

Press Release draft: UCCI receives IMI Accreditation
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Caption: IMI Chief Verifier Mr. Stephen Longworth makes his remarks at the ceremony
Mr. Tony Williams. Dr. Hassan Syed and Mr. Stephen Longworth display the
accreditation plaque

UCCI receives IMI accreditation

A week full of interviews and training sessions with the IMI's Chief Verifier, Stephen Longworth, was capped off with a commemorative ceremony earlier this month. The ceremony marked the finale of the accreditation process for the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) when they were awarded their Approved Training Centre Certificate and Accreditation plaque by the Institute of Motor Industry Awards Limited (IMI) in the United Kingdom.

The IMI is the professional association for individuals working in the motor industry. The Institute is the Sector Skills Council for the automotive retail industry, part of the Skills for Business network and also the governing body for the Automotive Technician Accreditation (ATA) scheme. Comprising 25,000 individual IMI members, its earned a solid reputation in the international motor industry.

Owen Laurenson, UCCI's newly appointed Automotive Programmes Director and Adjunct Professor, will spearhead the roll out of the institution's automotive training programme targeting the youth of Cayman. Initially, evening classes will be offered and students will work towards a credible and recognised Level 1 Joint Certificate through the IMI and UCCI in Light Motor Vehicle Technology.

Over the coming months Mr. Laurenson and his colleague, Michael Atterbury, will expand the range of study syllabus through UCCI up to a Diploma level. UCCI believes this offering will also appeal to interested personnel already working within the automotive industry, ranging from Automotive Technicians, Parts & Service Managers up to Dealer Principals and General Managers.

"Ultimately, UCCI has the vision to offer Modern Apprenticeship programmes to school leavers and existing automotive trainees to enhance the professionalism and knowledge levels within the industry in the local marketplace" explains Mr. Laurenson. He went on to say that students and employers can rest assured that the new automotive department at UCCI will offer the highest levels of professionalism and quality of training and course materials in line with IMI accreditation criteria, ensuring that all future students gain invaluable qualifications, industry knowledge and professional recognition for their efforts in study.

Mr. Longworth gave UCCI his vote of confidence and said "We are delighted to receive the application from UCCI to become not only the premier IMI Awards approved assessment centre for the Cayman Islands, but also for UCCI to represent a benchmark of internationally recognised qualifications throughout the Caribbean territories. IMI is proud to be associated with the UCCI project and we wish the UCCI every success in offering the programme to enable the young people of the Cayman Islands to achieve their aspirations through a range of internationally recognised qualifications."

UCCI's Chair of Continuing Education and Vocational Training, Mr. Ray Jones, was thrilled to see the fruits of the institutions labour these past several months. He explained it had been at least 12 years

since automotives course were offered on the campus and that students should fully maximize the opportunity afforded them. He went on to add that students at the high school level can be active in the programme through a partnership arrangement design specifically for students ages 15-18. The IMI professional track high school component allows students to transition from the high schools into the TVET programmes at UCCI.

Mr. Tony Williams of Tony's Toys has been a supporter and contributor of the programme. Well-known in the community as a leading automotive retailer and service centre, Mr. Williams sees the benefit the private sector. "This programme helps the automotive industry since its targeting local students. It allows young Caymanians, as well as those already in the automotive trade, to earn international recognition which is valued by employers. Tony's Toy's is fully supportive of the IMI programme and has committed our premises for facilitation of the coursework portion of the programme. We're excited to get the first batch of students."

The support from the industry has been overwhelming, says UCCI President, Dr. Hassan Syed. A meeting was held on 12 April in which he met with the General Managers and representatives from some of the leading automotive businesses in the country and discussed the programme with them. "Unanimous support was voiced by the business leaders from the automotive industry who are very keen to support and help this programme succeed," he said. "I would be remiss if I didn't thank each attendee by name and express our deepest gratitude for their support". Attendees included Mr. Chris Vanderbol from AutoHaus, Mr. Greg Hall from Vampt Motors, Mr. Paul Bodden from Automotive Art, Mr. Steve Gumby from GT Automotive, Mr. Carl Gordon from Kirk Motors/Napa, Mr. Danny O'Hara from Prestige Motors as well as Mr. and Mrs. Bernado- from EuroCar

The University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) is an institution of higher learning that contributes to Caymanian society by advancing knowledge and developing creative graduates through our cultural, social, economic and environmental activities. UCCI offers a number of certificate programmes, associate and degree courses as well as graduate programmes and professional trainings. Visit www.ucci.edu.ky to learn more.

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