

# Beyond Accreditation: A Multidimensional Assessment of the Quality of Private Higher Education Institutions in Jamaica

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## ABSTRACT

The expansion of private higher education has altered Jamaica's tertiary landscape. Yet debates about institutional quality frequently rely on accreditation status, reputation or anecdotal perceptions rather than multidimensional assessments of educational and developmental performance. This study critically evaluates the quality of private higher education institutions in Jamaica through five interrelated dimensions: lecturer quality, student-intake quality, graduates' contribution to the national economy, alumni influence nationally and internationally, and institutional research and national-development output. Employing a qualitative comparative institutional design centred principally on Northern Caribbean University and the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean, the analysis triangulates accreditation evidence, institutional records, scholarly literature, research-output indicators, policy documents and publicly verifiable evidence concerning academics and graduates. The current findings show that institutional accreditation provides substantial evidence that Jamaica's leading private universities satisfy nationally established quality standards, while their professional programmes, large graduate populations, experienced academics and increasingly visible research activities demonstrate contributions extending beyond the mere provision of additional tertiary places. However, important asymmetries remain between teaching and research intensity; insufficient publicly available longitudinal evidence on student selectivity, graduate earnings, employer assessments, scholarly impact and alumni outcomes prevents strong causal claims that accreditation necessarily translates into uniformly high performance across all dimensions. The study addresses this gap by developing a Private University Quality and Development Framework, arguing that the quality of Jamaican private higher education should be judged not by ownership status or accreditation alone but by the value institutions add between student entry and the subsequent intellectual, economic, professional and societal contributions of their graduates and scholarship.

**Keywords:** private higher education; Jamaica; university quality; Northern Caribbean University; University of the Commonwealth Caribbean; lecturers; student intake; alumni; research productivity; graduate outcomes; national development; quality assurance

## INTRODUCTION

Higher-education quality is intrinsically multidimensional because a university cannot be evaluated solely by its buildings, accreditation status, admission standards, faculty qualifications, research publications or graduates considered separately. Contemporary scholarship increasingly conceptualises quality through interacting dimensions encompassing inputs, educational processes, outputs, outcomes and broader societal effects, while acknowledging that stakeholders may attach different importance to each dimension (Harvey & Green, 1993; Tam, 2001). This problem becomes especially important when evaluating private higher education because assumptions concerning market orientation, accessibility and institutional prestige can substitute for direct evidence of academic performance. Globally, private institutions have become substantial components of higher-education systems and require assessment using standards capable of distinguishing organisational ownership from educational effectiveness (Levy, 2018). Jamaica presents a useful case because private institutions have expanded access alongside longstanding public universities while operating in a national accreditation and quality-assurance framework. The appropriate question is not whether private universities are inherently better or worse than public universities, but what evidence indicates the quality and developmental significance of the education they provide.

Jamaica's private higher-education sector is institutionally heterogeneous and historically includes universities, university colleges, theological institutions, professional colleges and specialised providers. Earlier research identified NCU, UCC, the International University of the Caribbean and Vector Technology Institute among significant locally based private providers serving different student populations and disciplinary niches (Coates, 2012). Since that research, the institutional landscape has changed considerably, particularly through the achievement of institutional accreditation by NCU and UCC and UCC's subsequent recognition as a university. The UCJ identifies both NCU and UCC as institutionally accredited institutions, meaning that their tertiary programmes receive recognised standing in Jamaica's national quality-assurance architecture (University Council of Jamaica [UCJ], 2024). Institutional accreditation provides a credible starting point for examining quality but cannot answer questions concerning research influence, graduate economic contribution or the global reach of alumni. A broader evaluative framework is required if the quality of private higher education is to be connected meaningfully with Jamaica's national development.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Public discussion of university quality often commits an analytical error by treating institutional reputation as if it were equivalent to measured educational performance. Older universities may benefit from accumulated prestige, large alumni networks, established research infrastructures and international ranking visibility, whereas newer institutions must develop reputational capital over substantially shorter periods. Private universities can be underestimated when reputation reflects institutional age more strongly than contemporary teaching quality, while they can equally be overestimated when aggressive marketing is accepted as evidence of academic excellence. Jamaica requires a more defensible assessment because students invest substantial financial and opportunity costs in tertiary education and employers depend on qualifications as signals of knowledge and professional competence. Government likewise requires evidence concerning which institutions generate human capital, research and innovation capable of advancing Vision 2030 Jamaica (Planning Institute of Jamaica [PIOJ], 2009). University quality must be examined through observable dimensions extending from student entry through faculty capability to graduate and societal outcomes.

