
Grenada

Programmes of teacher education in the sub-region need to be re-examined with a view to making them more centred on student learning needs and on methodologies that promote student creativity, imagination, independent judgement, critical thinking and imitative.

(Foundation for the Future: OECS Education Reform Strategy, 1991, p. 87)

Programmes

Pre-service

The only pre-service teacher education programme conducted in Grenada is a two week induction course which is aimed at orienting persons, mostly recent secondary school and college graduates, into teaching. The programme is held about three weeks before the commencement of a new academic year. The minimum entry qualification for the programme is four subjects including English language at CXC or GCE level.

During the two weeks (40 hours), the trainees are exposed to elements of classroom management, educational psychology, record-keeping and teaching methods. The programme is delivered by education officers, the Department of Teacher Education and principals of the schools.

In-service

Primary

New recruits into teaching attend a one day per week in-service teacher education programme which is conducted in three centres: St George's; Grenville and Carriacou. The main objectives of the in-service programme are:

- to expose the new teachers to the basics in classroom management and lesson preparation, and

- to help in the development of positive attitudes to teaching.

The courses are delivered by the Department of Teacher Education, with assistance from a curriculum development officer.

Workshops and group activities are heavily utilised in the delivery of the programme. Classroom supervision is given to the teacher trainees by the tutors of the programme. During this supervision, emphasis is placed on lesson preparation, classroom management, classroom climate/environment and conferencing between supervisor and supervisee. The principal or his/her designate is expected to give regular supervision to trainees also.

Successful completion of the in-service programme is a pre-requisite for entry into the two year full-time teacher education programme. Consequently, teachers at pre-school level who wish to enter the two year full-time programme also participate in the in-service teacher education programme.

In-service

Secondary

At present approximately 30 non-graduate teachers are participating in an in-service programme organised by EDF/UWI/Office of University Studies.

The modular programmes in the various subject areas are expected to enhance the performance of the teachers and prepare them to perform successfully in the UWI examinations for teachers' colleges of the Eastern Caribbean.

Short in-service courses

The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the Canadian Organisation for Overseas Development (OCOD) offers two week courses in a variety of subjects to teachers at

primary and secondary schools. Certificates are awarded to participants who successfully complete the three phases of the respective course undertaken.

Courses in various areas of the curriculum are offered to teachers by the Ministry of Education. The duration of the courses varies between one day and three weeks.

Full-time programme

The College, in conjunction with the Faculty of Education of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, delivers a two year teacher education programme to primary school teachers. However, because of the absence of a similar programme for pre-primary teachers, some of these teachers are permitted to enrol.

The core areas of the curriculum – education theory, mathematics, English, science and social studies – are developed and assessed by UWI. The final practice teaching session and the individual study are also externally assessed. All the students must also pursue studies in agricultural science and health and family life education along with another subject selected from options offered by the College.

In addition to participating in the micro-teaching sessions, based on perceived needs of trainees, and delivered by the department, the trainees engage in three sessions each lasting three weeks of practice teaching, the final one of which is assessed externally.

Upon successful completion of the two year programme, trainees are awarded a College Certificate in Primary Education and/or a Trained Teachers' Certificate from the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill. Only those who were successful in the UWI Examinations for Teachers' Colleges of the Eastern Caribbean receive the latter.

Issues and concerns

- The curriculum of the two year programme places too much emphasis on examinations and too little on the enhancement of classroom performance.
- The duration and organisation of practice teaching leans more towards teacher performance than pupil learning.
- The students often seem incapable of handling the level of individual study prescribed.
- The duration of initial teacher training seems inadequate for covering the work needed

for better teacher preparation.

- The two week induction course, though inadequate, is usually the only training received by secondary school teachers until they enter university if they ever do so.
- The current in-service programme caters for a limited number of non-graduate untrained teachers. The quality and quantity of supervision is inadequate because of several factors such as: the fact there are insufficient trained/qualified teachers in the secondary system to act as teacher partners or co-operating teachers; the method of staffing employed by the Ministry of Education and the insufficient time allocated for that purpose.
- Although teachers in primary schools are expected to teach the core areas, English, mathematics, science and social studies, the qualification for entry into teaching has only recently been unofficially upgraded to four GCE/CXC passes including English.
- Teachers who have received initial teacher training are not obliged to participate in further training. Participation in post-initial teacher training is usually initiated by the respective teacher.
- There is at present no formal training for specialists in special education and subject teaching areas.
- Insufficient emphasis is put on the training of trainers.

Future directions

- New entry requirements are necessary for teaching at the primary level which would ensure that new recruits have the minimum competencies in the core areas of the curriculum.
- The Faculty of Education needs to consider the development of a programme which would focus less on external examinations and more on enhancing teacher competence.
- The intake of trainees must be increased so as to increase the percentage of trained teachers.
- More opportunities for training of tutors are required.
- Short-term and long-term post-initial training programmes should be developed.
- Training programmes for secondary teachers and other specialist teachers including teachers of infants and pre-school children are required.