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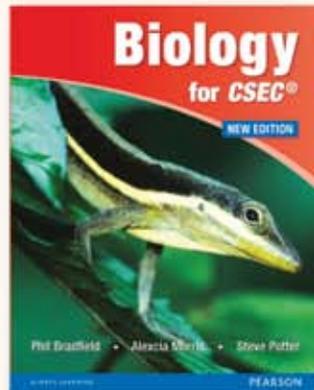
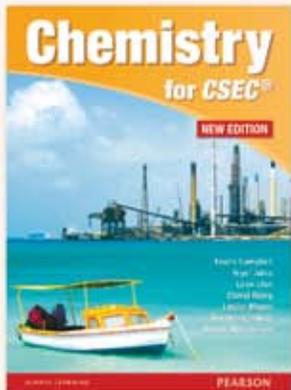
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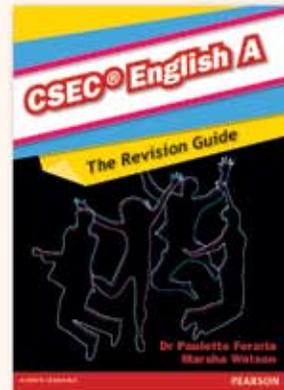
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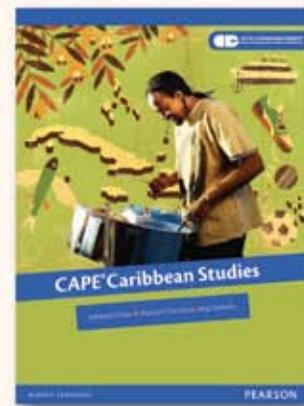
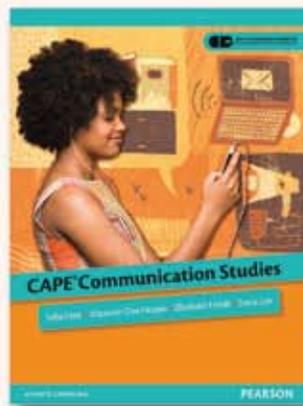
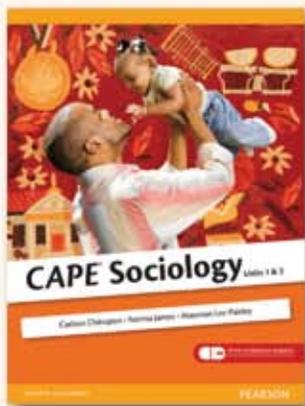
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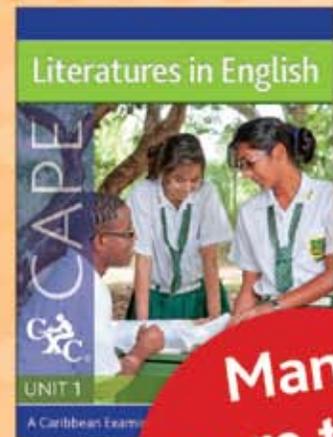
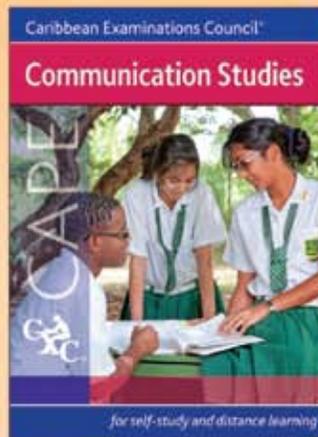
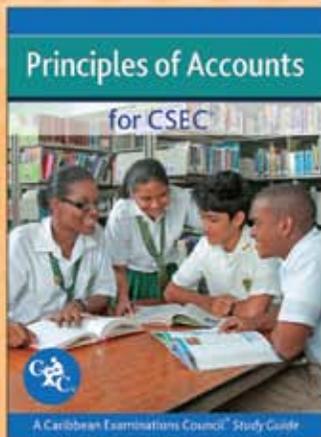
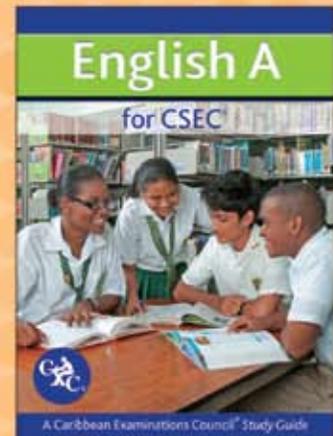
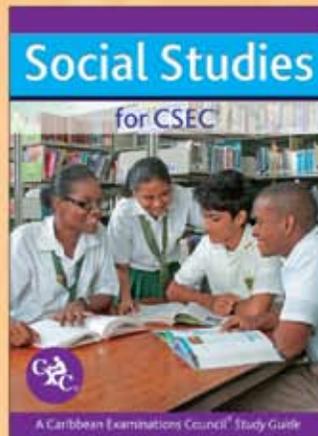
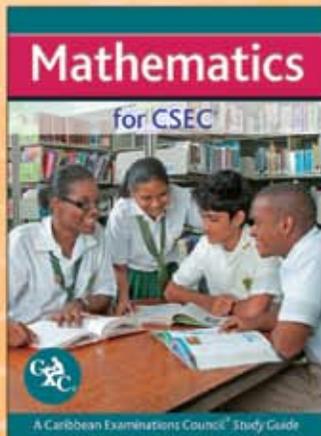
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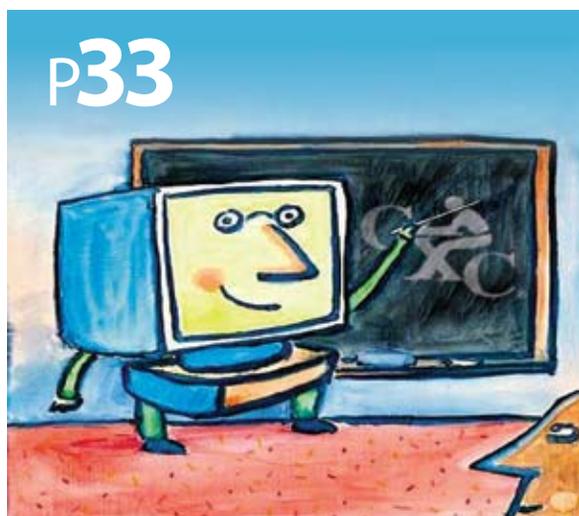
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CCSLC[®] – *Measuring Up to Standard*

UK NARIC's Benchmarking of the CCSLC[®]: A Review

By Dr Yolande Wright

A large, blue, 3D-rendered 'CCSLC' logo is the central focus, placed over a background of a metal vernier caliper and a ruler. The caliper is open, and the ruler shows markings from 0 to 6. The entire scene is set on a white surface with horizontal lines, possibly a window blind or a similar textured surface.

UK NARIC's Benchmarking of the CCSLC®: A Review

Seven years after its first examination of the **Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence** (CCSLC), the feedback to the **Caribbean Examinations Council** (CXC) and its stakeholders is that “The CCSLC can be considered broadly comparable to successful completion of Key Stage 3 (Year 9) in the UK and Year 9 in Australia, Canada and the USA.” This is the view of the United Kingdom’s national agency responsible for providing information and expert opinion on qualifications worldwide. The United Kingdom National Recognition Information Centre, UK NARIC, came to this conclusion after conducting an extensive benchmarking study of the CCSLC in 2014 on the request of CXC.

“UK NARIC is satisfied that the programme provides suitable preparation both in terms of subject knowledge and general competencies [and] that students will be suitably prepared to progress to the subsequent year of study in each of the four countries examined,” stated the UK NARIC report entitled *Benchmarking the Caribbean Examinations Council’s Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC)*.

Benchmarking studies of this type are consistent with the CXC vision of “ensuring the human resource competitiveness of the Caribbean through the provision of quality assurance in education and comprehensive certification.” The study provides a comparative analysis of the CCSLC and fulfils wider benchmarking objectives of measuring the quality of its policies, programme, and strategies by comparing these with similar measures of best-in-class systems to determine where improvements are required and possible to achieve higher performance.

This article presents a synopsis of the UK NARIC findings from an exercise designed to promote regional and international understanding and recognition of the CCSLC.

THE UK NARIC METHODOLOGY

The study spanned two major undertakings: firstly, a review of the components of the CCSLC and identification of opportunities for their improvement; and secondly, a benchmarking evaluation against education systems and standards in Canada, the United States of America, Australia and the United Kingdom. Information sources included available programme documentation, school visits, interviews with education officers from two CCSLC Participating Territories, meetings and interviews with key CXC staff, and the review of custom-designed student texts for CCSLC English and Mathematics.

Employing UK NARIC’s methodology for the components’ review, the analysis examined the aims and purposes of the programme and reviewed entry requirements, duration, programme structure and content, learning outcomes, modes of learning and assessment, associated outcomes, and quality mechanisms.

The comparative analysis of the CCSLC against the targeted systems necessitated the identification of appropriate reference points in each. In order for these points to be identified, the systems in each country and the province or state of interest were first detailed at generic and subject levels. The subjects of interest sampled from each system were English and Mathematics (CCSLC core subjects), a science-based subject for comparison with CCSLC Integrated Science, and an arts-based subject for comparison with CCSLC French.

THE CCSLC: PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The CCSLC is currently sequenced third in the CXC suite of products and is superseded by the flagship **Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate** (CSEC) then by the post-secondary

Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). Undergirded by CARICOM’s vision of an “Ideal Caribbean” person to increase social and economic development, and global competitiveness, the CCSLC was developed in response to the regional imperative to provide universal secondary education. With these catalysts came the need (i) to provide learners of a wider range of abilities with certification to identify their level of competence and (ii) to prepare students better to undertake CSEC programmes and so increase success rates and returns on investment in education.

The CCSLC is jointly awarded - by CXC and local ministries of education - to learners who successfully complete CCSLC English, Mathematics and three eligible optional subjects within a five-year period. Assessment for the CCSLC comprises formative, summative, internal and external elements. Formative assessment is central to the CCSLC and is integrated with teaching to guide teachers in making decisions about learners’ readiness for summative assessment. School-based assessment comprises five summative module assessments per subject and accounts for 50 per cent of each subject’s assessment. The external assessment component is developed and administered by CXC and comprises multiple choice items which are electronically scored. Candidate performance is summarised in a composite score and is reported on a three point grading scheme as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: CCSLC Grading Scheme

Composite score	Grade
75 - 100	Master
50 - 74	Competent
0 - 49	Developing Competence

Employing UK NARIC’s methodology for the components’ review, the analysis examined the aims and purposes of the programme and reviewed entry requirements, duration, programme structure and content, learning outcomes, modes of learning and assessment, associated outcomes, and quality mechanisms.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REVIEW OF THE CCSLC

The UK NARIC review of the CCSLC identified characteristics, strengths, and challenges or opportunities for improvement, in dimensions which included: core components, individual syllabuses, school-based and external assessments, marking and grading systems, and quality mechanisms. Highlights are as follows: (see Tables 2-4)

The report contains many other extracted examples and illustrations of school-based and external assessment tasks and mark schemes; additional examples of recommendations and opportunities for continual improvement are as follows:

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Whilst earlier stages of the benchmarking exercise focused on describing the CCSLC, the second half of the study focused on determining key similarities and differences between this CXC programme and comparable programmes in Australia, Canada, the USA, and UK. Breadth and depth of subject content, learning outcomes and assessment methods were compared across the five systems. In the first three countries, and to a much lesser extent in the UK, systems were found to be decentralised with different territories and provinces having responsibility for the design, naming and regulation of its systems; for this reason, the benchmarking exercise narrowed its focus to Queensland Australia, Ontario Canada, New York USA and, in the UK, a combination of England and Wales.

Qualifications generally have value in the workplace and for further education. With respect to its aims and purpose, it was noted that although the CCSLC was not specifically designed as an exit qualification, it has the potential to become one for the students who leave fifth form (Year 11) without achieving acceptable grades at the CSEC which is comparable to the GCSE – the UK’s ‘first national secondary qualification’. In contrast to the CCSLC, the first formal qualification in the Australian, Canadian and USA system is at Year 12. The focus of the study was therefore on identifying similarities in content, learning outcomes and assessment to provide an evaluation of where the CCSLC ranked relative to these systems.

Because students in the four reference countries are not externally assessed for a secondary level qualification, the benchmarking of the CCSLC qualification and its teaching and assessment methods was more of a challenge. Teachers in the CCSLC and the reference countries were found to use formative and summative assessment to monitor student achievement. Both groups have similar flexibility

Table 2: Characteristics of Core components

Core components	Findings and Characteristics
Aims and purpose	To prepare learners for further study, training and entry-level employment. In particular, to increase the number of students leaving mainstream education with a formal qualification certifying the knowledge, competencies, attitudes and values that all secondary school leavers should have attained
Entry requirements	No formal requirements although the learners would generally have completed six or seven years of primary education
Duration	Being competency-based there is no specified duration; the average student will complete in three years of secondary schooling, and the more and less able in two and five years respectively.
Programme structure and content	Compulsory CCSLC English and Mathematics plus three other subjects from optional sources which include other CCSLC subjects, CSEC offerings from TVET, business, creative/expressive arts options, subjects from other boards, and eligible locally certified options which reflect national priorities and interests
Learning outcomes	The CCSLC programme is underpinned by generic and subject-specific competencies; the former cut across the five CCSLC syllabuses and the latter across specific subjects as illustrated in Table 3 below.
Modes of learning and assessment	A student-centred approach is supported by suggested teaching and learning activities for adults and school-based learners.
Associated outcomes	These are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.
Quality mechanisms	Quality control and assurance mechanisms are prescribed for grade awards, curriculum development, monitoring providers, assessment and moderation practices

Table 3: Sample of generic and subject specific skills

Sample of Key Competencies	Key Skills and Abilities	Subjects of the CCSLC Curriculum				
		Eng.	Mod. Lang.	Math.	Int. Sci.	Soc. Sci.
Ability to communicate orally and in writing	Communicate information orally and in writing (Eng 1)	*	x	x	x	x
	Evaluate information read and viewed	*	x	x	x	x
	Source relevant information	*	x	x	x	x
Mathematical literacy	Calculate salaries and commissions			*		
	Calculate utility bills			*	*	
Social and citizenship skills	Conduct a healthy lifestyle				x	*
Technological literacy	Use modern technologies to conduct research and solve problems	x	x	*	*	*

* – Subject that specifically engages the learner in the development of the competency
 X – Related subjects that engage the learner in the development of the competency

UK NARIC's Benchmarking of the **CCSLC**[®]: A Review

With respect to individual syllabuses, subject specific examples were detailed and the **Table 4** below presents illustrative highlights and findings as follows:

Table 4: Highlights of findings in relation to individual syllabuses

CCSLC[®] English	"A student-centred, activity-based approach is central to the CCSLC English syllabus. ... Teachers have the flexibility to adapt or add to the recommended teaching and learning activities in the CCSLC English syllabus, to better suit their classroom needs and maximise student engagement." (p 30)
CCSLC[®] Mathematics	"... A particular strength of the Mathematics programme is the way it integrates everyday life such as budgeting, calculating interest and understanding discount when teaching mathematical concepts, thereby helping to increase the perceived relevance of the mathematics syllabus to students. ..." (p 30)
CCSLC[®] Social Studies	"The CCSLC Social Studies syllabus focuses on developing students' life skills both at school and externally. This will help develop students' appreciation of different people, customs and institutions. ..." (p 31)
Teaching activities in practice	<p>"The site visit also served to highlight a potential challenge to CCSLC delivery: that of untrained teachers. In Barbados, as well as in many other participating territories lower secondary teachers do not need to be trained in order to teach CCSLC classes." (p 31)</p> <p>(Opportunity for improvement, "As a competency-based qualification, it is important that the pace of teaching and level of classroom control are conducive to developing the required level of competency in students in a timeframe that reflects their potential. This would help ensure that students who are capable of covering the syllabus at a quicker pace are given the opportunity to do so, so that they can progress to the CSEC." (p 32)</p> <p>(Strength) "... the textbooks, as viewed by UK NARIC, will undoubtedly provide a valuable resource to teachers, with the structure and content well designed to support the general and specific objectives of the CCSLC subjects." (p 32)</p>

The report contains many other extracted examples and illustrations of school-based and external assessment tasks and mark schemes; additional examples of recommendations and opportunities for continual improvement are as follows:

Evaluation	Strength	Opportunity for Improvement
"... This format of [external] assessment lends itself to electronic marking, providing the CXC with a more sustainable model for script marking than has previously been the case for other CXC awards. ..." (p 38)	*	
"... the papers on the whole provide an efficient and effective means of testing and marking subject knowledge and understanding across different territories..." (p38)	*	
"... UK NARIC is satisfied that the multiple choice papers, in conjunction with the school-based assessment, provide an adequate evaluation of the knowledge and skills prescribed within the CCSLC curriculum objectives..." (p38)	*	
"... In designing the papers, it would be useful to categorise each question in terms of the level of difficulty and then weight these accordingly. This would help ensure that to achieve 'Master' level, students must be able to correctly answer an appropriate number of the more challenging questions. ..." (p39)		*
"... attention should be paid to the range and plausibility of the [multiple choice question] distractors." p81		*
"... whilst CXC qualifications are criterion- rather than norm-referenced, the CCSLC grades are not currently supported by corresponding grade descriptors, such as those provided for the CSEC and CAPE..." (p 40)		*

to design and use their own assessment strategies and techniques; however, the teachers in the reference countries had support of grading or marking descriptors or rubrics which allowed for less subjectivity in operation.