The quality question is complicated further because private institutions frequently pursue educational missions different from those of research-intensive public universities. UCC describes itself primarily as a teaching university, whereas NCU combines teaching with research across business, education, health, natural sciences, religion and other disciplines. Judging a teaching-oriented university exclusively against the publication volume of a large research university would confuse institutional mission with institutional failure. Conversely, describing an institution as teaching-oriented cannot exempt it from scholarly expectations because university-level teaching should be informed by research, disciplinary currency and critical intellectual engagement. A valid quality framework must recognise institutional differentiation while retaining common expectations concerning academic competence, student learning and contribution to society. The present study adopts that approach by distinguishing five dimensions that jointly provide a more comprehensive assessment of private-university quality.

## RESEARCH GAP

The principal research gap is striking because the expansion of Jamaican private higher education has received substantially more attention than its multidimensional quality outcomes. Coates' (2012) study made an important contribution by examining how private higher-education institutions expanded access in pursuit of Vision 2030, but the study itself acknowledged the absence of sufficiently objective direct evidence from students and employers concerning quality claims. Subsequent institutional accreditation provides stronger evidence concerning internal quality-assurance systems, yet accreditation studies are designed principally to determine whether institutions meet established standards rather than to compare their intellectual and developmental influence longitudinally. Existing public data also do not consistently integrate lecturer qualifications and scholarship, entry characteristics, graduate labour-market performance, influential alumni and research impact in the same analytical model. Claims about Jamaican private-university quality are often based on only one component of a substantially larger construct. This study addresses that gap by treating quality as a developmental chain connecting **academic inputs, student inputs, educational value added, graduate outcomes, alumni influence and knowledge production.**

A second gap concerns the relationship between university quality and national development. Conventional university rankings heavily weight research publications, citations, internationalisation and reputation, potentially undervaluing institutions whose primary contribution occurs through professional training, widening participation or regional workforce development. Conversely, national-development rhetoric can become excessively permissive if every graduate or community project is counted as evidence of high university quality without establishing academic standards or measurable outcomes. Jamaican private universities require an evaluative framework that simultaneously recognises teaching-intensive contributions and subjects developmental claims to scholarly scrutiny. This study introduces the concept of **developmentally consequential quality**, defined as educational quality that produces measurable intellectual, professional, economic or societal capabilities beyond the institution itself. The concept connects the internal quality of a university with the external consequences of its activities. It provides a theoretical bridge between higher-education quality assurance and national-development scholarship.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

The principal objective is to determine the extent to which available evidence supports the classification of Jamaica's leading private higher-education institutions as quality universities. The first research question examines the academic and professional quality of lecturers and researchers, including qualifications, scholarly activity, disciplinary expertise and connections with professional practice. The second examines student-intake quality while distinguishing entry qualifications from the educational value subsequently added by the university. The third investigates the contribution of graduates to Jamaica's labour force, productive sectors, professions, entrepreneurship and institutional leadership. The fourth evaluates alumni influence in Jamaica, the Caribbean and the wider international environment rather than reducing graduate quality to employment alone. The fifth assesses research, innovation, knowledge dissemination and direct institutional contributions to national development.

### Conceptualising University Quality

Harvey and Green (1993) famously demonstrated that quality in higher education can refer to exceptionality, perfection, fitness for purpose, value for money or transformation, making apparently simple comparisons conceptually difficult. Tam (2001) similarly emphasised that quality assessment must account for multiple stakeholders and educational purposes rather than presume the existence of one universally accepted measure. For the present study, **input quality** encompasses lecturers, students and academic resources, whereas **process quality** concerns curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, mentoring and institutional quality assurance. **Output quality** includes graduates, publications, innovations and other identifiable products of institutional activity. **Outcome quality** concerns what graduates and research subsequently accomplish in economies and societies. **Impact quality** refers to wider changes plausibly attributable to the institution, including professional leadership, entrepreneurship, policy influence, innovation and community transformation.

This framework makes an important distinction between **selectivity** and **quality**, because admitting academically elite students is not equivalent to producing excellent education. An institution enrolling exceptionally strong students may generate impressive graduate outcomes even if its educational value added is modest, while an institution admitting less prepared or non-traditional students may produce considerable educational transformation despite lower initial entry scores. Private institutions frequently contribute to widening participation precisely because they provide alternative pathways for learners excluded from highly selective institutions (Levy, 2018; Coates, 2012). Assessing student intake must examine whether entrants possess sufficient foundations for degree-level work while avoiding the elitist assumption that high rejection rates are intrinsically indicators of educational excellence. The strongest measure would compare student competencies at admission with competencies, employment and achievements after graduation. Quality should include **educational value added**, not merely the academic characteristics universities inherit from secondary schools.

