminal occupational qualification. Further, awards from a “community college” can be used to transfer to a three or four year colleges or universities. A transfer programme generally parallels the first year of a three or four year university.

Academic and training programmes at a “community college” are often designed to prepare students for direct entrance into an occupation. Community colleges may also offer continuing education courses that lead to certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, or even non-credit programmes for self-improvement or for interest.

3. University:

A tertiary institution that offers programmes leading to awards at the baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate levels and is characterised as well by a commitment to research that maintains, advances, disseminates and assists the application of knowledge.

Further, a university usually has substantial teaching and research facilities comprising of different departments, divisions, faculties, colleges, schools or institutes. A university has powers to award taught and/or research degrees through an undergraduate division at the baccalaureate level, as well as graduate schools and professional schools at the master's and doctoral levels.

A university differs from other tertiary institutions in that it is larger (number of students), has wider curricula, is usually involved in research activities, and awards its own professional, undergraduate, and graduate degrees.

4. Technical University:

A tertiary institution that has as its major emphasis the preparation of graduates for technological occupations through the award of baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate awards and also conducts research of an applied nature. That is, a tertiary institution established primarily to deliver technical, vocational and professional programmes that lead to the award of specialist and technical certificates, diplomas and advanced diplomas, as well as degrees at the associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. Generally, a technical university also conducts research related to the needs of society.