CONCLUSION: FIDELITY TO THE VISION

The **CCSLC** programme is much newer than the flagship **CSEC** and **CAPE** which are being widely used as exit qualifications for accessing the workplace and respectively for matriculation and advanced standing in tertiary level institutions. The UK NARIC benchmarking study comprised a comprehensive review and comparative analysis of this relatively new **CXC** offering and recognised international systems. Its major findings were that:

"*CCSLC demands a comparable level of knowledge, skills and competencies to that broadly required of completion of Key Stage 3 (Year 9) in the UK, Year 9 in Australia, Grade 9 in Canada and Grade 9 in the USA.*" p82

There were two main stakeholders in this benchmarking study: the current and potential users of the **CCSLC** qualification who justly want to know about the soundness and value of the programme relative to other more established international offerings; and **CXC** with its focus on being a world leader in the provision of examination products and services. **CXC** remains committed to transparency, continual improvement, and the provision of options and seamless pathways to lifelong learning for learners with a wide range of abilities. In so doing, it continues to contribute to the **CARICOM** vision of an Ideal Caribbean person who is equipped to shape and respond to regional and global imperatives.

"... UK NARIC confirms that individuals certified in the **CCSLC** demonstrate the overall knowledge, skills and competencies required to enter secondary education at Key Stage 4 (Year 10) in the UK, Year 10 in Australia, Grade 10 in Ontario and Grade 10 in the USA."

Dr Yolande Wright is Senior Assistant Registrar - Quality Assurance at CXC.

SOURCE:

Benchmarking Definition available at: <<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/benchmarking.html#ixzz3BF6xjmwk>> [Accessed Saturday 23 August, 2014]

UK NARIC National Recognition Information Centre, June 2014. *Benchmarking the Caribbean Examinations Council's Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC)*



What is Benchmarking and Gains from Benchmarking CCSLC®

By Dr Charles Mayenga

INTRODUCTION

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) commissioned the National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (commonly referred to as UK NARIC) to conduct a benchmarking study for its Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC) assessment. The focus of the study was to provide an evaluation of CCSLC's core components against standards from other well-established secondary education systems. This article provides an overview of the benchmarking process, the potential benefits of conducting benchmarking studies in general, and how they relate to CXC's CCSLC assessment.

The CCSLC measures a core set of desired skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes in: (i) English and Mathematics, and (ii) three additional subjects to be chosen from one of six groups, including CSEC subjects, TVET, creative and expressive arts, and locally certified enrichment programmes (See Figure 1).

ORIGIN AND BENEFITS OF BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking began in the late 1970s with Xerox Corporation when Xerox decided to compare its operations with those of its competitors. Over the years, benchmarking has become a common method of identifying new ideas and new ways of improving processes to meet the expectations of clients/customers [See Bateman, 1989; Elmuti and Kathawala, 1997; Matter and Evans, 1997]. A number of these scholars and others agree that benchmarking is the process of evaluating something by comparing it with a known standard which has been proven and recognised as a best practice. The standard becomes the point of reference from which an organisation's current practices

are judged as a means of identifying gaps in its processes. It involves measuring the quality of policies, products, programmes and even strategies against the standard to determine what and where improvements are needed.

The essence of the benchmarking process is to learn from the practices of others and make improvements necessary to reach those best practices that were identified. By benchmarking on best practices, it becomes the motivation and driving impetus for continuous improvement. Done correctly, benchmarking provides an opportunity to explore and discover new ideas, allowing for self-assessment, collaboration, adaptation of practices that improve current products and services to meet clients' needs and the maintenance of a competitive edge in the sector. Benchmarking is supposed to enhance an organisation's reputation beyond its borders by causing it to measure up to international performance indicators and standards. As a result, new standards may be set not only for the institution but also for the sector.

TYPES OF BENCHMARKING

According to Matter and Evans (1997), in their book *The Nuts and Bolts of Benchmarking*, there are four types of benchmarking:

Internal benchmarking – This is benchmarking against one's own operations to determine if the internal performance standards of an organisation are internal benchmarking's main objective.

Competitive benchmarking – Done externally, competitive benchmarking aims to compare companies and organisations in the same markets which have competing products, services, or work processes.

Functional or Industry benchmarking – This type is performed externally but against industry leaders or the best functional operations of certain companies.

Process or Generic benchmarking – This type of benchmarking focuses on the best work processes.

The benchmarking study for CCSLC falls under functional or industry benchmarking. In a way, this study was an outward way of looking at CCSLC in relation to similar assessments in the other well-established secondary education systems. Specifically, this benchmarking study compared CCSLC to a) the Queensland secondary school system in Australia; b) the Ontario secondary school system in Canada; c) the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3 in the UK; and the overall learning outcomes and assessment methods of secondary education in New York City (USA). This involved comparing a selection of CCSLC subjects with similarly-focused secondary school curricula and assessments in these territories/provinces/states.

BENCHMARKING PROCESS

According to Hank Clemons (2006), a well-conducted benchmarking process involves the following seven steps. These steps follow a typical research project:

STEP 1: Preparation and planning. As with any other project, thorough preparation and planning are essential at the outset. Once one recognises the need for benchmarking, it is crucial to determine the methodology to be used and identify the target participants and sites for the study.

Figure 1

CXC qualification	Australia	Canada	UK	USA
CCSLC	Year 9	Grade 9	Key Stage 3 (Year 9)	Grade 9

¹ The UK NARIC is responsible for providing information and expert opinion on qualifications and skills worldwide.

What is Benchmarking and Gains from Benchmarking **CCSLC**[®]

STEP 2: Data collection. This stage involves deciding what to measure and how it will be measured. It is necessary to define the benchmarking envelope — what is to be benchmarked and what is to be excluded. At this point, it is crucial to establish the metrics to be used, and clearly and unambiguously define them to ensure comparability of the information to be collected.

STEP 3: Data analysis. This will involve validation and normalisation of data before performing any meaningful analysis. Data validation and normalisation are essential for establishing accuracy and completeness. Some form of data normalisation is usually required to enable like comparisons to be made between what may be very different operational subjects. To be of value, the analysis must indicate strengths and weaknesses, determine (and, where possible, quantify) gaps in performance indicators, and provide recommendations for performance improvements.

STEP 4: Reporting. The analysis must be reported in a clear, concise, and easily understood format via an appropriate medium to maximise the value of the initiative.

STEP 5: Learning from best practices. In this step, the top-performing organisations share the best practices, to the mutual benefit of all stakeholders. Of course, when some of the stakeholders are true competitors, the options for sharing may be limited, and alternative approaches may be required to establish learning.

STEP 6: Planning and implementing improvement actions. Once the learning points have been ascertained, each organisation should develop and communicate an action plan for the changes that it will need to make in order to realise improvements. The learning points should feed into the organisation's strategic plan and should be implemented via its performance improvement processes.

STEP 7: Institutionalising learning. The insights gained and the performance improvements achieved must be fully embedded within the organisation; it is critical to ensure that the gains are rolled out throughout the business and sustained over time. Benchmarking can take place at the corporate, operational, or functional level of the organisation. The key point is to make

sure that these levels are linked via a cascading series of interlinked goals to ensure systematic progress toward the vision.

The first four steps relate to positioning the study and the last three steps relate to how the gains from the benchmarking activity are disseminated. In *The Benchmarking Book*, Spendolini (1992) contends that these steps are meant to help benchmarkers to spend less time wrestling with the process and more time finding solutions.

GAINS FROM CCSLC BENCHMARKING

The main focus of the comparative analysis was to determine whether the CCSLC programme covers subjects at similar breadth and depth as found within each system, and to compare the level of learning outcomes and assessment standards.

This benchmarking activity has helped to place CCSLC in relation to similar programmes beyond the Caribbean territories. The CCSLC can be considered broadly comparable to the successful completion of Key Stage 3 (Year 9) in the UK and Year 9 in Australia, Canada and the USA.

The study revealed clear similarities between the CCSLC curriculum in English, Mathematics, Integrated Science and Modern Languages with subjects in the first two or three years/grades of secondary education in schools in Queensland (Australia), Ontario (Canada), UK and New York (USA). Like the CCSLC, these school years also use a combination of formative and summative school-based assessment tasks.

It should be noted that CCSLC was developed in response to the influx of students with a wider range of abilities, as result of universal secondary education policies across the region. According to Blom and Hobbs (2008), by adding CCSLC to its suite of assessments, CXC was responding “to needs of its client members, especially as the use of learning assessment” (p. 20). This study has helped to re-affirm that the CCSLC programme provides suitable preparation both in terms of subject knowledge and general competencies that are comparable to well-established secondary education systems in Queensland (Australia), Ontario (Canada), UK and New York (USA). Overall, students who successfully complete CCSLC are suitably prepared to progress to the subsequent year of study in each of these four countries. This clearly indicates that competencies assessed by CCSLC are comparable and portable beyond the Caribbean region.

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Examinations Development and Production Division at CXC.



CCSLC® as a vehicle for addressing the needs of a larger population of secondary school students

By Professor Stafford A. Griffith

THE CXC FOCUS FROM ITS INCEPTION

An important consideration in establishing the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) was the broadening of access to quality secondary education relevant to the needs of the Caribbean. From its inception, CXC was concerned about addressing the needs of a larger proportion of secondary school candidates than the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE O' Level) examinations it sought to replace. The Council sought to move away from an exclusionary approach to education to an inclusionary approach (Griffith, 1999). It sought to assist the region in moving towards the provision of quality secondary education for all by developing courses of study and related examinations which defined knowledge and skills that students completing secondary school should have.

An important step in catering to the needs of a wider proportion of secondary school students than the GCE O' Level boards was the offer of the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations under three different schemes - General Proficiency, Basic Proficiency and Technical Proficiency. Together, these three Proficiencies were designed to respond to a wider range of interests and accomplishment among secondary school students in the Region.

According to the Council, a General Proficiency syllabus and examination required "a sufficient breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding to allow candidates who respond well to undertake study of the specific subject of examination beyond the fifth year of secondary school" (CXC, 1991, p. 5). The General Proficiency came to be accepted as the gold standard of secondary school achievement in the Region.

A Technical Proficiency syllabus and examination catered to "those candidates who require a greater practical orientation and preparation for further technical studies or pro-technician training than offered in a subject in the same area at General Proficiency" (CXC, 1991, p.6). Given the particular purpose of the Technical Proficiency, only a limited number of subjects were developed under this scheme.

The Basic Proficiency was distinguished from the General Proficiency by catering to the needs of candidates who may not subsequently pursue

further studies in areas related to the subject. The Basic Proficiency was designed to make cognitive demands on candidates that were different from those made by the General Proficiency (CXC, 1991).

From its inception, CXC encouraged students to take a combination of subjects, chosen to reflect their interests, their accomplishments in the subject and their likely destination upon completing secondary school. However, student preparation in most schools across the Region targeted the General Proficiency and the Technical Proficiency alternative where the latter was offered in the subject. Deliberate preparation for Basic Proficiency was hardly ever pursued. The notion of including Basic Proficiency in the student's selection of subjects for the CXC examination to match his/her profile of interest or accomplishment at the secondary level was not sustained. It is no wonder that with time, CXC found it necessary to terminate the offer of the Basic Proficiency.

A RETROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE BASIC PROFICIENCY

It appears that the intention in introducing a Basic Proficiency was to have a scheme that was less demanding than the General Proficiency but this was not explicitly stated. During the initial years of the CSEC examinations, most subjects were offered at the Basic Proficiency as an alternative to General Proficiency. However, the response of stakeholders to the Basic Proficiency was less enthusiastic than the CXC had hoped and, as a result of the declining demand, the Council was forced to undertake a gradual phasing out of this scheme.

In an article in the *Journal of Eastern Caribbean Studies* (Griffith, 2009), I suggested a few reasons for the challenges faced by CXC with the Basic proficiency. I expressed the view that:

Such a radical departure from the O Levels was perhaps overambitious and the marketing effort that was needed to educate the wider public and critical stakeholders about the three schemes being offered under a single examination, intended for the same cohort of students, seems to have been inadequate. (p. 42)

I also cited other possible factors which contributed to the demise of the Basic Proficiency. These included:

the failure to give adequate attention to the magnitude of classroom reform that was needed to allow students to be prepared for a mix of Proficiencies,

the Council's seeming unwillingness to make an unambiguously clear statement that the Basic and General Proficiency schemes targeted different levels of achievement in a subject,

the linking of these two schemes through at least a common paper or common set of examination questions and the consequent challenges faced by stakeholders in distinguishing between the Basic Proficiency and the General Proficiency.

Under these circumstances, the Basic Proficiency could not contribute to the desired broadening of access to secondary education which was an important objective of the Council.

CCSLC: A RESPONSE TO THE UNIVERSAL SECONDARY EDUCATION AGENDA

However, there was a clear need for an examination at the secondary level for those who could not complete the CXC General Proficiency within the time available to them in the secondary education system. The impetus for action came from the deliberations of the Ministers of Education of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) about the need for a programme and certification that addressed the needs of all secondary school students. As early as May 1996, the Standing Committee of Ministers of Education urged that in light of the continuing decline of entries for examinations offered under the Basic Proficiency scheme, CXC should review the scheme and its capacity to serve the clientele for which it was designed. The Standing Committee further noted that a number of territories proposed to develop National School-Leaving examinations and recommended that the Council should undertake research to assist the territories in the following ways:

- identifying the needs to be addressed for the cohort leaving secondary school without any certification and
- ensuring the validity of any examination and certification that would be offered to that cohort (CXC, 1998).

CCSLC[®] addressing the needs of a larger population of students

In response, the Council undertook a comprehensive study of the Basic Proficiency which, *inter alia*, sought to determine the assessment needs that still required attention among secondary school students in Caribbean Community countries (CXC, 1998). One of the findings of the study was that employers were of the view that CXC should seek to develop an examination which responded to the attitudes, values, behaviours and language skills needed for the work force (CXC, 1998).