## METHODOLOGY

The study employs a qualitative comparative case-study methodology using NCU and UCC as the principal

institutional cases. Selection is purposive because both are locally established private universities that have achieved institutional accreditation from Jamaica's national external quality-assurance authority, permitting comparison in a common regulatory framework (UCJ, 2024). Evidence is triangulated from UCJ accreditation information, university documents, government publications, scholarly studies, public research profiles and independently verifiable records concerning academics, alumni and institutional activities. Five predetermined analytical domains correspond directly with the research questions: lecturer quality, student-intake quality, graduate economic contribution, alumni influence, and research and national-development output. Claims made solely by universities are treated as institutional evidence rather than independent validation and are corroborated where credible external sources are available. This methodological distinction is necessary because scholarly assessment should not reproduce university promotional material as empirical fact.

To reduce the risk of institutional self-presentation shaping the findings, evidence was assessed through a source hierarchy. Independent regulatory, governmental and peer-reviewed sources were given greater evidential weight than university webpages, biographies and promotional material; institution-produced claims were retained only as descriptive evidence and, where possible, cross-checked against external records. The same analytical questions and evidential thresholds were applied to NCU and UCC, and the comparison distinguishes an absence of public evidence from evidence of weak performance. No primary interviews, surveys or administrative microdata from students, graduates, employers or academic staff were available for this study; consequently, the design cannot estimate employer satisfaction, learning gain, graduate earnings or causal institutional value added. The study should be interpreted as a structured secondary-evidence comparison that identifies defensible conclusions and measurement gaps rather than as a definitive institutional ranking.

The approach nevertheless contains important limitations that require transparency. Publicly accessible Jamaican higher-education data do not provide a comprehensive institution-by-institution longitudinal dataset containing lecturer qualifications, incoming student grades, retention, value-added learning measures, graduate earnings, employer evaluations, publication counts and alumni leadership outcomes. Bibliometric databases can also undercount locally oriented books, reports, creative works and journals, particularly where scholarship is directed towards Caribbean audiences rather than internationally indexed journals. Alumni influence is similarly difficult to quantify because public prominence represents only one form of graduate impact and can privilege politicians, executives and celebrities over teachers, nurses and other socially consequential professionals. The tables presented below provide **illustrative verified cases rather than exhaustive rankings** of individuals or institutions. The analysis is best understood as a multidimensional evidence synthesis that identifies both what can presently be concluded and what Jamaica still needs to measure. This caution strengthens rather than weakens the study because absence of evidence should not be converted into either evidence of poor quality or unsubstantiated claims of excellence.

### Jamaica's Quality-Assurance Architecture

The UCJ was established in 1987 and functions as Jamaica's national external quality-assurance agency for higher education, evaluating institutions and programmes against established educational standards. Institutional accreditation is particularly significant because it evaluates academic and administrative effectiveness and requires evidence that an institution possesses an internal quality-assurance system capable of managing quality throughout its operations. The UCJ's programme-level criteria include mission and governance, programme structure and content, programme management and, explicitly, the quality of students admitted, thereby demonstrating that accreditation addresses several dimensions considered in this paper. NCU received institutional accreditation effective in 2018, while UCC achieved institutional accreditation effective from November 2019. These outcomes constitute important independent evidence that both institutions have demonstrated compliance with nationally established quality expectations rather than merely self-identifying as quality providers. Accreditation should be treated as the **minimum evidential foundation** on which the more demanding questions of excellence and impact are built.

Institutional accreditation nevertheless establishes threshold credibility rather than proving equality across all universities or academic functions. Two accredited institutions can differ substantially in faculty research productivity, graduate outcomes, selectivity, international influence and innovation despite both satisfying the

standards necessary for accreditation. This distinction is particularly important because UCC describes institutional accreditation as encompassing comprehensive evaluation of academic and administrative effectiveness, while NCU similarly identifies accreditation with competence, transparency, accountability and continuous quality improvement. Accreditation reduces uncertainty concerning legitimacy but does not remove the need for outcome-based assessment. A genuinely mature Jamaican quality system would combine accreditation with longitudinal public performance indicators capable of demonstrating how accredited institutions differ and improve over time. The remainder of this paper moves beyond accreditation to examine the five substantive dimensions requested.

