

Internal Quality Assurance at UWI



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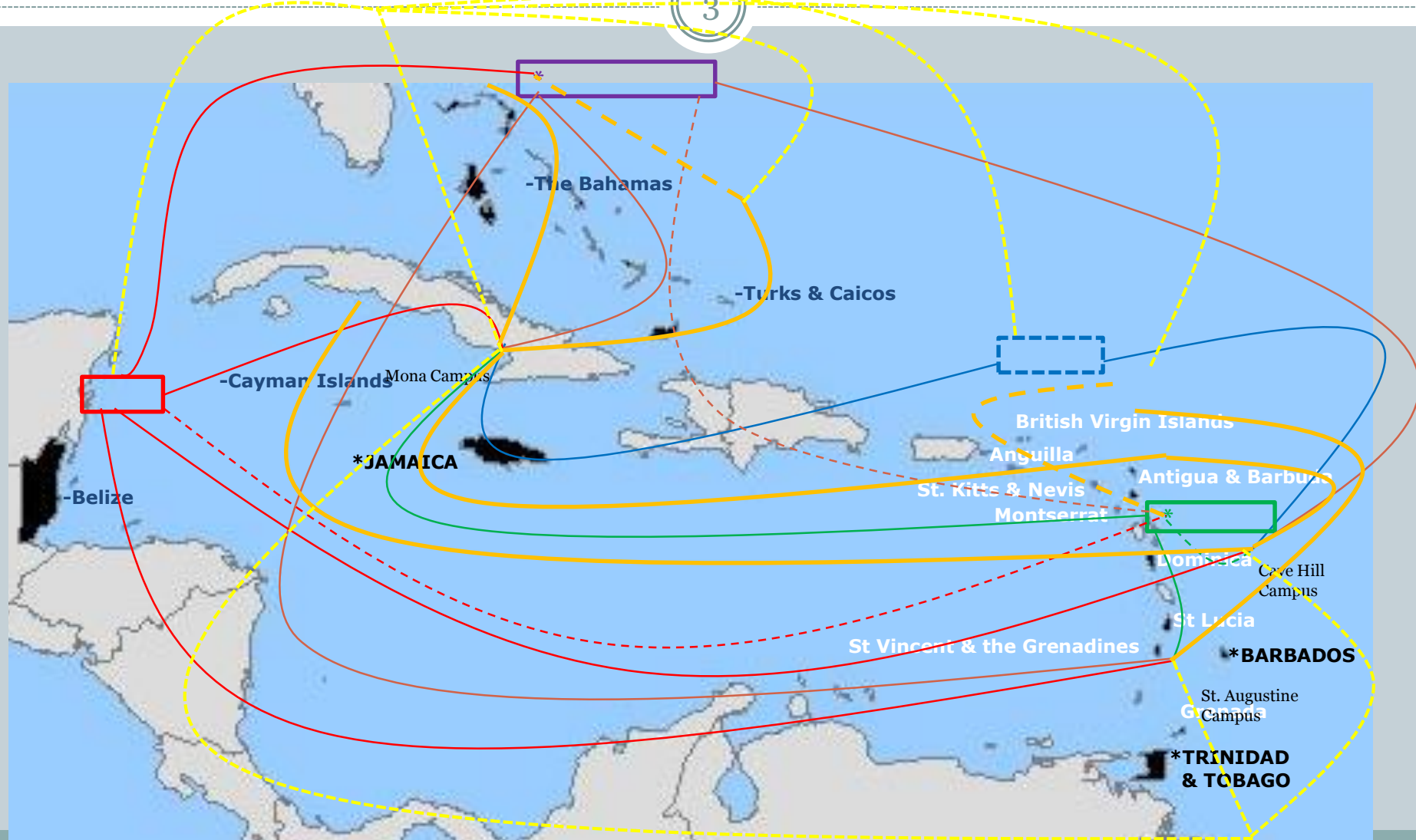
Internal Quality Assurance at UWI