Even as CXC was seeking to complete the study requested by the Standing Committee of Ministers of Education, the 1997 CARICOM Conference of Heads of Government established the target of achieving universal secondary education by 2005. Bernard (2004) noted that “several challenges arise out of this development, the starkest being that of addressing a far wider range of abilities at the secondary level” (p. 107).

The adoption of the policy of universal secondary education by Governments of the Region required the provision of appropriate secondary education for all students. This, in turn, required the definition of the critical competencies that all students completing secondary education should have and a way of assessing their accomplishments. In grappling with ways of responding to the curriculum and assessment challenges of universal secondary education, the countries in the Region continued to rely on CXC for leadership in defining an appropriate programme of study and examinations that would meet the needs of secondary education for all.

The development of the CCSLC responded to this need for a programme and certification that support the universal secondary education thrust of the Region. It was accepted that not all students in the secondary school system in the Region would be able to complete, within the time available, the level of preparation and accomplishment required for the General Proficiency and Technical Proficiency. It was recognised, though, that all secondary school students needed to acquire certain essential knowledge and skills that would prepare them for life after completing their education at this level and that it was necessary to provide them with appropriate certification of their accomplishments. Another important consideration in developing the CCSLC was that the examination should provide students with the competencies that would serve as a foundation for more advanced studies (CXC, n.d.).

The implementation of the CCSLC marked a new level of collaboration between the Council and its member territories. Whereas earlier certificates were conferred solely by the CXC, the CCSLC certification is jointly conferred by the CXC and the local Ministry of Education of participating countries. It makes provision, *inter alia*, for the inclusion of certification developed and administered at the national level in response to particular national needs.

CCSLC AS A PRE-CSEC OFFERING

The CCSLC is still relatively new. It may be too early to make a proper assessment of the future of this examination. However, the responses of a sample of students to a survey I conducted in Jamaica, suggested that students had rather positive views of this CXC offering (Griffith, 2009, p. 45).

More recently, I reported that a sample of teachers of CSEC English (A and B) consulted in St. Lucia were of the view that the CCSLC could serve as a good foundation for the competencies expected at the CSEC level (Griffith, 2013). These teachers thought that the examination could serve as an acceptable assessment of one stage in a student's development. The teachers were of the view that the CCSLC would allow students to graduate with a statement of competency that could be useful to employers and upon which they could build for CSEC (Griffith, 2013, p. 44).

Also, a sample of CSEC Mathematics teachers in Grenada with whom I consulted, expressed similar sentiments. They suggested that CXC should market the CCSLC more aggressively as a foundation for moving to CSEC. They felt that CXC needed to hold sessions with the business community to help them to understand the value of the CCSLC (Griffith, 2014, p. 24)

The CCSLC concept seems to be more clearly defined than the earlier Basic Proficiency. It is an examination designed for a level below that of the gold standard of secondary school achievement, the General Proficiency. It may, in fact, be seen as a Pre-CSEC offering which may be used to access employment at certain levels and which may form the foundation for further education and training, including preparation for CSEC. These were in fact the sentiments of the teachers of English in St. Lucia and the teachers of Mathematics in Grenada whose views of the examination were shared above.

The recent UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (UK NARIC) report has also endorsed these views. Following its review of the examination, UK NARIC has concluded that “individuals certified in the CCSLC demonstrate the overall knowledge, skills and competencies required to enter secondary education at Key Stage 4 (Year 10) in the UK, Year 10 in Australia, Grade 10 in Ontario and Grade 10 in the USA” (UK NARIC, 2014, p. 82).

This UK NARIC report helps to position the CCSLC firmly as a pre-CSEC qualification. It is a good foundation for CSEC and other qualifications at that level. With the UK NARIC endorsement, the CCSLC now seems poised for a rapid take-off. It seems well set to take a place of permanence and popularity beside its CXC predecessors, the CSEC and CAPE examinations which are now firmly established within the Caribbean's education system.

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A Case for CCSLC®

By Hector Stephenson

The world today is seeing a revolution in knowledge which has never before been seen. This explosion of knowledge has been fuelled mainly by the rapid development of information and communication technology.

It has revolutionised science and technology and has dramatically changed the way we do business. The delivery of knowledge at all levels of the education system has been reengineered and the teaching environment is changed forever. Students can access any content at the press of a button and teachers are presented with a plethora of approaches to delivering instruction for guiding their students into new and exciting discoveries.

Not only do we live in an age driven by knowledge and information, but we also live in a globalised age. Accordingly, this globalised world demands the maximum development of our human resources – our human capital.

As the world gradually creeps from under the recent global recession we must move very quickly to fast track the development of our human resources and the empowerment of our peoples. Knowledge is at a premium in today's environment. It is often said that knowledge is power. The ability to access, process, interpret and apply knowledge in a way that is probing and critical is of the utmost importance. It is those who are in command of solid information in diverse disciplines who will get ahead in this dynamic environment. This globalised world calls for a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce

with the command of linguistic, numeric and computer literacies.

Young people in the Caribbean are presented with many opportunities to achieve the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed in this global, albeit complex world. Up to a few decades ago, students in the region were writing secondary level examinations which were developed in the United Kingdom. Those examinations did not require coursework in the majority of the subjects available. Coursework has the positive spin-off of continuous assessment of very critical skills and promotes the notion of learning and doing. With the establishment of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) forty years ago and the introduction of School Based Assessments (SBAs) in almost all subjects, the way students are taught and assessed has been revolutionised.

CXC has been truly empowering and the region can be justly proud of this great Caribbean institution. With its suite of secondary level qualifications – CCSLC, CSEC, CAPE and the CVQ – there is an opportunity for students of varying levels of abilities, aptitudes and interests to succeed. We should all be very proud of these qualifications which are internationally recognised and are enabling our high school graduates to gain acceptance to some of the best universities in the world while turning out extraordinary performances in all areas of academic pursuits, and standing head and shoulders with students of different nationalities.

No one who has the opportunity to attend high school in the Caribbean should leave without some level of qualification or skill. The Ministry of Education in Jamaica has a motto which says “every child can learn, every child must learn.” The ministry also embraces multiple pathways for students and has provided tremendous resources to support the various programmes in the schools. While all will agree that there is still much to be done, the Caribbean is not short on ideas on how to educate and there are thousands of highly qualified teachers across this region that are committed to the cause of education. These professionals are working tirelessly and utilising innovative strategies with tens of thousands of students each with great expectations of future accomplishments.

As we widen the knowledge base of the children of the region and develop our human resources in many and varied disciplines, the support of different types of qualifications should be a matter of priority. We can't afford to practise, in the words of the CXC Acting Registrar, ‘intellectual or academic elitism’ at this time in our history. While we work to raise standards, we must acknowledge and certify our students' achievements along the development continuum. This is important in strengthening the candidates' self-esteem and will fan those small flames of success which will fuel other, and hopefully greater, achievements.

The region must therefore embrace all qualifications which are grounded in sound curricular content and mark standards of

The development of the CCSLC is one such programme that has been designed to “*represent the integration of knowledge, competencies and effective qualities critical to the dynamics of lifelong learning, global competitiveness and sustainable development in the region*”.



achievements in specific fields. The extent to which we will achieve this will depend on whether the society undergoes a radical paradigm shift in the way it views education and educational outcomes. Our failure to think 'outside the box' is marginalising thousands of young people every year.

This failure to change our attitude is evident in the refusal to accept the new thinking that students' examination results identify levels of achievement rather than "pass" or "fail". Students who achieve grades I, II and III have achieved the standard to matriculate to college or university while those with grades IV and V and a mix of other competencies go on to other pursuits - skills training in technical/vocational education, entry-level positions in the civil service or industry or repeat the examination to achieve a higher level of performance. The society's determination, however, is that those with grades I, II and III have "passed" while those with grades IV and V have "failed".

When CXC developed the Basic Proficiency examination, it was to give a certain cohort

perpetual burden on the collective public purse and the social infrastructures of the region as more and more young people are relegated to the scrap heap of failure.

As mentioned earlier, CXC has been at the forefront of leading the charge to change the way we educate and assess our children. The development of the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC) is one such programme that has been designed to "represent the integration of knowledge, competencies and effective qualities critical to the dynamics of lifelong learning, global competitiveness and sustainable development in the region" while "responding to the changing demands of education". The emphasis on the acquisition of specific skills which is the undergirding philosophy of technical vocational education makes the CCSLC an excellent programme for schools to implement as they guide students into the development of fundamental competencies. As with all other CXC qualifications the CCSLC promotes the integration of life skills in the learning process.

There are school leaders who indicated that when the CCSLC was implemented as a programme, the benefits to the students were significant. In one school, the principal was quite excited as she related that her school had found a way to utilise the CCSLC effectively. The CCSLC curriculum was introduced at Grade Nine in some cases and most of the students wrote the examinations at the end of Grade Ten. This according to the principal provided a vital foundation for CSEC. In fact, she was quick to point out that the school got its best CSEC results after the CCSLC foundation programmes were implemented.

In another school, the principal related that the programme was bearing positive fruit especially among the weaker students. She worked with her academic staff to use the CCSLC as part of the Grade Nine programme to address the weaknesses in the core subjects of Mathematics and English and then moved on to the teaching of the CSEC content. She gave an example of one student who had gained Mastery in CCSLC as well as success in technical/vocational subjects and was eager to move to another level. She was particularly proud of

As we widen the knowledge base of the children of the region and develop our human resources in many and varied disciplines, the support of different types of qualifications should be a matter of priority.

certification which would serve as a spring board for further education and training. The CXC Basic Proficiency examinations should have been the starting point for many youngsters in the region, but it was not given the recognition that it deserved and the achievements of holders of those certificates was undervalued.

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) in Jamaica was, to my mind, a rigorous examination. In fact, there were students in my batch at the Mico College who had ranges 4 and 5 (high performances) in a number of SSC subjects at the time of entry and they performed just as well or even better than some of those with GCE passes. These are just two examples of examinations which have been abandoned and with them thousands of students who were not able to work around the obstacles mounted by society's perception of failure.

We have failed to educate the public, employers, civil and business leaders on the diverse and multiple qualifications which are available. The marginalisation or, in the words of one educator, "cinderellarising" of some educational qualifications and educational institutions has led to a catastrophic waste of human resources and has put a colossal and

Although the CCSLC was not meant to be exit qualification from the secondary level system, the option to combine the units mastered with CSEC subjects, City and Guilds competencies and nationally recognised programmes allow the holders of CCSLC qualifications to begin the journey of building on a more solid foundation as they embark on career paths in their chosen disciplines.

Some educators in Jamaica have found the CCLSC to be an extremely useful programme. For the last few years prior to its strategic retreat, members of the Overseas Examinations Commission (OEC) have visited schools and have engaged principals, teachers as well as students on the matter of examinations and school leaving qualifications. The observations made and information gathered has proved vital to the Commission's understanding of the need for the certification of all students at the end of the secondary level. The Commission supports the Ministry of Education's (MoE) vision of pursuing multiple pathways to achieving education and training and, consequently, the appropriate qualification or certification for the pathways pursued.

this young man as she saw the transformation that had taken place during his sojourn at the school.

In yet another high school with a cohort of over five hundred Grade 11 students, it was most gratifying to hear that all students were required to sit at least one exit examination or a combination of different examinations when they reach the grade eleven. This is a non-traditional secondary school comprising students with distinct levels of abilities, aptitudes and interests and the school leadership took the bold decision that no one should be left behind. They were able to channel the students after Grade Nine into different programmes, in addition to CSEC, including the CCSLC, City and Guilds and NVQs so that at the end of Grade Eleven everyone had the opportunity to be certified.

These examples are all anecdotal but they drive home the essential point that students have differing abilities and will achieve different levels of competence by the end of the secondary system. The implementation of programmes like the CCSLC will allow all students to be certified at the level they have attained and so be able to move to the next step in their education and training.

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CCSLC English

By *Cherryl Stephens*

The English syllabus exposes students to language activities which allow them to communicate confidently and effectively in a variety of settings and situations. In a linguistically diverse region, the development of communicative competence in Caribbean Standard English (CSE) enables citizens to function nationally, regionally and internationally (CXC, *Rationale Pg. 1*). While the course of study aims to develop students' competence in their use of the standard, it also seeks to help students to appreciate when and where it is appropriate to use the native language varieties. The syllabus maintains that for students to negotiate successfully the environment in which they work and play, it is critical that they develop language skills that will help them to understand what they listen to, view and read, and to respond effectively in speech, writing and other expressive media.

A student-centred, activity-based approach is central to the delivery of the syllabus. The activities around which teaching and learning are encouraged allow students to explore social, cultural and moral values and to appreciate the aesthetic appeal and power of language. The syllabus takes full account of the varied learning styles of students and recognises the value of catering to multiple intelligences. It emphasises the use of students' experiences and simulates real life situations for the practice of language. The programme stresses careful attention to the processes involved in the development of language skills and provides scope for integration across the curriculum. Students are motivated to read for pleasure and for the development of self and community.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

On completion of this syllabus, students should be able to:

1. give and receive information;
2. read for specific information;
3. respond to information received;
4. read, understand and appreciate literature;
5. present information and ideas in a clear and interesting manner;
6. recognise the appropriateness and value of different language varieties in particular contexts and situations;
7. know and use conventions of language in speech and in writing

SKILLS AND ABILITIES TO BE ASSESSED

The aims and general objectives can be attained by developing the related key competencies in the student. These competencies are categorised under three broad headings:

- (a) Listening and Speaking;
- (b) Reading and Viewing; and
- (c) Writing.

KEY COMPETENCIES

Listening and Speaking

The ability to:

- Listen for, evaluate and present essential information;
- Speak effectively in a variety of contexts.

Reading and Viewing

The ability to:

- Read and interpret information from a range of print and electronic sources at the literal, inferential and critical levels;
- Evaluate information read and viewed;
- Source relevant information;
- Respond appropriately to information read and viewed.

Writing

The ability to:

- Write appropriately for a variety of purposes.

ORGANISATION OF THE SYLLABUS

The syllabus is arranged in five Modules, each of which represents a context for language use.

Module 1

Welcome to My World

Communicating Personal Information

Module 2

Searching and Sharing

Accessing and Presenting Information

Module 3

Speaking Up and Speaking Out

Convincing and Informing Through Language

Module 4

Windows to Our World

Language for Understanding and Using the Media

Module 5

Exploring New Frontiers

Communicating in the Work Environment

The following topics are covered in the syllabus:

- (a) Self and Family;
- (b) Cultural Beliefs, Practices and Performances;
- (c) Community;
- (d) Study skills;
- (e) Research skills;
- (f) Rights and responsibilities;
- (g) Environmental conservation;
- (h) Media;
- (i) Giving and receiving personal information;
- (j) Applying for a job;
- (k) At work.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an integral component of the Syllabus. The assessment for this Syllabus comprises two major components: School-Based Assessment (SBA) and External Assessment (EA).

The external assessment is a multiple-choice examination comprising 50 items. The school-based assessment consists of a single standardised school-based task for each Module. In the syllabus the end of Module assignments are as follows:

Module 1

Formal or Informal Letter

Module 2

Written Report and Oral Presentation

Module 3

Expository Piece, Oral Presentation, and a Listening Task

Module 4

A Group Presentation and a Listening Task

Module 5

Portfolio

This syllabus is designed using the philosophy that the acquisition and mastery of language is a progressive process which requires constant practice and reinforcement. It is envisaged that students will master the stated objectives after having been given many opportunities to receive and produce the target language. The contexts provided in each Module are intended to provide a framework for students to immerse themselves in language which raises issues relevant to the stated context. This course of study will assist in building students' awareness of the centrality of language to the normal functioning of human beings and facilitate their ability to operate in the Caribbean environment and beyond. It also seeks to build students' awareness and appreciation of self and community and provides them with the confidence and communicative competencies to respond appropriately and creatively to the challenges of functioning in whatever environments they may find themselves.

