

BACKGROUND

The Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI), through representation on a Ministry of Education & Technical & Vocational Institute Learning Recovery Taskforce, has developed a series of Workforce Readiness Certificate Programmes to serve as bridges for those high school students who, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, stopped attending classes or otherwise disengaged from their educational journey.

Dubbed, **Smart Start #dontcountusout**, the BTVI Workforce Readiness Certificate Programmes will hone basic literacy and numeracy skills within a trades learning environment. The programmes have begun in Grand Bahama and will be followed by New Providence. A roll out across several Family Islands is expected this summer and in Fall 2022, using a hybrid approach and integrating technology bridged across classroom and industry settings. A 30-hour service-learning, apprentice-type component will be incorporated in partnership with industry and business partners.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS ([Smart Start Application](#))

- Over 16 – regular admission requirements
- Under **16 (with parental consent)**
- Valid NIB Smart Card or a letter from NIB verifying that a student possessed a NIB Number
- Proof of citizenship (E-passport/Passport of citizenship) or certified copy of E-passport (first four pages) – Letter from the Principal/Justice of the Peace if no passport, attesting enrolment in high school during the period 2020-2022
- Certified copy of permit (international students) from the Department of Immigration (Tuition and fees apply to international students)

CURRENT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

FOUR Currently on Offer:

- Workforce Readiness Certificate: Automotive Mechanics (Diesel Systems; Engine Systems; Steering and Suspension Systems; Braking Systems; Electrical and Electronic Systems)
- Workforce Readiness Certificate: Beauty Trades (Barbering; Natural Hair; Nail Technology)
- Workforce Readiness Certificate: Construction Trades (Carpentry; Drywall; Electrical; HVAC; Masonry; Painting; Plumbing; Tiling)
- Workforce Readiness Certificate: Fashion Trades (Basic Garment Making)

CURRICULUM CONTENT

BTVI's especially designed certificates

1. Have over 300 hours in job readiness training
2. Have literacy and numeracy requirements
3. Have trades skills/competencies that align with requirements of an entry level technician on the Caribbean Qualifications Framework
4. Provide exposure to employability (soft) skills through a course designed for that purpose
5. Have a 30-hour community/apprenticeship requirement
6. Are tied to international certifications which students are eligible to take having gone through the BTVI programme

FAMILY ISLANDS

Not all certificates may be able to be offered on all islands, so BTVI is working with on-island coordinators who will collaborate with principals and district superintendents to make recommendations based on what is readily available through high school sites and partners and the interests of students.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Assuming students' BTVI Placement Examination scores are at the entry level for both English and Mathematics, they would begin with entry level courses in both areas. If there are deficiencies, they would have to take an additional level in each of the areas – English and Mathematics – but the English and Mathematics will be tailored to address literacy and numeracy for the trades – speaking the language of the trades. The focus will be on the utility of literacy and numeracy for the trades – measurement for carpenters, garment makers, hair stylists etc; literacy to deal with clients, to interpret and understand labels and instructions, etc.

SPECIAL KIND OF TEACHER AND COMMUNITY

(BTVI Employment Application Form)

To engage students in this way, the teachers BTVI will be recruiting must be individuals who can make these connections and who are even more patient! We know that to bring these young people back and reignite the fire will take a village. The village will comprise those who agree to be mentors, those businesses and master technicians who take these young people in as apprentices and provide a place and space where they can serve their 30 hours to work in and with a community.

30-HOUR COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

The 30-hour community commitment is meant to be an opportunity for a master technician to show a young apprentice the inner workings of a trade, and hopefully spark a light, a passion to follow a pathway to a deeper skill set beyond this initial entry level certificate. As noted above, 'to work in and with community.'

BTVI SMART START TUITION GRANT

The grant covers application and registration fees, tuition, textbooks and certification examinations.