### Dimension One: Quality of Lecturers

Lecturer quality is fundamental because universities cannot consistently produce sophisticated learning where academics possess inadequate disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical competence or engagement with contemporary scholarship. Academic qualifications provide an important initial indicator because postgraduate and doctoral training can expose lecturers to advanced theory, research methodology and specialised disciplinary knowledge. Qualifications alone are insufficient, however, because effective university lecturers must translate expertise into curriculum design, assessment, mentoring and intellectually challenging learning environments. Research activity provides another indicator because active scholars are more likely to encounter evolving disciplinary debates and contribute new knowledge rather than transmit static textbook content. Professional experience can be equally important in applied disciplines such as business, law, nursing, information technology and counselling, where students must connect conceptual knowledge with professional practice. Lecturer quality should be conceptualised through **qualification, scholarship, pedagogy, professional currency and academic leadership** rather than through academic titles alone.

Available evidence indicates identifiable research-active academics in NCU and UCC, although comprehensive comparative faculty datasets remain unavailable publicly. NCU's natural and applied sciences portfolio identifies research associated with Professor Patience Alonge, Professor Max Wellington and Professor Mark Harris, including health sciences, nutrition, environmental and climate-related work. Public scholarly profiles identify Wellington as a professor with research spanning analytical biochemistry, materials processing and biotechnology, while James Fallah's profile identifies extensive work in epidemiology, global health, nutrition and metabolism. UCC's appointment of Professor Colin Gyles brought an academic with a doctorate in chemistry, professorial standing and a documented publication and higher-education leadership record to its presidency. UCC has additionally developed visiting-professor arrangements spanning public health, tourism, computer science, educational technology, governance, leadership and other areas, potentially broadening exposure to international expertise. These examples establish that private-university faculties include substantial academic expertise, although they do not substitute for systematic indicators such as the percentage of courses taught by doctoral-qualified faculty or publications per full-time-equivalent academic.

Table 1 presents why the blanket proposition that private Jamaican universities necessarily employ academically weak lecturers cannot be sustained by the available evidence. Both principal institutions possess identifiable doctoral-level, professorial and research-active academics, and UCC reports approximately 400 faculty and staff across its operations. Nevertheless, isolated distinguished academics cannot establish the average quality of teaching experienced by students because institutional quality depends on the distribution of expertise throughout departments and programmes. Heavy dependence on adjunct faculty can provide valuable professional expertise while potentially reducing time available for student mentoring, research and institutional service if not managed carefully. Future quality reporting should publish the proportion of courses taught by full-time faculty, highest qualifications, student-to-academic ratios, scholarly output and systematic student-learning evaluations by department. Lecturer quality would then become measurable as an institutional property rather than inferred from selected prominent individuals.

**Table 1 Illustrative Lecturers and Researchers Associated with Jamaica's Leading Private Universities**

| Academic  | Institution | Field/role       | Evidence of scholarly or professional contribution | Relevance to quality |
|-----------|-------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Professor | UCC         | Applied science; | PhD in Chemistry; professor;                       | Links research       |

|                             |     |                                                                       |                                                                                                              |                                                                        |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Colin Gyles                 |     | university leadership                                                 | research publications, conference proceedings and academic leadership                                        | experience with institutional leadership                               |
| Professor John MacIntyre    | UCC | Artificial intelligence, computer science and engineering; Chancellor | More than three decades of academic experience and 200+ scholarly papers reported in institutional biography | Expands international scholarly and technological networks             |
| Professor Bernadette Warner | UCC | Institutional effectiveness and assessment                            | Leads institutional research, monitoring, evaluation and quality enhancement                                 | Connects evidence with continuous institutional improvement            |
| Professor Max A. Wellington | NCU | Biology, chemistry and environmental science                          | Research in biotechnology, analytical science, bauxite processing and related fields                         | Indicates applied scientific research capability                       |
| Professor Mark Harris       | NCU | Environmental/climate science                                         | Research and scholarly work concerning tropical climate change                                               | Connects university research with environmental development challenges |
| Professor Patience Alonge   | NCU | Health sciences                                                       | Published health-related research identified by NCU                                                          | Supports health-science scholarship                                    |
| Dr James Fallah             | NCU | Epidemiology, global health and nutrition                             | Public research record across epidemiology, global health and metabolism                                     | Strengthens health and population research                             |
| Dr Tom Mboya Amonde         | NCU | Economics                                                             | Applied socioeconomic, macroeconomic and econometric research                                                | Connects scholarship with economic-policy questions                    |
| Dr Randy Lee Stewart        | UCC | Behavioural sciences and education                                    | Research interests include teaching, curriculum, e-learning and lifelong learning.                           | Relevant to teaching innovation and educational quality                |

*Note.* The table is illustrative rather than exhaustive and includes academics for whom publicly verifiable evidence of institutional affiliation and scholarly activity was identified. Evidence is drawn from university records and public scholarly profiles.