Summary of Revised **CCSLC**[®] Syllabuses

CCSLC Mathematics

By *Alsian Brown-Perry*

CONTEXT

Mathematics in the Caribbean responds to the broad spectrum of needs of the Caribbean community. Caribbean people need to be mathematically literate as this will enable them to identify and understand the role that mathematics plays in the world, make sound judgements, and engage in mathematical thinking that meets the needs of their current and future life as constructive, concerned and reflective citizens. This Mathematics programme of study is, therefore, designed to help Caribbean students to develop mathematical competencies such as thinking and reasoning; mathematical communication; argumentation; modelling; problem posing and solving; representation; the use of symbols, tools and technology. On completion of this course of study, students will be equipped to use mathematics for the enhancement of their environment, as well as for the empowerment of self, country and region, in order to be more competitive in an ever-changing world environment.

The Mathematics programme generally recognises that Mathematics teaching and learning may be enriched by approaching content and teaching and learning activities through the use of concrete examples and experiences, as well as through real-life experiences. If implemented as suggested, the programme would equip all Caribbean students for further study, the world of work and in general, for life-long learning.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

On completion of this syllabus, students should:

1. develop competence in working with numbers;
2. develop skills to use appropriate mental, written and calculator techniques to solve a variety of problems;
3. develop algebraic thinking skills;
4. appreciate that transactions with money are integral to everyday life;
5. develop an appreciation of the value of money, locally and internationally;
6. understand the need for accuracy and honesty in dealing with money;
7. develop and apply geometric properties of straight lines, polygons and circles;

8. develop spatial awareness;
9. develop computational and estimation competencies;
10. develop skills in collecting, summarising and interpreting data in different ways;
11. develop the ability to use data to solve problems, make decisions, and draw conclusions and inferences;
12. develop skills to use statistics and set theory as problem solving tools.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES TO BE ASSESSED

The aims and general objectives can be attained by developing the related key competencies in the student. These key competencies are:

Mathematical Thinking and Reasoning: Posing questions characteristic of mathematics; knowing the kind of answer that mathematics offer to such questions; distinguishing between different kinds of statements (definitions, theorems, examples); and understanding and handling the extent and limits of given mathematical concepts.

Mathematical Argumentation: Knowing what proofs are and how they differ from other kinds of mathematical reasoning; following and assessing chains of mathematical arguments; possessing a feel for heuristics ('what can or cannot happen, and why?'); and creating and expressing mathematical arguments.

Mathematical Communication: Expressing oneself in a variety of ways in oral, written and other visual form; understanding someone else's work.

Modelling: Structuring the field or situation to be modelled; translating reality into mathematical structures; interpreting mathematical models in terms to reality; working with a mathematical model; validating the model; reflecting, analysing and critiquing a model and its result; and monitoring and controlling the modelling process.

Problem Posing and Solving: Posing, formulating and defining different kinds of mathematical problems and solving different kinds of problems in a variety of ways.

Representation: Decoding, encoding, translating, distinguishing between, and interpreting different forms of representation of mathematical objects and situations; the interrelationships between the various representations; choosing and switching between different forms of representation, according to situation and purpose.

Symbols: Decoding and interpreting symbolic, formal and technical language and operations.

Tools and Technology: Using aids and tools, including technology when appropriate.

ORGANISATION OF THE SYLLABUS

The syllabus is arranged in five Modules, namely:

Module 1 – Number and Number Sense

Module 2 – Conscious Consumer

Module 3 – Spaces in the Environment

Module 4 – Measuring around us

Module 5 – Data Handling

ASSESSMENT

The assessment for this Syllabus comprises School-Based Assessment (SBA) and External Assessment (EA).

The external assessment is a multiple-choice examination comprising 50 items. The School-Based Assessment consists of a single standardised school-based task for each Module. The end of Module assignments are as follows:

Module 1 – Portfolio

Module 2 – Investigation

Module 3 – Construction of a Model

Module 4 – Project

Module 5 – Investigation

TOPICS COVERED BY MODULES

Module	Topics
Module 1 Number and Number Sense	• Properties of Numbers • Number Patterns • Symbolic Representations • Ratio • Use of the Calculator
Module 2 Conscious Consumer	• Percentages • Currency • Household Bills • Purchasing • Taxes • Wages, Salary and Commission
Module 3 Spaces in the Environment	• Lines, Angles, <i>Directions</i> • Plane Shapes • Pythagoras' Theorem • Solids: Cylinder, Cuboid and Cube
Module 4 Measuring around us	• Measuring Length and Mass • Measuring Perimeter and Area • Measuring Volume • Measuring Temperature • Measuring Time, Speed and Distance
Module 5 Data Handling	• Data Collection • Organisation of Data • Statistical Measures • Interpretation of Data • Simple Probability

Caribbean people need to be mathematically literate as this will enable them to identify and understand the role that mathematics plays in the world...



CCSLC Modern Languages

By *Cherryl Stephens*

The Modern Languages programme seeks to provide students of the Caribbean with language skills to communicate effectively with French and Spanish speakers within the region. The Council is of the view that this programme will encourage students to improve their language skills for participation in the increasingly complex global environment.

On a personal level, learning a second language promotes respect, tolerance and appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity, fostering greater harmony, regionally and globally. This syllabus will contribute to the development of the “Ideal Caribbean Person” through the exploration of beliefs, values and behaviours, students develop respect for human life, cultural heritage and the environment, thus enabling them to view the target culture from a perspective of informed understanding. It also maximises opportunities in the field of education, training and employment.

Emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for students to communicate through practical, authentic and functional activities appropriate and relevant to their experiences. All five Modules are to be taught in the context of the four language skills in a cultural setting. Emphasis is to be placed on students’ ability to communicate in the target language.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

On completion of this syllabus, students should be able to:

- understand and respond appropriately to spoken forms of the language in an acceptable manner;
- communicate orally and in writing in French and Spanish to everyday situations;
- understand material written in French and Spanish on topics relevant to their lives and experiences;
- develop an appreciation for language and culture in their personal lives and the lives of native Spanish and French speakers of the region;
- acquire an adequate foundation upon which they can continue to strengthen their communicative skills in French and Spanish for further study and the world of work.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES TO BE ASSESSED

The Aims and General Objectives can be attained by developing the related key competencies in the student. These are categorised under four broad headings:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

KEY COMPETENCIES

Students will be able to:

- converse meaningfully on a variety of topics with native speakers of Spanish and French;
- read, understand and respond appropriately to written material, such as, short statements, notices, signs and e-mails related to their lives and experiences;
- write brief messages, simple dialogues, notes, e-mails, letters and cards relevant to their lives and experiences;
- collect, process and present information on a variety of topics delivered in Spanish and French;
- show an appreciation of traditions, values and norms of their own culture and those of the people in French-Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean and Latin America.

ORGANISATION OF THE SYLLABUS

The syllabus is arranged in five Modules, namely:

Module 1

Knowing Me, Knowing You

Self, Family, Friends, Neighbours, Pets, Home and the Community

Module 2

See Me On The Go

School and Daily Routine

Module 3

Let’s Live It Up

Sports and Leisure and Eating Out

Module 4

Cash It Or Charge It

Shopping

Module 5

Watch Me Grow

Professions and Occupations, Future Plans and Travel

THE FOLLOWING TOPICS ARE COVERED IN THE SYLLABUS:

Self;
Family, Friends, Neighbours, Pets;
Home And Community;
School;
Daily Routine;
Sports and Leisure;
Eating Out;
Shopping;
Professions and Occupations;
Future Plans;
Travel.

ASSESSMENT

The assessment for this Syllabus comprises School-Based Assessment (SBA) and External Assessment (EA).

The external assessment is a multiple-choice examination comprising 50 items. The school-based assessment consists of a single standardised school-based task for each Module. In the syllabus, the end of Module assignments are as follows:

Module 1

Identification form

Module 2

Reading comprehension and written responses to situations

Module 3

Conversation and role play

Module 4

Reading and dramatisation of dialogues and composition of e-mails

Module 5

Conversation

The underlying philosophy of this syllabus is that the acquisition and mastery of language is a continuous process which demands that skills be practised and reinforced regularly. The syllabus, therefore, embraces a paradigm shift from the traditional approach of acquisition of proficiency mainly through grammatical and lexical contexts towards the achievement of communicative competence which enables the learner to use the language to ensure communication. Errors will be made in the process but these should be viewed as part of the normal acquisition of language. Hence excessive criticism and correction must be avoided in an effort to encourage production of the language. Although it is recognised that overt instruction helps students to acquire language more efficiently, in the context of this syllabus, it is expected that students will be taught the grammar they need to know to accomplish defined tasks.

Summary of Revised **CCSLC**[®] Syllabuses

CCSLC Integrated Science

By *Alsian Brown-Perry*

CONTEXT

An understanding of science is central to a young person's preparedness for life in modern society. It enables an individual to participate fully in a society in which science and technology play a significant role. This understanding also empowers individuals to participate appropriately in the determination of public policy where issues of science and technology impact their lives. The inclusion of the CCSLC Integrated Science in the school curriculum will contribute significantly to shaping the quality of life through promotion of personal health practices and respect for the environment. The programme, therefore, aims at providing Caribbean learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that would help them negotiate an increasingly complex and dynamic technological environment in which they have to live and work, as well as contribute positively to the region and the world.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

On completion of this syllabus, students should:

- appreciate the dynamic nature of Science and the impact of Science and Technology on the world in the twenty-first century;
- understand the importance of quantifying the dimensions of matter;
- be aware of the contributions of the Caribbean to Science and Technology;
- understand the particulate nature of matter, and its chemical and physical properties;
- understand that there is interdependence among living organisms;
- understand the relationship between structure and function for selected body systems;
- appreciate the components of the physical environment and their inter-relationship; understand the need to practise a healthy lifestyle;
- appreciate the role each individual must play in preserving the environment;
- understand the impact of energy on man's activities and the interchange among the different forms of energy;
- appreciate the need for responsible use of energy;
- integrate Information and Communication Technological (ICT) tools and skills.

TOPICS COVERED BY MODULES

Module	Topics
Module 1 Working Like a Scientist	• Science and Technology • Responding to Challenges Using Science and Technology • Measurement: An Important Scientific Skill
Module 2 Investigating Matter	• States of Matter, Water • Elements • Compounds and Mixtures • Metals and Non-Metals • Acids and Bases
Module 3 Understanding Life	• Living Organisms • Plants • Air • Pests and Pesticides • Soil
Module 4 Focusing on me	• Reproduction • Drugs • Diseases • Food and Me • Blood and its importance
Module 5 Exploring Energy	• Forms of Energy • Energy Conservation • Energy Sources • Energy in the home • Energy interaction

SKILLS AND ABILITIES TO BE ASSESSED

The aims and general objectives can be attained by developing the related key competencies in the student. These key competencies are:

Recording and Communication
Manipulation and Measurement
Drawing
Analysis and Interpretation
Planning and Design
Social Attributes

KEY COMPETENCIES

Recording and Communicating

Students will be able to record scientific data and communicate information effectively, orally, graphically and in writing.

Manipulation and Measurement

Students will be able to safely use appropriate instruments to measure accurately various physical qualities.

Drawing

Students will be able to make faithful representation of different species.

Analysis and Interpretation

Students will be able to carry out experiments, analyse and interpret data from experiments to solve problems.

Planning and Design

Students will be able to plan and design experiments to solve problems.

Social Attributes

Students will be able to function efficiently and effectively in a group setting, while collaborating to achieve a common goal.

ORGANISATION OF THE SYLLABUS

The syllabus is arranged in five Modules, namely:

Module 1: Working Like a Scientist
Module 2: Investigating Matter
Module 3: Understanding Life
Module 4: Focusing on me
Module 5: Exploring Energy

ASSESSMENT

The assessment for this Syllabus comprises School-Based Assessment (SBA) and External Assessment (EA).

The external assessment is a multiple-choice examination comprising 50 items. The School-Based Assessment consists of a single standardised school-based task for each Module. The end of Module assignments are as follows:

Module 1: Portfolio
Module 2: Investigation
Module 3: Portfolio
Module 4: Class Test
Module 5: Portfolio

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE SYLLABUS

The organisation of each Module in the syllabus is designed to facilitate inquiry-based learning and to ensure that connections among concepts are established. Teachers should ensure that their lessons stimulate the use of all of the senses in learning. This will help students view science as a dynamic and exciting investigative process. This syllabus caters to varying teaching, learning and assessment strategies. Greater emphasis should be placed on the application of scientific concepts and principles and less on the factual materials, which encourage memorisation and short-term recall. The role of the teacher is to facilitate students' learning of accurate and unbiased information that will directly contribute to a more scientifically literate citizenry that is capable of making educated and ethical decisions regarding the world we live in.



CCSLC Social Studies

By Dr Annette Piper

Social Studies is one of the six subjects offered at the CCSLC level, and was developed based on the philosophical underpinnings of the Council. Consequently, one of the major expectations of this syllabus is that a person who successfully completes this core should have the foundation for further education and training and for entry-level employment.

In order to achieve this, CXC took into consideration the UNESCO four Pillars of Learning as well as the cultural context and the aspirations of regional governments for a well-educated and trained labour force to meet the targets set for social and economic development as enshrined in the CARICOM document “The Ideal Caribbean Person (2000)”.

That is, because the development of citizens as the most valuable resource of the small states of the region is a regional priority, the syllabus seeks to ensure that on completion of this course of study, students will learn to do, learn to be, and learn to transform themselves and society. They will have acquired the competencies to deal with issues and challenges faced in their daily lives and be able to function effectively as productive citizens and for those seeking employment immediately on leaving secondary school, the programme provides the necessary marketable social skills for effective participation in the world of work.

The Council has collaborated with its partners in both the development and implementation of this programme at the secondary level to ensure compliance and compatibility. Therefore the inclusion of Social Studies in the school curriculum, as well as the selection of content and methodology, are influenced by the regional context. These are included on the premise that an understanding of self, family, community, region and the world will foster an appreciation of self and the environment. Learners will be sensitised to the need to respect themselves and others irrespective of ethnicity, status, belief, gender or class. The syllabus aims to equip young adults with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that would enable them to develop competencies to negotiate the increasingly complex and

dynamic global environment in which they live and work. Therefore the approach to the delivery of the subject is interdisciplinary, drawing from a variety of other disciplines including History, Geography, Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology and Economic, and explores the interaction between individuals and their physical and socio-cultural environment.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The stated general objectives are that on completion of this syllabus, students should:

- demonstrate the ability to make informed decisions on moral and ethical issues
- develop an appreciation of family and kinship
- develop and practise social skills and values which create positive personal and interpersonal relationships
- develop attitudes and values that will enable them to make meaningful contributions as members of society
- develop a sense of national identity and pride
- accept responsibility and be accountable for the effects of their actions on their own lives and the lives of others
- appreciate the value of good work ethic for employer and employee
- understand the impact of globalisation on the Caribbean society and economy
- develop an appreciation of the need to respond/adapt to global changes

SKILLS TO BE ASSESSED

The following are the specific skills and abilities to be taught and assessed:

- Problem solving using systematic procedures
- Collecting, organising, interpreting and presenting information (research)
- Displaying appropriate attitudes and behaviour in the conduct of interpersonal relationships (exercise of good interpersonal skills)
- Exhibiting good citizenship practices in local and regional contexts
- Working collaboratively in groups
- Reading and interpreting maps and other graphical representations

ORGANISATION OF THE SYLLABUS

To facilitate the successful achievement of the stated objectives the syllabus is arranged in Five Modules, namely:

- Module 1:** Dimensions of Self
- Module 2:** Community Interaction
- Module 3:** Responsibility and Accountability
- Module 4:** Regional Perspective
- Module 5:** The Global Village

ASSESSMENT

The assessment for the subject is conducted internally through specific tasks related to each module, as well as externally through a multiple-choice examination comprising 50 items.

