



Panel Presentation

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“New norms in assessment after the pandemic.”
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**Examinations during times of uncertainty:
Challenges and Implications for the Future.**

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Thank you, Moderator. Fellow Panellists, distinguished Ladies and gentlemen, Good Afternoon.

Let me first express my gratitude to be invited to participate in this important panel discussion on “Examinations during times of uncertainty: Challenges and Implications for the Future”.

The capability and capacity of all normative systems were, and continue to be tested, revealing the inadequacies and vulnerabilities within the regional education system. Therefore, the emerging imperative for member states is the development of a greater level of resilience in the education sector. This, at the very least, requires a robust and sustainable transformation of our development infrastructure and operational systems to become responsive and agile. The complexity of challenges at the level of each member state was exponentially transferred to regional entities, that must operate across member states. An added dimension to the complexity is that each member state has its own unique education system with varying levels of resources and approaches to its curriculum delivery.

Within the regional construct the transformation processes of teaching, learning and assessment have emerged as the common platform for regional discourse in terms of cooperation and collaboration for the development and preservation of standards.



The specific challenges faced by CXC® under the COVID-19 are as follows:

1. Adjusting for learning loss

- a. Across the region, there were different levels of preparedness, which made it difficult to determine what aspect of the syllabus to be assessed.
- b. Inability to exercise innovative operational flexibility for assessment modification and development.
 - i. Low take-up/inability to administer e-Testing.
 - ii. Limitations of the Modified Approach.

2. Standardisation across territories

Different assessment standards within and across territories made it difficult to quality assure. The SBA was a common standardisation measure across the region.

3. Maintaining the integrity of the examination.

Implementation of an approach that reflects the best arrangement and adequate safeguards for quality assurance.

- a. Varying levels of Syllabus coverage
- b. Varying standard of SBA - inherent weaknesses in preparation and management
- c. Varying standard of assessment (Across the Region, within member states and across and within schools of member states.

4. Facilitating Regional Consensus

Territories having different demands and concerns that must be rationalised and resolved towards a consensus. Striking a delicate balance knowing that not all will be completely satisfied.

The consultation process in achieving consensus is difficult within a regional context with global implications.



5. Administration Logistics and scheduling

Determination of the most convenient period for examinations. The factors to balance were safety protocols, matriculation concerns, hurricane season and the start of new academic/school term.

Release of results

- a. Matriculation requirements and admission deadlines.
- b. Examinations' schedule and Natural disasters (Pandemic/Epidemic, Earthquake, Storm and Hurricane)

6. Accounting for the Psycho-Social impact on stakeholders especially the students.

Strategy and Administration of 2021 Examinations

CXC[®] has:

1. **Delayed the schedule start of CAPE[®] and CSEC[®]**
2. **Shared the topics on Paper 02** for subjects where such details are not already specifically available in the syllabus. Candidates will also be reminded that **the entire syllabus was assessed on Paper 01.**
3. **Created the facility to accommodate deferrals.**
 - (i) **SBA's scores can be transferred** for use in the next examination sitting,
 - (ii) There will be no fee charged for the deferral of examinations.
4. **Provided extension for the submission of SBAs** by a maximum of two additional weeks. It is important to note that the SBA requirements have been reduced to as much as 50% for some subjects.



The Caribbean Examinations Council® is by no means immune to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. CXC’s strategy from as far back as 2015 sets out a vision of transformation and change to reposition its operation and assessment in the region on an e-platform for greater levels of efficiency, quality, and security. However, while some progress would have been made, the full realisation of the outcomes is yet to be achieved. In recognition of this CXC® is now implementing a new five-year strategic plan for the period 2021–2025. The vision is to create a digitally transformed enterprise providing quality, relevant and globally recognised educational services. To this end, the strategic plan presents a structured system of transformation to include **research and development, artificial intelligence, digitalisation of systems and an inclusive decision-making framework.**

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 experience has served to highlight several weaknesses in the regional education system and points to the urgent need to reorient our approach for its sustainable development. It is important to note that digital transformation of our education system is only an enabler for operational flexibility and not a panacea. Other interventions dealing with psychosocial interventions are also critical.

The overall lesson learnt from COVID-19 is the awakening of the collective consciousness (at the governance, leadership, operational and functional levels) of the inadequacies of our normative systems and the awareness of the need to collectively reimagine and develop a more inclusive



and resilient socio-economic system of development. It is within this resilient environment that the critical function of developing the human capital through the teaching, learning and assessment process will continue without disruption. Critical to this response is the preservation of examinations integrity to instil confidence and trust in the certification issued to validate competence.

It is more than just “**building back stronger**” it is “**building back sustainably**”.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you.