## Dimension Two: Quality of Student Intake

Student-intake quality requires particularly careful interpretation because admissions policies simultaneously perform quality-control and access functions. NCU's general undergraduate requirements include five GCE, or CSEC passes at the stipulated levels including English Language, with additional routes involving equivalent qualifications and tertiary transfer. Some programmes impose stronger subject requirements, with NCU's computing programmes requiring combinations including Mathematics, English, Information Technology and, for Computer Science, a science subject. UCC generally requires five CSEC or GCE subjects including English Language and Mathematics for unconditional undergraduate admission, while mature-entry pathways recognise relevant professional experience and alternative qualifications. Both institutions also provide conditional or preparatory routes for some applicants who have not initially satisfied every conventional matriculation requirement. These policies reveal systems attempting simultaneously to protect academic thresholds and widen access.

More flexible entry should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of lower university quality because educational transformation can be greatest among students who begin with less advantaged academic backgrounds. NCU's pre-university pathway explicitly prepares students lacking complete matriculation requirements while limiting progression unless outstanding qualifications are subsequently obtained. UCC's mature-entry pathway similarly evaluates age, work experience, academic or professional qualifications, employment evidence and professional references rather than treating secondary-school examination results as the only legitimate indicator of readiness. Such pathways are particularly relevant in a national-development

framework because working adults and non-traditional learners may possess substantial experiential capital not captured by conventional school-leaving examinations. The critical quality question is whether institutions maintain demanding exit standards and provide sufficient academic support to convert diverse entrants into competent graduates. Student-intake quality should be evaluated jointly with **completion, learning gain and graduate outcomes**, rather than through entry grades in isolation.

### **Dimension Three: Graduates and the National Economy**

Graduate contribution represents one of the strongest tests of whether higher education creates value beyond the institution. NCU and UCC educate students across fields directly connected with Jamaican economic and social infrastructure, including business, computing, education, health, management, counselling and professional services. NCU's graduates have long been publicly recognised as contributing throughout Jamaica, the Caribbean and wider world, while government commentary has specifically highlighted the professionalism of graduates encountered in the workforce. UCC reports an alumni population exceeding tens of thousands and current annual enrolment of approximately 7,000 students, indicating a potentially substantial cumulative contribution to the country's human-capital stock. Its 2026 commencement alone anticipated approximately 1,000 graduands across multiple disciplines, illustrating the scale at which a private university can feed trained personnel into Jamaica and the wider region. Numerical scale, however, establishes potential economic significance rather than proving graduate productivity.

The appropriate economic test requires evidence concerning employment, occupational advancement, entrepreneurship, earnings, productivity and employer assessments. Earlier Jamaican private-higher-education research reported institutional perceptions that employers were satisfied with graduates but correctly acknowledged that direct employer evidence was required for objective validation (Coates, 2012). This limitation remains central because a university cannot establish its own labour-market quality simply by reporting the number of people it graduates. Jamaica would benefit from national graduate-tracer studies comparing employment rates, earnings, occupational match and career progression across institutions while controlling for programme, prior achievement, age and socioeconomic background. Such data would also permit researchers to determine whether private universities are particularly effective for working adults who use degrees to achieve occupational mobility rather than enter employment for the first time. Until such evidence becomes routinely available, the graduate contribution is strongly plausible but inadequately quantified.

### **Dimension Four: Alumni Influence in Jamaica and the World**

Alumni influence provides a different quality signal because universities exercise social influence partly through the leadership, professional practice and innovation of their graduates. NCU reports an organised alumni community exceeding 40,000 individuals, while UCC reports a similarly large and internationally dispersed graduate community. Size matters because large alumni populations create professional networks, philanthropic capacity, mentoring relationships and potential channels for institutional influence across countries. However, alumni prominence must be interpreted cautiously because individual success depends on personal characteristics, subsequent education, professional networks and opportunities encountered after graduation. Honorary degree recipients must also be distinguished rigorously from actual alumni because conferring an honorary doctorate on an already distinguished individual does not demonstrate that the university educated that person. The following table prioritises documented graduates and avoids treating honorary recipients such as Audrey Marks as educational outputs of NCU.