The syllabus aims to equip young adults with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that would enable them to develop competencies to negotiate the increasingly complex and dynamic global environment in which they live and work.



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New Generation **CAPE Subjects** *well received*



A gymnast of the Nishida's Gymnastics is airborne during one of the many heart-thumping demonstrations at the launch of Physical Education and Sport in Jamaica



Students from schools in Guyana are all smiles at the launch of CAPE Agricultural Science



Performers from the National School of Dance portraying a farm scene during the launch in Guyana

Between Friday 9 May and Tuesday 20 May, CXC, working with ministries of education in five Participating Countries and key local stakeholders launched five New Generation subjects for the **Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)** in five countries much to the delight of the countries and stakeholders.

The five subjects – Agricultural Science, Entrepreneurship, Performing Arts, Tourism, and Physical Education and Sport were launched in Barbados (Tourism on May 9); Guyana (Agricultural Science on May 12); Trinidad and Tobago (Entrepreneurship on May 14); St Lucia (Performing Arts on May 16); and Jamaica (Physical Education and Sport on May 20).

In Barbados, CXC partnered with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) for the launch of Tourism; In Guyana, the major partner was the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI); In Trinidad, CXC worked with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce; in St Lucia the major partner was the Cultural Development Foundation; and in Jamaica CXC partnered with five tertiary institutions which offer Physical Education and Sport.

During all five events, ministers of education for the respective islands or their representatives delivered address at the events. In addition, ministers with responsibility for some of the areas of interest of the new subjects and representatives from the major stakeholder partners also spoke at the events. Here are some extracts from some of the speeches.

Hon. Natalie Neita-Headley
Minister with Responsibility for Sport
in the Office of the Prime Minister, Jamaica

“By teaching physical education in combination with sport we increase the pool of potential sportsmen and sportswomen who will go on to participate in competitive sport and we also encourage others to consider the growing

opportunities for careers in sport: coaching, training, physiotherapy, sports medicine, sports law, sports management, sports agency, sports journalism, research and development and a myriad of other related disciplines.

I am especially pleased to see the comprehensive approach of the syllabus. In Unit 1 the “Fundamentals of Physical Education and Sport” modules covered will include:

Functional Anatomy and Training Theory; The Sociological Aspects of Sport; and Sports Psychology. Unit 2 – the “Application of Physical Education and Sport” is just as exciting covering: Biomechanics Sport Management; and Technology And Innovation

The improved focus on this age-old subject gives hope that the future generation of managers, agents and business advisors will be able to formalise and institutionalise much of what many of our lead coaches have developed but with greater understanding of the rudiments of the what, why and how to replicate.

Clearly, CXC is trying as far as possible to ensure that with their new subjects, students think about their employment prospects, including the prospect of self-employment...

New Generation **CAPE**® Subjects well received

If I sound overly optimistic it is because I believe in the paradigm shift that this examinable subject can bring and the tremendous benefits it can generate, not just for Jamaica but the entire region.

Our tertiary institutions share my belief and are adjusting their syllabi and course offerings expecting a growing number of students to come from the secondary system wishing to pursue their degrees in the Sport Sciences and other such areas.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this “new generation” of CAPE subjects will likely create a healthier Jamaica, reduce the nation’s health costs, promote a more peaceful society, reduce stress levels, create a greater pool of athletes from which to select our national teams, provide increasing opportunities for economic development and promote the development of a new generation of professionals in the area of sport business.”



The Most Honourable Professor Sir Kenneth Hall presents Honourable Natalie Neita Headley, Minister with responsibility for Sport in Jamaica with a copy of the new CAPE syllabus

PHOTO: JIS

Mrs Jane King-Hippolyte

Dean of the Division of Arts and General Studies at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, St. Lucia

“I imagine that Saint Lucia was chosen for the site of the focus on Performing Arts because of its legendary performers and other movers and shakers in the business. I’m thinking Derek, Luther, Kendel... I’m thinking of all the giants behind the founding of the Music School - our own beloved Sir Leton Thomas, Hunter Francois, their first Principal, John Bailey. Thinking of the pioneers in dance, Theresa Collymore, Christine Samuel and others. The cinematic prodigies - Davina Lee, Mathurine Emmanuel... And so many other names that I

am going to stop mentioning names because it is dangerous and I know I have already missed out the vast majority of you. Right now our poets are heading out to the UK to perform in the Brighton Fringe Festival, and I would have been going with them if it hadn’t been the month for CAPE exams! But the point I am trying to make is that despite the tiny size of Saint Lucia, many Saint Lucians have made their marks – and sometimes even their livings - in the performing arts.

One of the reasons they’ve done it is probably rooted in our very tininess and isolation. For those of us who wanted to see live theatre, hear poetry readings, be involved in films, dance, whatever - if you wanted to see it, you pretty much had to be it. So you got these brilliant kids - I think of Davina Lee immediately

- who didn’t wait for someone to come and set up a film industry, and didn’t wait for a funding agency to come with money. She wanted to make films so she made films. Last year at the ACLALS conference after her showings someone asked about budget. She looked beautifully, gratifyingly muddled and said: None? One does need money eventually, but if you sit around waiting for the cash to come to you, you’ll never get started. The thing is to jump in with both feet. With the new Performing Arts syllabus, CXC hopes to teach its CAPE students how to make money out of their talent as well as how to develop their skills.

The Performing Arts syllabus itself is a fascinating piece of work. Like most CAPE subjects, it has been divided into a Unit 1 and a Unit 2, and like most CAPE subjects,



Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch, Acting Registrar of CXC; Mr Norman Gibson of CARDI; Honourable Leslie Ramsammy, Minister of Agriculture, and Honourable Priya Manickchand, Minister of Education enjoying a light moment after the launch in Guyana

Mr Vere Parris of the Barbados Association of Principals of Secondary Schools; Dr Jean Holder, former Head of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO); and Mr Johnson Johnrose of CTO are attentive to the proceedings at the launch of CAPE in Barbados





the idea is that one may take either Unit first. With Performing Arts, however, there are four possible Unit 2 options – one might specialise in Cinematic Arts, Dance, Drama or Music, and one could choose to make up an “A” Level equivalent by doing two of those Unit 2s OR by taking one of the Unit 2 options and the Unit 1, which is called Business for the Creative Arts, and whose three modules include Business Feasibility, Business Development and Planning, and Project Planning for the Arts. In fact, one could theoretically take two A Level equivalents in Performing Arts (if one found the right school), by taking any two two-Unit combinations.

Clearly, CXC is trying as far as possible to ensure that with their new subjects, students think about their employment prospects, including the prospect of self-employment, something that is especially important in the Creative Arts. But the prospects for employment in the Creative Arts also feed into the development of our tourism product, and we cannot pretend that there is not a need to develop that and make it more exciting and appealing, more creative and more specifically Saint Lucian. The syllabus also encourages students to investigate local practices and to study local events and festivals. It familiarises them with cultural forms from the wider Caribbean, and encourages a deeper sense of what it means to be Caribbean, as well as encouraging them to understand the history of the performing arts throughout the world, including Asia and Africa, as well as Europe.”

Hon. Rev. Ronald Thwaites
Minister of Education, Jamaica

“It is also our determination that by 2017 all students should graduate with at **least one marketable skill** among the suite of subjects in which all will sit examinations.

To this end, last September we introduced into fifty-four (54) secondary schools, five new occupational skills as follows: Call Centre

Operations, Digital Animation, Crop Production, Food and Beverage and Motor Vehicle Repair (Air Conditioning).

There are many more to come - all dictated by the needs of the economy. The prejudice against technical and vocational subjects as being inferior to academic subjects must be discredited now, once and for all.

The Ministry of Education and HEART Trust/NTA will this year double the training for more than two hundred fifty (250) teachers who can guide new students to sit Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) and National Vocational Qualification of Jamaica (NVQJ) examinations.

HEART is collaborating with the Ministry to ensure that Levels One and Two NVQJ programmes become more available to the secondary school cohort.

It is against this background that the Ministry of Education welcomes the introduction of these five new programmes at the CAPE level.

The intervention is timely because the economic situation in Jamaica and the region dictates that much more weight must be given to acquiring those skills which will attract investors and equip our young people to work and thrive in the region and anywhere in the world.

Importantly, persons equipped with these skills are more likely to gain employment as micro-business operators compared to persons with certification only in academic subjects.

In this regard, we commend the Caribbean Examination Council for including a subject in Entrepreneurism as well as infusing elements of this discipline into the four other new CAPE programme.

The Government of Jamaica endorses this emphasis by CXC to equip students in grade 12 and 13 with work-ready skills and entrepreneurial competencies. The creation of entrepreneurial ventures provides opportunities for self-employment as well as the employment of others.

We note that one of the key features of these new syllabuses is the focus on product development and service creation. This encourages learners to develop products and services that are of real world value and significance.”

Senator Dr the Honourable Bhoendradatt Tewarie
Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development, Trinidad and Tobago

“I have been asked to speak about the entrepreneurial profile but I want first of all to applaud the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) for introducing Entrepreneurship as a new CAPE subject as it continually strives to make education more relevant to the Caribbean experience and to the challenges which face the region.

One of the exciting aspects of the introduction of this subject, and indeed the other four subjects which are being launched this month, is that it will also help to transform both teaching and the classroom, making learning more interactive and project oriented.

Indeed, the claim can be made that the CXC is being entrepreneurial by introducing more non-traditional subjects into its syllabus. Members of the council would no doubt have heard the Mighty Sparrow’s famous calypso where he parodies his own educational experience with the phrase “And Dan is the man/ in the van.” In that era, Sparrow seemed to be suggesting, he was being taught useless knowledge – although he would later use rhyming skills to telling effect.

Introducing entrepreneurship as a subject can be seen as an answer to Sparrow so that the students and entrepreneurs of today might now have a different take on that calypso, perhaps asking questions like “was Dan wasting his time transporting things in a van?”



Jane King Hippolyte addressing the launch in St Lucia



CAPE launch Guyana: Honourable Leslie Ramsammy, Minister of Agriculture in Guyana speaking about the importance of “growing our own food” as his aide displays some produce from Minister Ramsammy’s farm

New Generation **CAPE**® Subjects well received



Senator Harry Husbands, the guest speaker at the launch of Tourism in Barbados, and Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch, Acting Registrar of CXC engaging two students after the launch of CAPE Tourism



Mrs Irene Walter, former CXC Registrar, presenting Honourable the Reverend Ronald Thwaites with a CD of the new CAPE subjects



Mr Rawle Gibbons, CXC Performing Arts resource persons is having a chat with Dr Didacus Jules, former Registrar of CXC, during the launch of Performing Arts in St Lucia

The entrepreneur enters the situation from a different perspective and asks questions. Can things be done differently? When one considers that schooling in the colonial era required the student to be a passive recipient of knowledge, it is possible to see how teaching entrepreneurship will be transformative.

The person credited with coining the term "entrepreneurship," Richard Cantillon, emphasised the entrepreneur's profile as a risk-taker while nineteenth century economist Jean-Baptiste Say saw the entrepreneur as a planner, someone who "undertakes" an idea and unites all the necessary elements together –land, labour, capital – to create a product. Surely, the entrepreneur is a bit of both as he/she strives to make his/her idea into sustainable reality. The successful entrepreneur understands how to unite the talents and skills of a wide range of people to put ideas into effect. Increasingly, the entrepreneur as planner and coordinator, as inspirational and visionary, becomes more important especially with technologically complex projects.

Mrs Bonita Morgan

Director of Resource Mobilisation and Development, CTO

"...why is it important to introduce the tourism subject into our schools:

It is one of the building blocks in the development of the human resources environment to support tourism.

Building Career Awareness in Tourism

Tourism is the lifeblood of the Caribbean at this time in our existence and will continue to be an important economic sector for our region for some time to come. We have been saying for the longest while that one in every four persons in the region either works directly or indirectly with the tourism sector. Tourism is labour intensive, which is a good thing for our small economies, and we need to attract

persons to work in the sector. In fact, there is a strong likelihood that many school leavers will actually end up working in jobs in tourism or in jobs that link to tourism, whether it be in events and conference planning, public relations and marketing, research and statistics, conducting tours, working in hotels and restaurants, etc. It is a reality of our economies and we should at minimum prepare our young people to understand something about the scope and workings of the sector so that they can make intelligent choices when they begin their own career planning and forging their own career path. So building career awareness is important for the tourism sector.

Why introduce tourism in the schools: Influencing Public Attitudes and Awareness to Tourism and Tourists

We need to do a better job at sensitising our local populations about the importance of tourism to our economies and to their individual well being and to show them the positive impacts linked to job creation, foreign exchange earnings, local and foreign investment, tax collection, goods and services generated and used by the sector etc. etc. and how this all feeds in a better quality of life for all of us. I am very aware that when we are trying to publicly influence attitudes and thinking about critical areas of our lives for example: the dangers of legal and illegal drugs, protecting our environment, adopting healthy lifestyles, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV and AIDS, domestic violence and child abuse, family planning, the dangers of smoking etc. etc. our social advocates say that we need to go into the schools to educate our young people so that over time we can influence their thinking and behaviours, and we have started to see positive gains from this type of education in our schools. Just think about the reduction of smoking in our young populations as an example. This campaign has worked successfully over the years and our young people have received the message. Additionally, tourism depends on a

host population that is receptive and welcoming to visitors and not hostile or looking for ways to rip them off. And we believe like the African American writer, poet, artist extraordinaire Maya Angelou said "when you know better you do better." So we have to better educate our general population so that we can safeguard and protect our visitors and by doing so safeguard and protect our economies. We are convinced that once our people "know better" about tourism they will act and do better, and the school is one of the building blocks to engender those public attitudes and awareness to tourism and tourists.

Mr Dominic Hadeed

Founder and CEO of Blue Waters

When I was growing up, it was my entrepreneurial traits that got me classified as a trouble maker and a rule breaker in school.

In fact, it was many of these very traits that allowed me to become successful later in my business career, but, I repeat, they were the exact ones that got me into a lot of trouble in school.

If this course was available to me 25 years ago, I believe that it would have saved me a lot of the grief and soul searching that I went through when I was growing up.

I took many different business classes in college and up to today I speak to any entrepreneur who I can get in contact with, to understand how they think...and I still do a lot of reading and I take short courses to help me fill in my gaps, as I still believe that I have so much more to learn to be truly successful.

I would be very interested in taking a version of this class if it were available otherwise.

In fact, I would go so far as to suggest that teachers and parents be given some information from this curriculum, on how to spot entrepreneurial traits in children, so that they can better understand these children and be in a position to guide them to take this course and also learn how to get the best out of them."



FAREWELL

Dr Didacus Jules

On 22 April 2014, friends, coworkers and members of CXC governance committees paid tribute to **Dr Didacus Jules** at the Hilton Barbados as he spent his last week as CXC Registrar.

Tributes were paid by representatives of the two staff unions – **André Blair** and **Wayne Morgan**; a representative of the management team – **Mr Anderson Marshall**, and representatives of the governance committees which were meeting in Barbados at the same time – **Mrs Jacintha Pringle** (Director of Education, Antigua and Barbuda), **Mrs Grace McLean** (Chief Education Officer, Jamaica), and **Mrs Chanelle Petty-Barrett**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Anguilla.

Here are extracts from some of the tributes;

Mr André Blair

President of the Principal Staff Association, CXC
"Dr Jules always had an open-door policy... he was a man who had anticipation of doing great things. I realised that you are a man of great



Dr Jules arriving at the function with Henry Mangal (L) and Anderson Marshall (behind)

vision. Since he came we have implemented so many things technology wise."

