

Objectives

- To transform tertiary education into the engine of human resource development and knowledge generation in the sub-region.
- To facilitate the consolidation of technology transfer in the sub-region.
- To provide educational programmes for all persons who missed or were not afforded the opportunity to complete formal primary or secondary education.
- To provide the opportunity for educational renewal and advancement for all citizens with the relevant educational background to continue their education throughout life.

General Philosophy

Tertiary and adult education in the OECS context is quite distinct from primary and secondary education. First, it is geared to older adolescents and adults. Second, it embraces a wide array of sectoral and individual interests, for example, teacher and nursing education, technical and vocational education, traditional university-type education as well as the education of adults wishing to learn to read or to learn about some new disease or pursue some other area of interest. Third, it is both the highest rung of the ladder of educational achievement and a point at which individuals can make up for past lack of attainment at the lower levels.

Given the variegated character of tertiary, continuing and adult education it embraces a wide diversity of outcomes:

1. Specialization within the context of vocational interests.
2. Integration of education with specific skills training and consequently their articulation with the world of work.
3. Lifelong education and training of OECS citizenry. As technologies change, society is transformed and other related developments occur that require education and training responses.
4. Additional chances for individuals who did not capitalise on earlier education and training opportunities.

Institutional autonomy and self-direction of the participants are essential components and must be supported by an adequate legal framework and an appropriate system of accountability.

Tertiary education is underdeveloped within the OECS. Any new thrust must be mandated to provide for a higher percentage of the population thereby decreasing the tendency of OECS

nationals to migrate in search of tertiary education. This means expanding tertiary education opportunities within the OECS. At the same time, the under-representation of females in Science and Technology and the deprivation of rural residents require attention.

There should be a partnership involving all the beneficiaries in order to ensure that the best relevant quality education is delivered. Only a national effort that maximizes government, private sector, personal and external support can provide the needed expansion and improvements.

The integration of single-discipline colleges into larger multi-disciplinary institutions is seen as a feasible measure to ensure the better utilization of manpower and scarce and expensive resources.

Regional cooperation is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of tertiary education since no single country can be self-sufficient in meeting its manpower training needs or in enabling its citizens to achieve their maximum potential.