The alumni evidence is strongest for NCU partly because its institutional history extends back through West Indies College to 1907, giving it considerably more time to accumulate graduates than UCC, which was established in its current form in 2004. This temporal difference indicates why raw counts of distinguished alumni cannot be interpreted as straightforward comparative measures of contemporary educational quality. UCC's substantially shorter institutional history means that many of its graduates remain in comparatively early or middle stages of their careers, even though its large alumni population provides increasing potential for national and international influence. NCU's School of Religion and Theology, for example, reports that more than 95 per cent of Adventist church leaders in Jamaica have passed through the school and that graduates serve across the Caribbean, United States, Canada and United Kingdom. Such evidence indicates

institutional influence extending beyond ordinary graduate employment into the reproduction of professional and organisational leadership. Alumni quality should be evaluated longitudinally and relative to institutional age rather than through decontextualised lists of famous names.

UCC's alumni body provides important evidence of the institution's growing contribution to professional, entrepreneurial and civic development in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. Although UCC is considerably younger than some long-established universities, its expanding graduate population has begun to demonstrate influence in areas such as business, marketing, information technology, human-resource management, entrepreneurship and public service (University of the Commonwealth Caribbean [UCC], 2025, 2026). Graduates such as Lashawn Mills and Skeita Smith illustrate the entrepreneurial pathway through which UCC education can contribute to enterprise creation and private-sector development, while Ammoya Patrick's international recognition in diplomacy indicates the emerging global reach of the university's alumni community (UCC, 2025). The institution's alumni network also contributes to educational access and institutional development through scholarships, mentorship, internships and community-outreach activities, indicating that alumni influence extends beyond individual career advancement (UCC, n.d.). However, the comparatively recent development of UCC means that its alumni profile should be evaluated relative to institutional age, since many graduates remain in the early or middle stages of their professional careers and have not yet had the time to accumulate the international prominence associated with alumni of much older universities. Overall, the available evidence suggests that UCC is developing an increasingly consequential alumni network whose influence is most visible in professional advancement, entrepreneurship, civic participation and emerging international engagement, thereby strengthening the argument that graduate outcomes constitute an important dimension of the university's institutional quality.

Taken together, the alumni evidence indicates different but complementary patterns of influence. NCU's longer institutional lineage is associated with a mature transnational network spanning scholarship, education, religion, science, government and organisational leadership, whereas UCC's younger alumni community shows emerging strength in entrepreneurship, business, technology, professional mobility and civic engagement (NCU, n.d.; UCC, 2025, 2026). These differences should not be converted into a simple quality hierarchy because institutional age strongly affects the time available for graduates to accumulate senior leadership, scholarly distinction and international visibility. A balanced comparison treats alumni prominence as illustrative rather than causal and evaluates both institutions against the same categories: professional leadership, entrepreneurship, public service, knowledge production, network contribution and international reach. The detailed alumni cases are moved to Appendices A and B so that the main text retains the analytical comparison without allowing individual biographies to dominate the argument.

Alumni outcomes also require careful attribution. Graduate achievement reflects university education alongside prior ability, later qualifications, occupational experience, social networks and individual motivation; the evidence can establish association with subsequent achievement but not that either university caused an alumnus's success. This caution is especially important where public prominence makes some graduates easier to identify than teachers, nurses, administrators and other less visible professionals. The strongest future test would link graduate-tracer data with occupational progression, earnings, entrepreneurship, employer assessments and alumni-network participation. Until such data are available, alumni evidence is best treated as one component of the broader quality framework rather than as a stand-alone proxy for institutional excellence.

### **Dimension Five: Research Output**

Research is indispensable to the concept of a university because higher education should participate not only in transmitting existing knowledge but also in interrogating, adapting and producing knowledge. NCU documents research across natural and applied sciences, health and environmental fields, while publicly visible scholarship includes work by academics such as Wellington, Harris, Alonge, Fallah and others. Earlier research on Jamaican private higher education documented NCU projects involving sorrel and breadfruit and UCC student work applying information technology to agricultural problems, suggesting an established tradition of applied research directed towards local challenges (Coates, 2012). These activities are developmentally relevant because small states often require applied scholarship capable of adapting scientific and technological knowledge to local economic and social conditions. The important question is not merely

how many papers are published but whether institutional scholarship possesses methodological quality, visibility and relevance. Research quality requires simultaneous attention to **volume, citation impact, disciplinary breadth, collaboration and societal application**.

UCC's research infrastructure is visibly developing and now includes annual research conferences, academic journals, research publications, visiting professors, ethics arrangements and scholarly discussion series. An external open-research dataset recorded 116 UCC-associated publications from 2006 to 2024, of which 52 were open, with approximately 1,600 citations, although bibliometric databases differ substantially in their coverage and these figures should not be equated automatically with Scopus output. NCU similarly indicates visible research activity, with one external ranking database attributing 209 publications and 1,791 citations to the institution in its 2026 assessment, again using a database and methodology different from Scopus. The figures indicate that neither university is devoid of research activity, but they also suggest that research volume remains modest by the standards of large research-intensive universities. This finding should be interpreted in relation to institutional size, mission, resources and teaching responsibilities rather than as a simplistic quality verdict. A strategic priority for Jamaica's private universities should nevertheless be to increase publication in rigorous indexed journals and strengthen externally funded research collaborations.

