

## A Second Chance for a ‘hands-on’ education.

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) is at the forefront of educational advancement in the region with the application of Competency-Based Education Training and Assessment (CBETA) methodology to its programmes. This changes the role of the teacher from an ‘information-giver’ to a ‘resource person’ by empowering students to take more responsibility for their learning and progress. CBETA is based on the premise that “almost all learners can learn equally well if they receive the kind of instructions they need.” (CVQ Caribbean Vocational Qualification: Requirements and Guidelines for School Administrators and Principals, CXC 2012)

This assessment method is currently being implemented through CXC’s Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ®) which is one of the components of the recently-launched Strengthening ‘Second Chance’ Education Programme (2nd Chance Programme). The Programme will be run in nine (9) territories in the Caribbean, these being Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

The CVQ® is a vocational “hands-on” training programme where candidates are expected to demonstrate competence in attaining occupational standards developed by practitioners, industry experts and employers. Currently, CVQs are offered at five levels; however, CXC certifies Levels 1 and 2.

- Level 1: Directly Supervised/Entry – Level Worker
- Level 2: Supervised Skilled Worker
- Level 3: Independent or Autonomous Skilled Worker
- Level 4: Specialized or Supervisory Worker
- Level 5: Managerial and/or Professional Worker

The CVQ® programme is also an innovation in higher learning, as students have the flexibility of learning at their own pace with no defined time frame for their course of study. They also have the additional advantage and impetus of becoming industry certified at the completion of their successful course of study.

Advances in the development and administration of the unit-based programmes are already being implemented as the CVQ® programme has already been introduced throughout several secondary schools in the Caribbean. Mr. Henderson Wiltshire, Education Officer in the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation with responsibility for the implementation of CVQs in Barbados, was part of a committee formed in 2009 by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of the CVQ® Programme. He noted that

“most students have found it easier to find jobs having passed through the Programme as they would have been involved in the work attachment segment of the Programme.” He further stated “...Companies who hire students passing through the CVQ® Programme will hire well rounded students with requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes. Previously, some employers have opted to keep the students after the work attachment period had expired.”

With funding from USAID and the American people, this prime opportunity has now been extended to the ‘at risk’ youth population (16-30 age group) in the nine highlighted regional territories, through the deployment of CXC’s 2nd Chance Education Programme.

This is great news as it brings new opportunities for self-improvement to at-risk youth, including some differently-abled and special needs young people in the Caribbean. Having a competency-based assessment programme with no time limit to becoming qualified is highly beneficial as it allows those most in need to learn and achieve at their own pace.

For more information on how you can benefit from enrolling in the 2nd Chance Programme, please email [dworrell@cx.org](mailto:dworrell@cx.org) and take the second chance you’ve always been waiting for!