- **UWI is one of only two universities around the world whose core operations transcend the borders of multiple nation states.**
- **UWI's operations conducted in forty-five educational sites in sixteen countries place a premium on the development of an internal quality assurance process to ensure common standards, structured external benchmarking and the internal sharing of best practice.**

UWI at a Glance

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The UWI Quality Management System



- **University Level**
 - **University Academic Boards – BUS & BGSR (Academics/Senior Administrators/Students)**
 - **University Management Audit Function**
 - **University Quality Assurance Unit**
 - **University Appointments Committee**

The University Quality Management System



- **Campus Level**
 - **Campus Academic Boards & Academic Quality Assurance Committees**
 - **Campus Committee on Graduate Studies & Research**
 - **Campus Quality Assurance Office**
 - **Office of Deputy Principal**
 - **Office of Campus Registrar**
 - **Office of Student Services and Development**
 - **Campus Examination Committees**
 - **Campus Appointments Committees**

The University Quality Management System



- **Faculty and Departmental Level**
 - **Faculty Boards**
 - **Faculty Sub-Deans for Student Matters**
 - **Departmental Staff-Student Liaison Committees**

Principles of UWI Quality Management System



- **Fitness for Purpose**
- **Staff ownership of quality management**
- **External benchmarking (Student assessment/staff appointments/disciplinary reviews)**
- **Internal sharing of best practice**
- **Stakeholder Involvement**
- **External accreditation (programmatic/institutional)**

Enduring Processes of Quality Assurance at UWI



- **Multiple Staff Involvement in Student Assessment Exercises** (first, second, university, external assessors)
- **Collaborative Staff Assessment/Appointment Processes** (faculty, campus, university, external)
- **Layered Course/Programme Approval Processes**
(Departmental/Faculty/Campus/University)
- **Consensual Decision Making Processes**
(Faculty/Campus/University/External) with full staff and student involvement in decision making.

Creation of an Explicit Quality Assurance Function



- **1996** Board for Undergraduate Studies established with explicit responsibility for Academic Quality Assurance.
- **1997** BUS initiates a process of structured quality assurance disciplinary reviews.
- **2001** – Quality Assurance programme offices extended to Cave Hill and St. Augustine Campuses and QAU formed.
- **2008/9** – Quality assurance programme formally extended to Open Campus and Graduate Studies and Research.
- **2010** – Quality Assurance Unit becomes a semi-autonomous unit reporting to BUS and BGSR.

Quality Assurance Review Process



- **Staff Ownership and Development** – Quality Evaluations/ Self-Study
- **External Benchmarking** – Reviews led by international disciplinary expert
- **Internal Best-Practice Sharing and Inter-campus programme harmonisation** – Review teams include disciplinary expert from another campus.
- **Stakeholder Involvement** – Review teams include local professional; review process includes student surveys; interviews and focus group sessions.

Quality Assurance Outreach



- **QAU has provided consulting services to regional tertiary institutions:** Anton de Kom/ University of Guyana, Hugh Wooding Law School.
- **QAU/OBUS has led in promoting/supporting programmatic accreditation** (medicine, engineering, business et al).
- **QAU/OBUS has led in promoting institutional accreditation** (BAC/ACTT/UCJ).
- **QAU/OBUS has led in promotion of teaching and learning pedagogical reform, curricula reform and university teaching certification.**
- **QAU has itself been subject to a quality assurance review.**

Quality Assurance Impact



- **The UWI community is persuaded of the value of formal quality assurance processes.** The review team for the QAU states that “it heard evidence from the communities of interest of the value as well as the high regard in which the QAU is held.”
- **External reviewers praise UWI’s QA system.** An external team leader from Stanford University states “Few universities around the world provide for the regular, intense scrutiny of individual programmes and departments that UWI’s quality assurance review provides. The UWI deserves every credit for having established and maintained this praise worthy programme, despite its high costs, on all three campuses.
- **The regional community appreciates the outreach of the QAU.** A participant in a QAU workshop at UG states: A challenging but great experience. I never knew that QA provided such great opportunities for change and motivation to excellence.”