### Research And National Development

The most important research question for Jamaica concerns whether scholarship addresses problems of national and regional consequence. NCU's documented research includes environmental science, health, nutrition, biotechnology, economics and climate-related work, all of which correspond to significant Jamaican development challenges. UCC's developing research architecture and international visiting-professor network potentially connect Jamaican academics and students with scholarship in artificial intelligence, public health, tourism, computer science, governance and educational technology. These areas align with national concerns surrounding digital transformation, health systems, tourism competitiveness, education and institutional effectiveness. Yet alignment of research topics with national priorities does not establish impact unless scholarship influences practice, policy, technology, enterprise or community outcomes. Jamaican universities require stronger mechanisms for tracking **research-to-impact pathways**.

Applied research offers private universities a particularly plausible route towards distinctive research identities because competing directly with large international research universities across every discipline would be financially unrealistic. NCU can exploit expertise in health, environment, agriculture-related science, education and community development, while UCC can build specialised strengths around business, entrepreneurship, digital transformation, professional practice and applied social research. Such differentiation would allow the institutions to develop areas of recognised expertise instead of distributing limited research resources too thinly. Partnerships with public universities, ministries, businesses, international universities and development agencies can further compensate for limitations in laboratory infrastructure and research financing. National research funding should be competitively accessible to qualified private as well as public universities where proposals satisfy rigorous scientific and developmental criteria. Ownership should not determine access to research opportunities when the resulting knowledge constitutes a national public good.

### Quality through Innovation and Internationalisation

Internationalisation provides another quality mechanism where partnerships expose students and faculty to wider academic standards and intellectual networks. UCC maintains international relationships and identifies itself as a recognised affiliate institution supporting University of London law programmes in Jamaica, while its visiting-professor network incorporates scholars across multiple international disciplines. NCU's international influence is partly embedded in the global Seventh-day Adventist educational network and its alumni and professional connections across North America, the Caribbean and elsewhere. NCU students also achieved international technological visibility through Microsoft's Imagine Cup, with Jamaican official commentary noting a third-place global performance in 2007 and subsequent representation of the Americas. Such achievements demonstrate that private-university students can compete beyond the domestic educational environment. Internationalisation becomes a genuine quality indicator, however, only where partnerships strengthen curriculum, scholarship, mobility or graduate competence rather than functioning primarily as branding devices.

Technological innovation also increasingly affects the quality proposition of private higher education. Flexible and online delivery can expand participation among employed adults and geographically dispersed students, but convenience cannot substitute for intellectual depth or rigorous assessment. UCC's substantial online provision and NCU's technology-enabled programmes illustrate the sector's capacity to move beyond conventional residential education. Quality assurance must examine equivalence across face-to-face, blended and online modes, particularly in assessment integrity, student engagement and academic support. Institutional accreditation provides an important foundation because UCC's recognised systems explicitly encompass delivery across face-to-face, online and blended modalities. Future research should compare learning outcomes across modalities rather than presuming either digital inferiority or digital superiority.

### Student Quality versus Institutional Value Added

The analysis of student intake produces one of the paper's most important conceptual findings. Highly selective universities often report impressive graduate outcomes partly because they admit students who already possess strong academic preparation, family resources and social capital. Institutions serving non-traditional learners confront a more demanding educational task because students may combine employment, family responsibilities and uneven prior preparation with university study. Jamaica's private institutions have historically served significant populations of part-time and employed students, particularly outside traditional residential university models (Coates, 2012). Evaluating them solely according to incoming examination scores could punish the very access function for which private higher education has been considered nationally valuable. Quality assessment should instead estimate the intellectual and professional distance students travel between admission and graduation.

This proposition does not justify weak admissions standards because degree-level education requires adequate literacy, numeracy and disciplinary foundations. Universities admitting underprepared students assume a responsibility to provide diagnostic assessment, foundation programmes, tutoring and other mechanisms capable of bringing those students to appropriate academic standards. NCU's pre-university route illustrates one approach by requiring students with incomplete qualifications to obtain outstanding subjects before full progression. UCC similarly provides conditional admission arrangements while specifying subsequent requirements that must be satisfied. The decisive quality measure is whether exit competencies remain rigorous despite differentiated entry routes. Access without standards would constitute credentialism, whereas standards without access could reproduce social exclusion.

