

19TH ANNUAL

CANQATE CONFERENCE AND AGM

24-27

OCTOBER 2023



CALL FOR PAPERS

Venue: Port of Spain, Trinidad

Submission of Abstracts:
10 July, 2023

Notification of Acceptance:
24 July, 2023

Submission of Final Paper:
22 September, 2023

Higher Education Quality and Workforce Development in the Caribbean: Issues, Challenges, Opportunities and Solutions

Conference Strands

- Employability and Higher Education Quality: Synergies between Employers and Educators
- Enhancing Higher Education Quality for Environmentally Sustainable Development and Mitigating the Challenges Posed by Climate Change
- The Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Higher Education Quality and Workforce Development
- Higher Education in a Post-pandemic World: How many of our pandemic practices do we keep without compromising quality?

CANQATE CONFERENCE 2023 SECRETARIAT

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Requirements for Submission

A. Your submission should include an abstract that is relevant to one of the strands. The abstract for your paper should **be no more than 250 words** and formatted as follows:

- Strand
- Title of Paper
- Author(s): list each author's full name
- Institutional affiliation
- Email address(es) of author(s)
- Font: 12-point Times New Roman

B. Your submission should also include a biography of each author of **not more than 100 words**.

C. Your submission of abstracts and requests for additional information should be emailed to CANQATE2023@utt.edu.tt

Deadlines

- **Submission of Abstracts: 10 July, 2023**
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Explanation of Strands

The main theme of the conference is:

HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN: ISSUES, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND SOLUTIONS

The following sub-themes are derived from the main theme:

1. Employability and Higher Education Quality: Synergies between Employers and Educators

As major stakeholders in workforce development, the perspectives of employers and industry representatives are critical in helping learners achieve their career outcomes. Continuous changes in the workplace have resulted in increasing demands for employees to acquire additional skills and competencies. Workers will also need to develop the ability to continuously learn new skills and adjust to an ever-changing environment. Furthermore, as Caribbean economies seek to rebuild, following a period of severe economic hardship, higher education graduates will be expected to promote innovation and growth within their various organisations. This theme invites participants to discuss how quality assurance processes can ensure that educational aims are appropriate and being achieved, and how programmes are adapting and developing by drawing on synergies between employers and education providers. This sub-theme welcomes papers on the following key areas but is not limited to these:

- Best practices in developing linkages between employers and educational institutions
- Processes for integrating the employers' perspective in curriculum development
- Closing the skills gap through Technical & Vocational Education & Training
- Programme design for ensuring competence in the workplace
- Upskilling through microcredentialing: Issues of quality assurance and recognition
- Employability and accreditation criteria
- Issues and challenges in the recognition of prior learning
- Quality and recognition of work-based learning programmes
- National and regional qualification frameworks

2. Enhancing Higher Education Quality for Environmentally Sustainable Development and Mitigating the Challenges Posed by Climate Change

Educational institutions and programmes in this region are expected to be catalysts for socioeconomic development. This development must be environmentally sustainable – conserving natural resources and protecting ecosystems to support health and wellbeing, now and in the future. Climate change poses a present and ongoing threat to the lives and livelihoods of Caribbean people. These issues highlight the need for several changes in how people live and work. Among the needed changes is the transition to alternative energy and the greening of jobs. The transformation will require developing new skills and competencies in learners which emphasise productivity, innovation, and environmental protection, for a sustainable future. Education providers must quickly enhance the quality of their systems and programmes to support workforce development that addresses these needs. This sub-theme welcomes papers on the following key areas, but is not limited to these:

- Environmentally sustainable development and a quality culture in regional higher education
- Quality assurance, accreditation, and environmentally sustainable development: standards and practices
- Microcredentials as a tool for the greening of jobs
- The greening of jobs through Technical Vocational Education and Training
- Improving teaching and pedagogical practices for sustainability
- Aligning curricula and educational programmes to the environmentally sustainable development agenda
- Enhancing the quality of regional research and innovation on climate change and alternative energy

3. The Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Higher Education Quality and Workforce Development

The recent launch of the AI chatbot, ChatGPT, created ripples across the higher education sector. These included fear about the potential for academic dishonesty, anticipation about its potential to innovate pedagogical practices, and concern about curricula relevance for workforce development in the future. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to revolutionise traditional educational models. It also threatens the jobs and earnings of workers in many sectors. It has moved from a topic covered in computing and technology courses to a practical application changing the way we teach, learn

and work. Stakeholders in education and workforce development – educators, administrators, QA practitioners, employers, policymakers, among others – must be alert to the opportunities and challenges presented by AI. They must respond with appropriate quality assurance policies and practices ensuring that graduates have the requisite competencies to adjust to the changing environment. This sub-theme welcomes papers on the following key areas, but is not limited to these:

- Best practices in adopting AI in teaching and learning
- Ensuring the integrity of assessment in the age of ChatGPT
- Ethical concerns in the use of AI in education
- Curriculum development and new skills for the AI-altered workplace
- Enhancing quality assurance and accreditation processes using AI
- Opportunities for expanding access to higher education using AI

4. Higher Education in a Post-pandemic World: How many of our pandemic practices do we keep without compromising quality?

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education was undergoing rapid changes driven by advances in digital technologies. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly accelerated these trends which have disrupted traditional higher education models and transformed the way higher education is delivered and supported. Technology-enhanced teaching and blended-learning approaches quickly transitioned into emergency remote teaching, delivered mostly online. For many higher education institutions, the learning curve was steep and immediate with several missteps and successes along the way. Now that the world has entered a post-pandemic phase, it begs the question: how many of the practices and policies associated with digital technology and online learning should we keep and why? This sub-theme welcomes papers on the following key areas, but is not limited to these:

- External quality assurance and accreditation of online programmes in the Caribbean
- Online learning and workforce competence: issues of quality and recognition
- Best practices in digitally-enabled teaching and instruction
- Leveraging technology to enhance internal quality assurance processes
- Best practices in blended learning approaches in higher education
- Internal quality assurance systems for online and blended programmes
- Blended learning as an effective means of workforce development
- The opportunities and challenges to a complete return to in-person classes
- Innovative practices in a digitally-enabled higher-education environment