Mrs Jacintha Pringle

Director of Education, Antigua and Barbuda

"At the time Dr Jules came to CXC, I think CXC needed a faster pace and that is exactly what happened. His technological prowess changed the organisation into one that is technological driven. CAPE offerings have increased...they are exciting subjects, just right for Caribbean students."

Dr Grace McLean

Chief Education Officer, Jamaica

"...He was very friendly, very charismatic, and very strategic...Dr Jules, you have served CXC very well. You have transformed the

Farewell Dr Didacus Jules



Cheers! L to R: Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch, Dr Didacus Jules, Professor Nigel Harris and Mrs Chanelle Petty-Barrett



Dr Jules greeting former Registrar Dr Lucy Steward. Mr Anderson Marshall, Director of Corporate Services is at left.

organisation making it into an ICT-driven organisation that is second to none in the Caribbean and other parts of the world. You have been a fearless leader and you have stood up for what you believe in, and this has defined you as a forward thinker, one who wants to bring out the best in the region and in our people."

Mr Anderson Marshall

Director of Corporate Services, CXC

"He arrived at CXC in 2008 on 2 April and the first thing he brought to us was the Unified Communications System (USC), and transformed our technology almost immediately. He had barely arrived and our information systems had begun to change. . .

Didacus, and his relentless quest to reposition CXC in the face of globalisation and resultant and actual potential threats for CXC, had set out on a major thrust to ensure that the certification offered by CXC remained relevant."

Mrs Chanelle Petty-Barrett

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Education, Anguilla

"Dr Jules has indeed found his purpose. . . he is a man of passion, in fact he is on fire when it comes to the things he is passionate about;

and I think his purpose is being an instrument of change in the Caribbean region. . . He is a rebel with a cause, the betterment of the people of the Caribbean being his cause."

Professor Nigel Harris

Chairman of CXC

When Didacus Jules came on board, we did absolutely the right thing.

Dr Jules' tenure here has been a short one, but in truth it has been transformational, and I would even say it was revolutionary.

How someone could have covered that much ground in a short six years is really amazing and a test to this man's vision and energy. He restructured the organisation from the time he came and looked to turn it into something more effective and efficient.

Below is the poetic tribute by Wayne Morgan, President of the Support and Ancillary Staff Union at CXC. His tribute is entitled Tropical Storm DJ.

Tropical Storm DJ originated in St Lucia, and has had a direct effect on St Lucia, St Vincent, Dominica and Grenada.

Tropical Storm DJ, made landfall in Barbados at the Caribbean Examinations Council on 2 April 2008, and since then has be

wreaking havoc on inefficiencies, low flying staff and outdated processes. Since reaching land, tropical Storm DJ has been known to lead in the merger of divisions, improve the IT infrastructure and systems of CXC and manage to massage the political will to construct our new CXC Headquarters in the Pine after 40 years. Tropical Storm DJ is centred around building a CXC that is world-class.

Since arriving on the island, Tropical Storm DJ wind-span has reduced as he made a valiant effort to take care of his health, whether it was swimming, playing tennis or walking,

Maximum sustained winds of vision are very present with gusts of straight-talk and veiled promises of being the wind beneath the wings of those who strive for excellence. Life-threatening surf and rip currents did not go unnoticed.

On its present path, Tropical Storm DJ is expected to hit the OECS on 1 May 2014. On its present course, minimal central pressure is expected. Those at the OECS offices are urged to move out of low-lying areas and seek shelter. Tropical force winds are expected to extend outwards as Tropical Storm DJ is expected to remain a large system in the foreseeable future.

Standing next to one of his favourite work of art by a student, Dr Jules is all smiles as he holds a photograph of the New CXC Headquarters



Dr Jules being interviewed by Lisa Brome of CBC Television

CXC First Paper-Less Exam Returns Excellent Results

Digital Media, offered in May/June 2014 as the first 100 per cent paper-less examination by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) has returned excellent results in its first sitting.

One hundred per cent of the candidates taking Digital Media Units 1 and 2 achieved acceptable grades which are Grades I-V at CAPE.

Of the 68 candidates who registered for Unit 1 of Digital Media in its first sitting, 19 per cent of the candidates for Unit 1 achieved Grade I; 21 per cent of candidates achieved Grade II; 49 per cent achieved Grade III and nine per cent achieved Grade IV.

Nine candidates registered for Digital Media Unit 2. One achieved Grade I; two achieved Grade II and six achieved Grade III.

CXC Digital Media was introduced to schools in September 2013.

Performance Remains Consistent

Overall performance in CAPE remained consistent with 2013. Ninety per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V which are the acceptable grades, the same as in 2013. Performance remained the same on 16 Units, improved on 14 Units and declined on 16 Units.

Mathematics and Sciences

There were mixed performances in the Mathematics and Sciences cluster of subjects. Both Units of Applied Mathematics returned identical performance as last year – 89 per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V. In both Units of Applied Mathematics, 27 per cent of entries achieved Grade I.

For Pure Mathematics Unit 1, performance declined slightly, from 72 per cent in 2013 to 69

per cent this year, while for Pure Mathematics Unit 2, performance improved marginally from 82 per cent in 2013 to 85 per cent this year.

Both Units of Biology saw a dip in performance this year. Eighty-six per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades in Unit 1 this year compared with 90 per cent in 2013. For Unit 2, ninety-one per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V compared with 97 per cent in 2013.

Performance on both Units of Chemistry improved when compared with 2013. There was a slight improvement on Unit 1 with 85 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 84 per cent in 2013; while for Unit 2, there was a three per cent improvement in performance this year. Ninety-five per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, compared with 92 per cent in 2013. Both Units of Chemistry recorded a high percentage of Grade Is. Twenty-four per cent of entries achieved Grade I in Unit 1 and 39 per cent of entries achieved similar grades in Unit 2.

There was a three-per cent improvement on performance in Physics Unit 2 this year – 95 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 92 per cent in 2013. Performance remained steady on Physics Unit 1 with 93 per cent of entries achieving similar grades in both years.

Humanities

Performance in the humanities cluster of subjects remained mostly steady when compared with performance last year. French Unit 1 saw a slight improvement with 97 per cent achieving Grades I-V compared with 96 per cent last year. For French Unit 2 there was a three-per cent decline, from 99 per cent in 2013 to 96 per cent this year.

Both Units of Spanish performed almost identical in both years. Spanish Unit 1, ninety-two per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 93 in 2013. Similarly 92 per cent of entries for Unit 2 achieved acceptable grades this year compared with 94 per cent in 2013.

Sociology Units 1 and 2 saw slight decline in performance; 85 per cent in Unit 1 compared with 86 per cent last year and 93 per cent in Unit 2 this year compared with 95 per cent last year.

Law Unit 1, had a one-per cent decline, from 85 per cent of acceptable grades last year to 84 per cent this year; while for Law Unit 2, there was a one-per cent improvement – 82 per cent this year compared with 81 per cent last year.

Performance on Literatures in English for both Units in both 2013 and 2014 were identical. In both years 94 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades for Unit 1 and 96 per cent achieved similar grades for Unit 2.

History Unit 1 recorded a slight improvement in performance when compared with 2013. Seventy-nine per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V this year compared with 76 per cent in 2013. Unit 2 saw a decline of six per cent – 70 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 76 per cent in 2013.

Business

Performance in the business cluster of subjects remained fairly consistent with that of 2013 in most Units. Ninety-five per cent of entries for Accounting Unit 1 achieved acceptable grades compared with 96 per cent in 2013. For Accounting Unit 2, seventy-nine per cent achieved compared with 82 per cent last year.

CXC First Paper-Less Exam Returns Excellent Results

Management of Business Units 1 and 2 saw a one percentage point variation in the performance on both Units in the two years. Eighty-six per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades in Management of Business Unit 1 compared with 87 per cent in 2013; while for Unit 2, ninety-seven per cent achieved acceptable grades this year, one per cent improvement over 2013.

Similarly for Economics Unit 1, there was a one-per cent variation with 82 per cent of entries achieving Grades I-V in 2014 and 83 per cent in 2013. For Economics Unit 2, eighty-five per cent of entries Grades I-V this year compared with 88 per cent in 2013.

Technical and Vocational

In the technical and vocational cluster of subjects, performance was consistent with the exception of Geometrical and Mechanical Engineering Drawing Unit 1 which saw a marked decline in performance this year. Sixty-nine per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 85 per cent last year. Seventy-nine per cent of entries for Geometrical

and Mechanical Engineering Drawing Unit 2 achieved acceptable grades compared with 83 per cent in 2013.

Both Units of Art and Design remained consistent with 100 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades in both Units in both years.

Food and Nutrition Unit 2 returned similar results with 99 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades. In Unit 2, ninety-seven per cent achieved acceptable grades in 2014 compared with 99 per cent in 2013.

Seventy-four per cent of entries for Electrical and Electronic Technology Unit 1 achieved acceptable grades compared with 75 per cent in 2013; and for Unit 2, seventy-nine per cent achieved acceptable grades compared with 83 per cent in 2013. No candidate achieved Grade I in this Unit.

Core Subjects

The two core subjects, Communication Studies and Caribbean Studies continue to perform consistently with previous years. This year 96 per cent of entries achieved acceptable

grades in Communication Studies compared with 97 per cent in 2013, and for Caribbean Studies 93 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 94 per cent in 2013.

Growth

The number of candidates entered for CAPE this year was 29,379 compared with 28,228 in 2013, an increase of 1,151 candidates.

Communication Studies continue to lead the subject entries with 15,625 entries this year compared with 14,926 last year. It is followed by Caribbean Studies with 11,941 entries this year, compared with 11,220 in 2013. Sociology Unit 1 with 5,996 entries, Biology Unit 1 with 5681 and Chemistry Unit 1 with 5,447 entries round out the top five largest Unit entries.

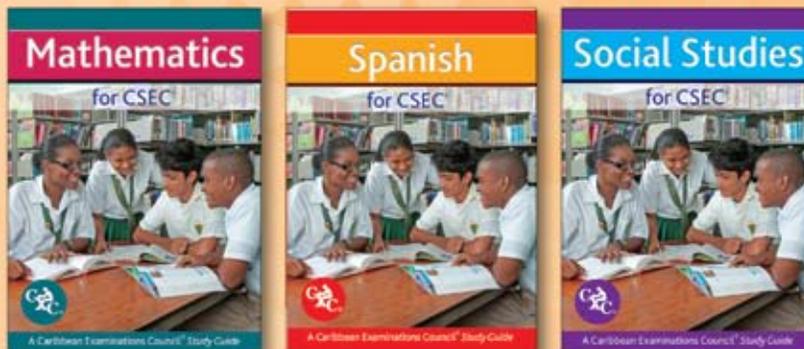
Sixty-two per cent of the candidates were females and 38 per cent males.

Just over 42 per cent of the candidates were in the 18-year age group, while 33 per cent were over 19 years and 22 per cent were in the 17-year age group.

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-Marking Goes Live!

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) utilised electronic marking or e-marking for some of its live scripts during the 2014 May/June examination sitting.

The Council marked 11 papers in seven Caribbean Secondary Education (CSEC) subjects using the e-marking technology provided by the UK-based company RM.

The seven subjects with papers e-marked were Biology, Chemistry, Human and Social Biology, Integrated Science, Physics, Principles of Accounts and Principles of Business.

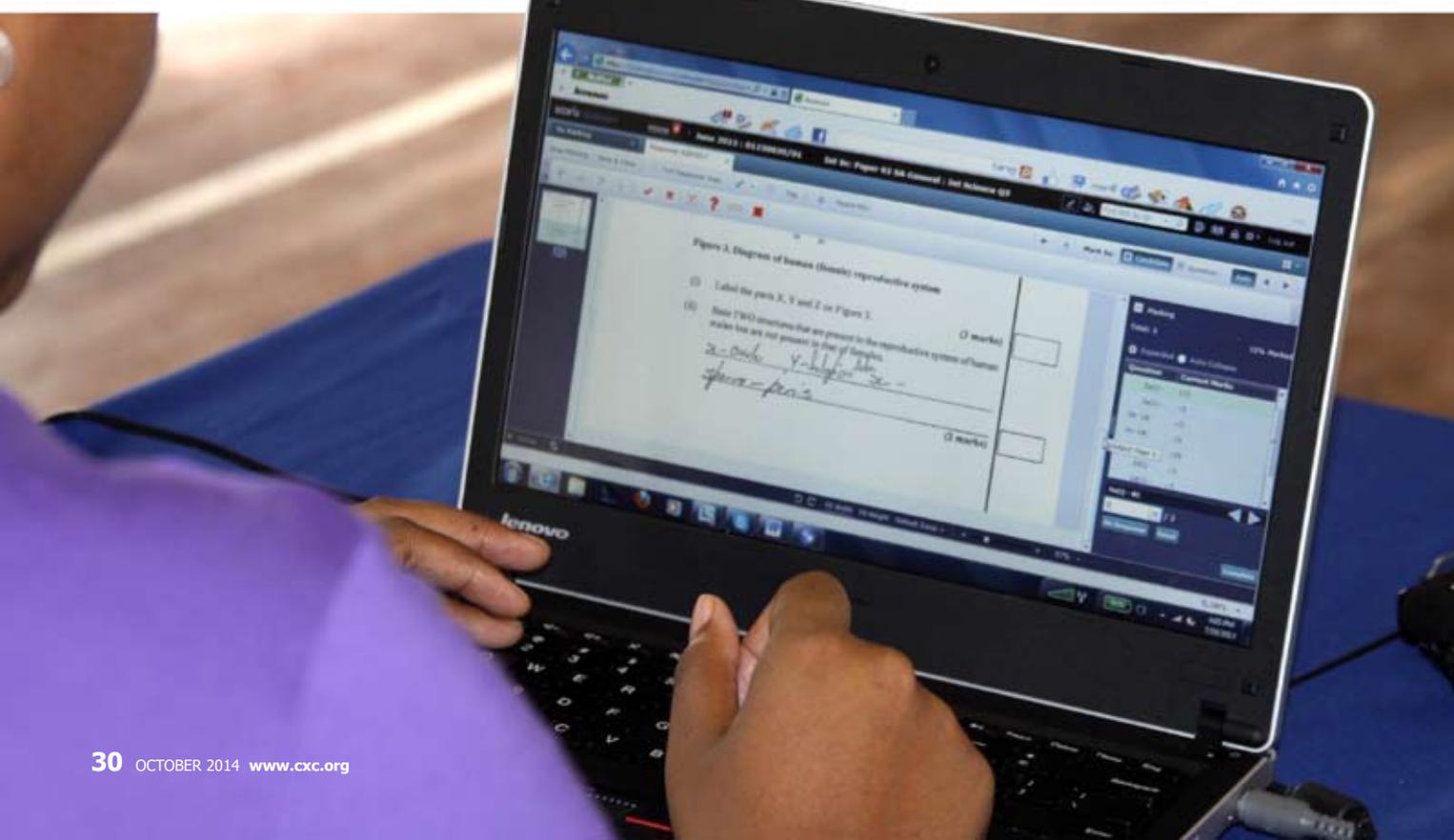
As part of the preparation for e-marking, 22 Chief Examiners, Assistant Chief Examiners and Team Assistants had their final training session in May at CXC's Headquarters in Barbados. The training was conducted by CXC and RM and participants were trained to use e-marking tool called RM Results. The 22 persons were taken through the steps for the standardisation and script-marking processes using the RM Results e-marking software.

CXC opened the system for markers to commence live e-marking on 20 June and markers who were trained and who were approved for e-marking had a four-week window to complete the scripts assigned to them.

"E-marking helps CXC to capture a lot more detailed information than we were able to do with paper-based marking, and improve our analysis of the examinations, down to the level of the questions," explained Mrs Brenda Lee Cato, Assistant Registrar – Measurement and Evaluation. "The accuracy of the scoring will improve and the likelihood of errors is significantly reduced since the system automatically calculates scores as the script is being marked," Mrs Cato added.

In 2013, CXC used the e-marking software to e-mark two subjects as an experiment: Integrated Science and Physics. The subjects were marked using both the traditional paper-based format along with the e-marking tool as part of the experiment. The result showed a high correlation between the scripts marked face to face and the same scripts marked using e-marking. This provided the confidence for CXC to increase the number of subjects and papers in 2014.

CXC wishes to assure the public that the move to e-marking enhances some of the quality assurance procedures and will result in more detailed analysis of examination performance.



e-Marking Goes Live!



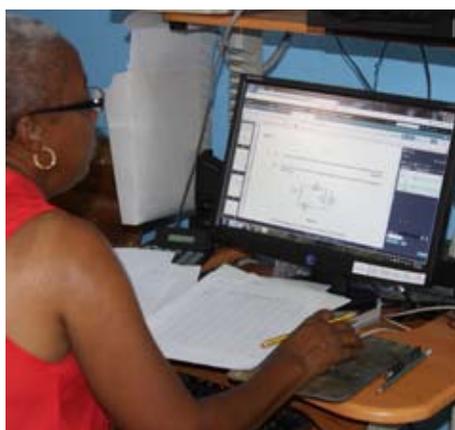
In their own words...
the experience of some persons who participated in e-marking in 2014



E-marking training: Ms Carol-Ann Gill of CXC assisting resource persons during e-marking training



Mr James Spurgeon of RM conducting training of Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs



An e-marker marking scripts in the comfort of her home

"The period April to August in any year is, for the Head of Examinations and Security, possibly the most stressful time, simply because there are so many things that can go wrong. More importantly the failure to meet critical deadlines could bring untold chaos to the entire CXC organisation. It is during this period that our logistics management must be spot on as question papers are dispatched, examinations administered, scripts shipped to marking centres, marking begins/ends, grading proceeds and results are issued. It is also a time when there is very little sleep and every telephone call is answered cautiously.

This year there was a greater challenge as we were, for the first time marking electronically 11 papers in seven subject areas with over 600 markers. We had undertaken training for staff, orientation for e-markers, and standardising

and training for Chief Examiners. RM, the software suppliers, were camped on our doorstep assisting when needed. For me, it was the uncertainty that fuelled my fear as this was something so very new to the region. How were teachers going to respond? Would they drop out after they began and decide it was not for them? Suppose we could not get the 110,000 scripts marked on time?...and on and on. The questions and concerns were endless. EAS, EDPD and ISD worked as usual like a well-oiled machine and even though my colleagues Rodney Payne and Charles Mayenga kept reassuring me, there were many nights when I was so worried as our organisation entered this "brave new world..."

Mrs Susan Giles

Senior Assistant Registrar – Examinations Administration and Security Division

"The E-marking was a very enriching experience. Although supervising face-to-face marking, officers were able to monitor the progress of the e-marking. Among the benefits that were derived from e-marking are flexibility – markers can mark at any time, from anywhere; closer monitoring and feedback – administrators and supervisors can monitor the activities of markers and contact them in real time. There was also enhanced quality assurance – in addition to examiners reviewing the scripts marked by assistant examiners, the system uses a process of 'seeding' where definitively marked scripts are randomly assigned to markers. Failure of a marker to mark these seeds accurately results

in the marker being suspended and being able to continue only after having been re-approved by his/her supervisor. The accuracy of scoring was also increased as the system calculates the marks as the questions are marked; this also eliminates the need for data capture, thus reducing the chance of introducing errors. The richness of the data derived from this process cannot be overstated. We were able to capture invaluable data on the quality of the marking as well as the markers."

Mrs Brendalee Cato

Assistant Registrar – Examinations Development and Production Division

"E-marking came with some exciting change and good benefits to the CSEC examination marking. I believe this process afforded anonymity for the student and country thereby raising the standard of the marking process.

This measure also afforded markers the ability to correct deviation from the standards almost immediately as the responses and marks given could have been checked against the definitive marks.

Markers were able to complete their quota or even go beyond their quota as they were able to mark scripts wherever and whenever

they wanted. They were not time bound nor could centre bound during the marking period, so more marking have been completed.

There was the main challenge encountered such as being released when you got auto suspended. This meant having to wait until the Examiner got approval from the Chief to remove the auto suspension.

This was an exciting and commendable endeavour which should be done for all subject areas. Keep it up, CXC!"

Mrs Carol Boyce-John

Examiner (e-marker)



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The Future of Exam Marking is Here – It's Digital

By RM Results

With preparations underway for the second round of CXC exams using e-marking, now seems like a good time to pause and reflect on the journey so far and CXC's plans for e-marking in the future.

What is e-marking?

'E-marking', 'online marking' or 'onscreen marking' are all different terms for the same thing. Essentially, e-marking enables examiners to mark exams and tests online instead of using the traditional pen and paper marking process. Many types of exams can be e-marked; paper exam scripts which have been scanned and uploaded to the system as digital images, computer based tests, coursework, practical exams and more, proving e-marking to be a flexible and innovative tool.

The global e-marking community

As part of an increasing number of prestigious awarding organisations to implement e-marking, CXC is in good company. RM Assessor e-marking software is used by examiners in 76 countries (and counting) around the world. In 2013 our system was used to mark 143 million exam pages and this number is set to rise significantly in 2014. Other customers include Cambridge Assessment (one of the main exam boards in the UK), CKE (Poland's national exam board) and International Baccalaureate, which has 7,500 examiners in over 150 countries. In addition, many other academic, professional and vocational awarding bodies use RM Assessor to mark their exams.

Why e-marking?

Why are awarding bodies in so many countries adopting e-marking? And why has CXC chosen to go down this route?

Preference

The majority of examiners (84 per cent according to research conducted by RM Results) prefer on-screen marking. The main reason cited was accuracy, when marking online there is less human error as the marks are added up automatically and in turn it generates less paperwork.

Improved security

E-marking is also more secure. Exam scripts are scanned in and accessed by examiners online, so they can't get misplaced, nor do examiners have to package up and post bundles of scripts once they've been marked, they are all logged and sent using the online tool.

Improved marking quality

Experience tells us it's much easier to regulate the standard of marking using an online system. By using a seeding process i.e. picking scripts at random for a marking review by a chief marker, you can ensure quality and consistency as well as monitoring examiner performance. Raising queries and seeking advice is also simpler, making marking thousands of scripts easier and more efficient. The resulting consistency and improved quality means appeals are less likely which raises confidence in the grades awarded.

Removes geographical barriers

Whether your students are all in one room or based in different countries, their scripts can be marked online. It doesn't matter where they sit the exam. There has been an increased global interest in online and distance learning (e.g. MOOCs) and e-marking enables a consistent approach to marking of papers online despite the disparate locations of students.

The CXC e-marking journey: phase one

For CXC, the main objectives when introducing e-marking were:

- To reduce inconvenience of examiners having to travel to a marking centre often leaving families behind for two to three weeks.

- To reduce the obvious risk of physically moving scripts around multiple times in multiple states

- To further improve the quality of marking in order to promote CXC qualifications on a world stage.

In the first live summer exam session in Summer 2014, 100,000 CXC exam scripts (about 20% of the total CXC exams) were e-marked using RM Assessor; all of which were structured, short answer papers. In January 2015, 100% of CXC's structured papers will be e-marked and, by summer 2015 all scripts, both structured and essay-based papers will be e-marked using RM Assessor. This staged roll-out ensures satisfactory training and support is in place. The CXC e-marking helpdesk is now fully operational, with trained advisors on hand in the Caribbean to answer any queries. The summer 2014 session was a great success due to the hardworking team at CXC and we look forward to continuing the positive experience in January 2015 and in future sessions.

Thinking global

One of the reasons for CXC's adoption of e-marking is its drive to promote high quality qualifications to the rest of the world. E-marking played an important role to play in developing CXC's global reputation for quality assessment, both as an indicator of the forward-thinking and quality-focused attitude of the Council, and the opportunities it offers for geographically-dispersed students. CXC and RM Results are sharing the knowledge gained in rolling out e-marking in the Caribbean at international conferences, including the highly regarded e-ATP (European Association of Test Publishers) conference in Budapest in September 2014.

Data driven knowledge

Another benefit of moving to e-marking is the ability to capture a wide range of data around marker behaviour. This data can be mined to maximise efficiency and improve processes and assessment quality. For example, awarding organisations can see which questions generate the most queries so they can be re-worked and the data can even tell CXC what time of day examiners are most commonly marking. As the data is collated throughout the upcoming exam sessions, CXC will start to build a picture of the marking process with new data-driven insight that was not possible before the adoption of e-marking.

A hardworking and dedicated team

RM Results might provide the technology behind the e-marking at CXC, but it's the hard work and dedication of the CXC team that has enabled e-marking to be implemented so successfully in the Caribbean. Our experience was of a passionately committed team who was completely honest with their queries and suggestions and was open to learning from shared experiences. The CXC team really pushed each other and worked closely with examiners and marking teams to succeed. The positive attitude and energy was what brought this project to fruition.

Throughout the implementation process the RM Results team have worked closely with CXC to ensure that the complex transition from paper marking to e-marking was seamless. We will continue to learn as CXC transition to e-mark 100 per cent of its exams and look forward to further developing a close working relationship with the teams in Barbados and Jamaica.



“Awesome” Visual Arts Exhibition in Anguilla

If every time the word “awesome” was used to describe the **2014 CSEC Visual Arts exhibition** hosted in Anguilla, you received five dollars, you will be rich, very rich.

The three-day exhibition which opened on Sunday 27 April with a brief reception at the **Rodney MacArthur Rey Auditorium**.

Honourable Jerome Roberts, Minister of Education, delivered the feature address, while **Ms Colleen Horsford**, Anguilla’s CXC Registrar and **Mr Cleveland Sam**, CXC Assistant Registrar also spoke at the opening.

During the Sunday afternoon ceremony, there were performances by students of the **Within Dance Company**; Theatre Arts students from the **Albena Lake-Hodge Comprehensive School**; and the school’s Steel Orchestra.

Honourable Jerome Roberts, Minister of Education in Anguilla is assisted by Mrs Navene Mairshaw, Head Visual Arts at the Albena Lake Hodge Comprehensive School in cutting the ribbon to officially open the Visual Arts Exhibition. Ms Colleen Horsford, CXC Local Registrar is left and Mrs Rhonda Connor, Chief Education Officer is right

PHOTO: THE ANGUILLAN NEWSPAPER



The exhibition generated a lot of interest not only among art students, but among the general student population and art lovers in Anguilla



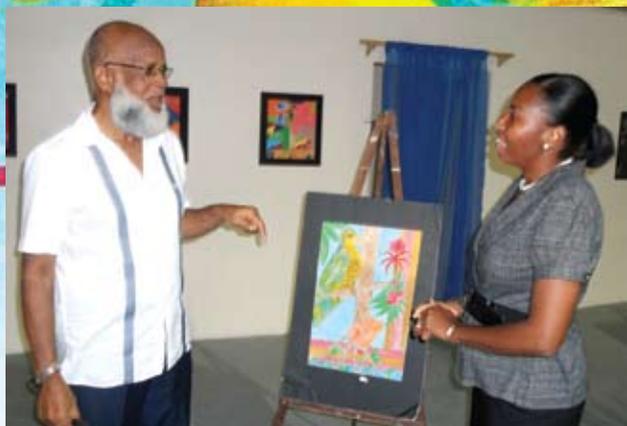
These two former Regional Top Award 3-D pieces catch the eyes of these two students in the Sculpture and Ceramics section



Up close and personal: These students are captivated by the Painting and Mixed Media piece entitled “Tangled”



Full house: Students visiting the exhibition



Mrs Navene Mairyshaw, Head of Visual Arts at the Albena Lake Hodge Comprehensive School chatting with known Anguillan historian Mr Colville Petty



Putting the finishing touches on the exhibition sign

Minister Roberts and **Mrs Navine Mairyshaw**, Head of the Visual Arts Department of the Albena Lake-Hodge Comprehensive School cut the ribbon to signal the official opening of the exhibition.

The exhibition generated a lot of interest not only among art students, but among the general student population and art lovers in Anguilla. As a result, curators at the exhibition were kept busy by the hundreds of visitors who made the daily trip to view the works of art in display.

The exhibition featured an Anguillan students' display and an Anguillan artists' display. The Reflective Journal display was once again a major attraction for the current and future CSEC Visual Arts students and their teachers. They reported that seeing the journals on display was very instructive in giving them a better understanding of what the journal should look like and the quality of work required for the journal.

"It was an excellent idea to display the best of the works of art throughout the various islands... This was an eye opener for us here in Anguilla. We've seen some aspects of the examination in a very different light, e.g. the journal, stated **Mrs Octavia Fleming**, a Visual Arts teacher.



Students admiring the 2012 Regional Top Award for 2-Dimensional Art

If the comments in the exhibition's guests' book is as accurate measure of the exhibition, then the exhibition can be rated as a resounding success. "Awesome" was most definitely the most popular word used by visitors to describe the exhibition.

Rita Celestine-Carty wrote "Awesome exhibition!!" "Awesome" is all **Tadajah Gumbs, Kendelle Gumbs, Xavi Brooks, and Kirsten France** said, while **Zidane Neverson** said "awesome and kool"; "Awesome and fabulous work" stated **Akira Rogers. Coleen Thompson** remarked, "Awesome talent. Excellent

demonstration of creativity, beauty and colours."

"It was awesome," stated **McKayla Webster**.

Tejanique went a bit further as the exhibition assisted her in making a decision about at least one subject. "It was awesome," he said, "I want to do art as a subject."

Ingrid Lake, principal of the **Albena Lake-Hodge Comprehensive School**, the main beneficiary of the exhibition said the exhibition was an "excellent display of creative artistic skills. Pleased that Anguilla was selected as the venue. We must continue to encourage excellence."



Visual Arts teacher Mrs Dian Samuel (centre) discusses a textile manipulation piece with two visitors to the exhibition



Students examining the Reflection Journals on display under the watchful eyes of teacher Navene Mairyshaw



PHOTO: CSAM / CXC

L to R: Mrs Cecile Humphrey, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education Science, Technology and Innovation; Senator Harcourt Husbands, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education Science, Technology and Innovation; Honourable Makabelo Mosothoane, Minister of Education and Training, Lesotho; and Mrs Keratile Thabana, Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Training, Lesotho

Building Stronger Ties with Africa

CXC Hosts Delegation from Lesotho

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) hosted a delegation from the Ministry of Education and Training of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Southern Africa from Monday 25 to Wednesday 27 August at its Headquarters in Barbados.

The six-member delegation was led by Honourable Makabelo Mosothoane, Minister of Education and Training and included Dr Lifelile Matsoo, Chairman of Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECoL) and Lecturer at the National University of Lesotho; Mrs Keratile Thabana, Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Training; Mrs Mabakubung Seutloali, Director of Education and Training; Dr Mathabo Tsepa, Lesotho's High Commissioner to Canada and the Caribbean Territories; and Dr Litsabako Ntoi, Registrar, Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECoL).

While in Barbados, the delegation held wide-ranging discussions with CXC officials, paid courtesy calls on Senator Harcourt Husbands, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of

Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and Honourable Maxine McLean, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CXC at Divi Southwinds Hotel on Tuesday 26 August. Dr Litsabako Ntoi, Registrar, Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECoL) and Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch, Acting Registrar of CXC signed on behalf of the two examinations boards.

Among the matters discussed were CXC's method of implementing continuous assessment in all of its examinations; CXC implementation of CAPE to replace the A'levels and its introduction of the Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA). The Council is seen as one of the global leaders in continuous assessment.

In the past five years, CXC has hosted similar delegations from Botswana and Zambia.

During the signing of the MOU, Minister Mosothoane delivered an address. (See the address below.)

"Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to start by expressing my gratitude to our hosts, the

Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) for their invitation of my Ministry, unparalleled hospitality and for all the efforts that have contributed towards the realisation of today's meeting, which marks the culmination of the tireless dedication and commitment from members of the CXC team and the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECoL) team.

It would be a transgression on my part if I failed to acknowledge the role played by the High Commissioner of Lesotho to Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Cuba and Canada, Her Excellency Dr. Tsepa for orchestrating the entire process. Thank you, 'Mè! Once an educationalist, always an educationalist! You could not have acted better.

Education in Lesotho is undergoing a major transformation. The Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), through ECoL, is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring the appropriateness of the envisaged changes so that they are in-line with all the policies that regulate the entire system. Although Lesotho may be venturing

CXC Hosts Delegation from Lesotho

into uncharted waters, it will do so with great confidence because there are those organisations like CXC that have successfully travelled a similar route. This therefore, makes CXC the ideal partner for ECoL to benchmark with as the latter can use the experiences of the former to validate its intentions and to make relevant and informed decisions that are key to the ideals of educational development in Lesotho.

The parameters of the framework that will determine the mode of operation of this collaboration will be defined by the following key areas with the possibility of extending the areas of interest:

1. The Phasing out of the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE)
2. Implementation of Continuous Assessment
3. Localisation of O-Level with the possible introduction of a higher senior certificate
4. Assessment of Early Grades Numeracy and Reading
5. Security of Examination Administration
6. Examination Administration Policies

Ladies and gentlemen, let us never lose focus of the fact that the key element in this whole process of transformation is the learner.

If we can always bear in mind that the driving force behind everything that we envisage is the fact that, "the results [we] achieve will be in direct proportion to the effort [we] apply," then I can confidently attest to the success of this collaboration. The very reason why we are gathered here today is not for how well ECoL or CXC will look in their pursuit for excellence, but how effectively our efforts are translated into practice. Hence, the need for every educator to consider himself or herself as an artisan working on a delicate piece of artwork that he or she will be proud of upon its completion. Therefore, all our efforts need to be perfectly synchronised towards achieving a common goal and our priority should be to have well-rounded learners, a feat that can be achieved if we ensure that they are developed holistically.

As the custodian of education in Lesotho, the Ministry of Education and Training through one of its many tributaries, the Examinations Council of Lesotho, is obliged to keep abreast with what happens worldwide in the field of education particularly in the sphere of Assessment for Learning (AfL). Both entities (MoET and ECoL) have to play a pivotal role in monitoring the learners' actual attainment of the intended outcomes with the aim of augmenting pedagogical practices.

Although basic education is central to educational development in Lesotho, the issues surrounding the quality of higher education are of importance as well. As a result, Lesotho in its current strategic plan, intends to introduce a qualification higher than O' Level/ LGCSE. That is, A' Level or its equivalent.

Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, the issue of access, quality, relevance and equity at any level of the education system demands 'the willingness to think differently and to try out novel solutions' with the realisation that, instead of equipping a narrowly selected elite (through the Primary School Leaving Examination – PSLE) for further academic education, the role ascribed to basic education becomes that of preparing an entire age-group for integration into adult society (life skills, key competencies etc.) into the world of work (core generic skills) and for further studies. This forms the fundamental principle upon which we intend to build this collaboration.

I wish to conclude by indicating that, like a mother hen that creates an environment conducive for the incubation of her eggs and clucks protectively over her young; the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho shall do the same. It will do all in its power to continue to support, build and nurture this collaboration beyond today's gathering, but informed by it.

Once again, thank you."



Honourable Makabelo Mosothoane,
Minister of Education and Training, Lesotho



MOU Signing: Dr Litsabako Ntoi, Registrar of Examinations Council of Lesotho and Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch, Acting Registrar of CXC signing the MOU



OVERALL CSEC® PERFORMANCE CONTINUES UPWARD TREND

The overall performance for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) May/June 2014 examination continued the gradual upward trend started in 2012. This year, 66 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, Grades I – III. This compares favourably with 65 per cent in 2013 and 62 per cent in 2012.

Of the subjects offered, performance improved in 12, declined in 19 and remained constant in five.

Physical Education and Sport was the subject with the best overall performance. Ninety-nine per cent of the ten thousand entries achieved Grades I-III, compared with 94 per cent last year. Theatre Arts had the next best results; 94 per cent of the seventeen thousand entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 93 per cent in 2013. Food and Nutrition caps off the top three best performing subjects with 91 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades.

ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS

Performance in the English and Mathematics offerings also continued the positive trend from last year except for English B which had a marginal decline. This year English A saw a one per cent improvement over last year's performance. Fifty-nine per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 58 per cent last year and 47 per cent in 2012. Seventy-two per cent of entries for English B achieved acceptable grades compared with 73 per cent in 2013 and 68 per cent in 2012.

Mathematics saw the most improved performance of all subjects offered in 2014 compared with 2013. Forty-nine per cent of entries achieved Grades I-III, which is a 14 per cent improvement over 2013 when 35 per cent of entries achieved similar grades; and 16 per cent improvement over 2012.

The Subject Awards Committee attributed the improved performance to improvement on most areas on the examination with the exception of trigonometry and geometry.

Additional Mathematics, in its third year, recorded an improved performance over the two previous sittings. Seventy-six per cent of entries achieved Grades I-III this year compared with 70 per cent last year and 58 per cent in 2012.

SCIENCES

Of the science subjects, performance improved in Chemistry and Physics and declined in Biology, Agricultural Science Double Award (DA), Agricultural Science Single Award (SA), and Human and Social Biology. Sixty-eight per cent of entries for Chemistry achieved Grades I-III compared with 62 per cent in 2013, while for Physics there was a 10 per cent improvement with 77 per cent of entries achieving Grades I-III compared with 67 per cent in 2013.

Both Agricultural Science DA and Agricultural Science SA saw significant decline in performance this year. For the Double Award, the percentage of entries achieving acceptable grades fell from 96 in 2013 to 75 this year, while for the Single Award, the percentage

fell from 93 per cent in 2013 to 78 per cent this year. For Biology and Human and Social Biology there was a two-percentage point decline; Biology dipped to 72 per cent, from 74 per cent last year and Human and Social Biology dipped to 62 per cent, down from 64 per cent last year.

BUSINESS

All the subjects in the business cluster recorded declining performances of varying degrees. Seventy per cent of entries for Economics achieved Grades I-III compared with 81 per cent in 2013. The Subject Awards Committee noted that questions relating to the business environment, exchange rates, economic integration and balance of payments posed challenges to candidates.

For Principles of Accounts, 68 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 75 per cent in 2013. Principles of Business had a four per cent decline year on year with 75 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 79 per cent in 2013.

Office Administration had a five per cent decline with 73 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades this year compared with 78 per cent in 2013. Candidates were challenged by topics such as financial services, closing stock, and operating balances, the Subject Awards Committee reported.

Performance in Electronic Document Preparation and Management (EDPD) remained the same as last year's – 86 per cent of the entries achieved acceptable grades.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS

The subjects in the expressive arts cluster with the exception of Visual Arts recorded improved performance when compared with 2013. Ninety-nine per cent of the entries for Physical Education and Sport achieved acceptable grades, compared with 94 per cent in 2013. Music saw an eight per cent improvement with 78 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 70 per cent in 2013. Theatre Arts saw a slight improvement, from 93 per cent of acceptable grades last year to 94 per cent this year.

Performance on Visual Arts declined by eight per cent – 69 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 77 per cent in 2013.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL

There were mixed performances in the technical and vocational subjects. Performance in Home Economic Management and Technical Drawing improved by seven per cent and three per cent respectively. Ninety per cent of entries for Home Economic Management achieved acceptable grades this year while 83 per cent achieved similar grades in 2013. For Technical Drawing 77 per cent achieved acceptable grades this year and 74 per cent achieved similar grades last year.

Food and Nutrition saw a marginal decline from 92 per cent of Grades I-III in 2013 to 91 per cent this year; Building Technology – Construction also saw a one per cent decline – 80 per cent this year compared with 81 per cent last year.

Both Electrical and Electronic Technology and Mechanical Engineering Technology had a five per cent decline in performance: Electrical and Electronic Technology dropped from 62 per cent in 2013 to 57 per cent this year, while for Mechanical Engineering Technology performance fell from 75 per cent in 2013 to 70 per cent this year.

Eighty-one per cent of entries for Clothing and Textiles achieved acceptable grades in 2014 while 72 per cent achieved similar grades in 2013, while for Building Technology – Woods 76 per cent achieved acceptable grades in 2014 and 82 per cent achieved similar grades last year.

HUMANITIES

The subjects in the Humanities cluster saw decline in performance this year when compared with 2013. Social Studies saw a ten per cent decline in performance – 58 per cent of entries achieved Grades I-III compared with 68 per cent in 2013. Performance in Caribbean History dipped from 68 per cent in 2013 to 62 per cent this year. Both foreign languages, Spanish and French saw marginal declines – French dropped one percentage point from 77 to 76 and Spanish dropped from 70 per cent in 2013 to 66 per cent this year.

Performance in Geography remained steady over the two-year period at 67 per cent. The Subject Awards Committee noted once again that there is a general weakness in map reading, physical geography and exposure to field work. During the Final Awards Committee meeting it was noted that several teachers of Geography are not Geography graduates and this impacts their ability to adequately deliver the syllabus.

ENTRIES

The number of candidate and subject entries declined this year. Candidate entries fell from 149,311 in 2013 to 142,884 this year, while subject entries moved from 616,447 in 2013 to 603,383 this year.

Mathematics was once again the largest subscribed subject with 98,542 entries, followed by English A with 94,106 entries. The next largest subject entry was Social Studies with 50,027 entries. Principles of Business is in fourth with 34,883 and Human and Social Biology fifth with 31,450 entries.

The age group 19 years and over comprised the largest single cohort of candidates, 31 per cent, while the 17-year old age cohort accounted for 29 per cent of candidates, 16-year olds 20 per cent and 18-year olds 14 per cent.

Forty-one per cent of the candidates who registered for the 2014 examination were male and 59 per cent female.



CXC and Columbus sign agreement

Columbus Telecommunications and CXC have committed to providing unparalleled service to students and teachers following the signing of an unprecedented, significant agreement in June.

The two-year agreement, which has been broken down into five phases, will allow CXC to immediately benefit from the use of Columbus' cutting edge regional fibre optics, by providing the technical support to this year's results as well as allowing CXC to access test management tools, and more.

This partnership was in the making since last September, when Columbus Barbados and CXC signed a Memorandum of Understanding that would also provide CXC with broadband and digital video services for students in Barbados and across the region. Additionally, CXC would be utilising CBS's Cloud-based Solutions to host their official website www.cxc.org.

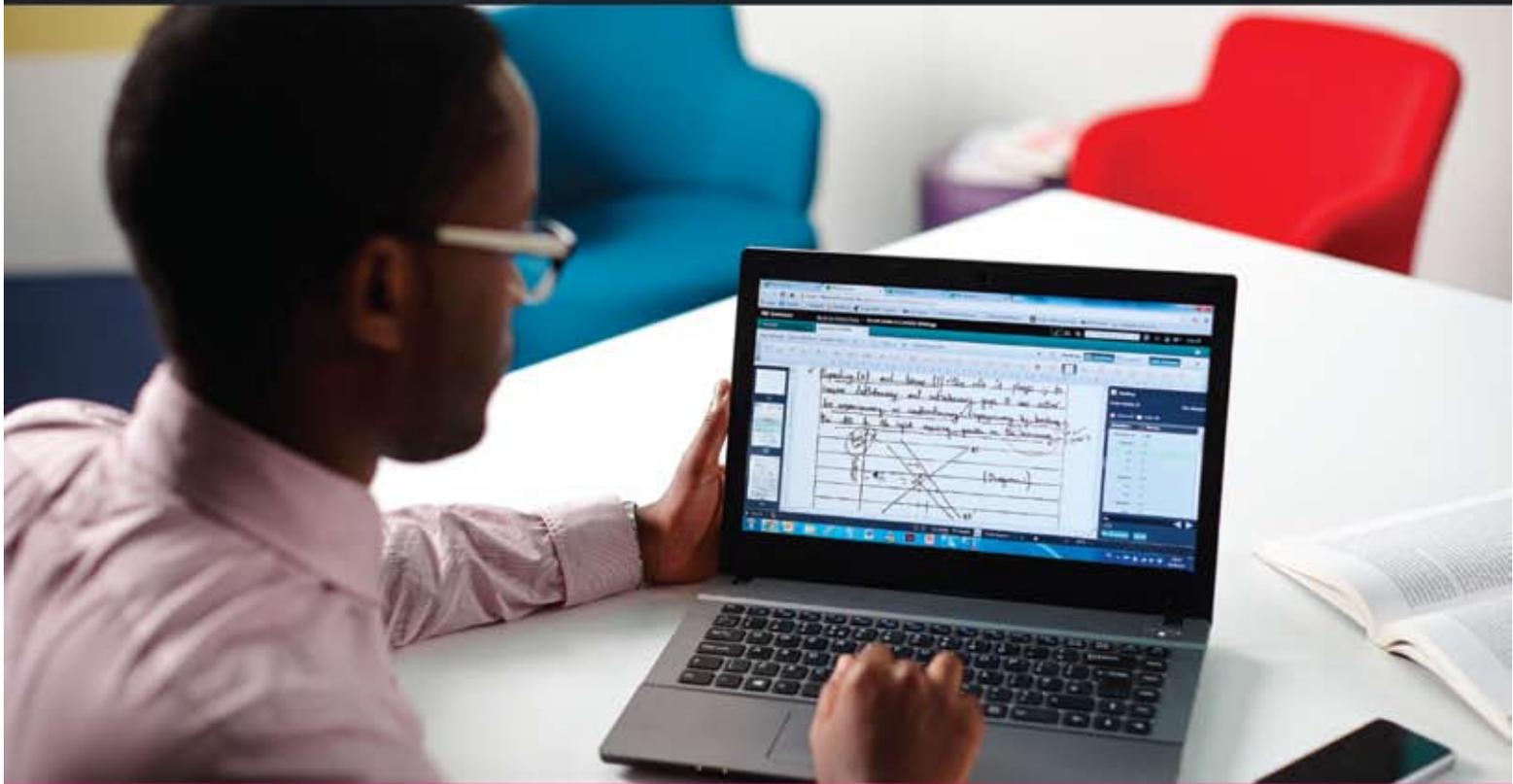
After signing the agreement on 20 June 2014, Jaggernauth Dass, vice president – Columbus Business Solutions – Eastern Caribbean said, "CXC will be able to realise greater efficiencies and continue to focus on providing world-class services for all its stakeholders including teachers and students."

This partnership allows Columbus to galvanise another phase of its social commitment to enable nation building through community development and to develop social assets.

Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch, Acting Registrar of CXC noted that "as an IT intelligent organisation, CXC continuously looks for ways to improve its processes with ICT application. The agreement with Columbus provides CXC with the opportunity to strengthen its IT infrastructure and increase its bandwidth which will assist the Council in improving its efficiency and delivering improved services to its stakeholders."



Mr Anderson Marshall, Director of Corporate Services at the Caribbean Examinations Council (left) and Mr Jaggernauth Dass, Vice President, Columbus Business Solutions – Eastern Caribbean (right) signing contract while (standing from left to right) Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch, Acting Registrar of CXC, Mr Rodney Payne, Senior Assistant Registrar – Information Systems Division, CXC and Mr Dean McIntosh, Columbus Business Solutions, Pre-Sales witness to this historical partnership



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