### A Private University Quality and Development Framework

The evidence supports a five-domain **Private University Quality and Development Framework** directly corresponding with the dimensions investigated in this study. **Academic capital** encompasses lecturer qualifications, research activity, pedagogical competence and professional expertise, while **student potential and transformation** combines entry quality with learning value added. **Graduate economic contribution** measures employment, occupational relevance, entrepreneurship, professional advancement and productivity, whereas **alumni influence** captures leadership and professional networks in Jamaica and internationally. **Knowledge and development impact** incorporates publications, citations, innovation, policy contribution, community research and other forms of national problem solving. Institutional accreditation operates underneath these domains as a quality-assurance foundation rather than functioning as a sixth substitute measure. A high-quality private university should demonstrate credible performance across the framework while allowing weighting to vary according to institutional mission.

The framework also permits a distinction between **threshold quality**, **performance quality** and **consequential quality**. Threshold quality means satisfying credible accreditation and operating standards, a criterion that institutionally accredited NCU and UCC demonstrably meet. Performance quality concerns how effectively teaching, research and academic services function relative to appropriate benchmarks. Consequential quality concerns whether graduates, scholarship and institutional activities subsequently improve organisations, professions, communities and the national economy. Universities can satisfy threshold quality without yet achieving exceptional research performance, just as research-active institutions can possess weaknesses in teaching or student support. The proposed model avoids reducing quality to a binary judgement and instead treats it as a developmental continuum.

## Comparative Assessment of NCU and UCC

The available evidence suggests that NCU's principal strengths derive from institutional longevity, a substantial established alumni network, institutional accreditation, broad disciplinary coverage and an identifiable research base extending into natural science, health, environment and applied social inquiry. Its history provides opportunities for longitudinal influence unavailable to newer institutions, and its alumni footprint in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and wider professional environments indicates significant organisational reach. NCU also combines conventional admission requirements with preparatory pathways, giving it both quality-control and widening-participation functions. Its challenge is to convert considerable pockets of scholarly activity into a more visible, systematically measured research profile indexed through major international databases. Publication, citation, grant and research-impact data should be reported routinely by college and discipline. NCU can reasonably be characterised as an established private university whose next quality frontier involves stronger research visibility and impact measurement.

UCC presents a different institutional profile characterised by rapid expansion, strong teaching orientation, flexible delivery, substantial enrolment, international partnerships and an increasingly formal research infrastructure. Institutional accreditation and university recognition provide external confirmation that its development has moved beyond the status of a small private training provider. Its research conferences, publication infrastructure, visiting-professor network and appointments of research-experienced senior academics suggest deliberate movement towards a stronger scholarly identity. However, the institution's comparatively young age and teaching-intensive history mean that evidence of long-term alumni influence, and internationally indexed research remains less developed than enrolment and teaching evidence. UCC's next developmental stage should emphasise the conversion of institutional scale into measurable graduate, research and innovation impact.

**Table 2 Summary Matrix of Comparative Evidence and Remaining Data Gaps**

| Quality dimension       | NCU: available evidence                                                                             | UCC: available evidence                                                                                     | Comparative constraint                                                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Quality assurance       | Institutional accreditation; established disciplinary breadth                                       | Institutional accreditation; teaching-oriented model and flexible delivery                                  | Accreditation confirms threshold quality, not equal performance                    |
| Graduate scale/outcomes | Large, long-established graduate and alumni base                                                    | Large alumni base; about 7,000 annual enrolments and about 1,000 graduands reported for 2026                | Comparable audited employment, earnings and employer-satisfaction data unavailable |
| Alumni influence        | Long historical record and mature transnational network                                             | Younger, emerging network visible in entrepreneurship, professional mobility and civic engagement           | Raw prominence counts are biased by institutional age and public visibility        |
| Research activity       | Publicly visible applied research; one external source reports 209 publications and 1,791 citations | Developing research infrastructure; one external dataset reports 116 publications and about 1,600 citations | Figures come from different databases/periods and are not valid direct rankings.   |
| Evidence needed         | Graduate tracer, learning-gain, employer and faculty data                                           | Graduate tracer, learning-gain, employer and faculty data                                                   | Common instruments and observation periods required for balanced comparison        |

## National Development Implications

The quality of private universities matters nationally because Jamaica cannot afford to evaluate human-capital institutions according to ideological preferences concerning ownership. Where accredited private universities educate competent teachers, nurses, managers, entrepreneurs, technology specialists, counsellors and other professionals, the resulting capabilities enter the same Jamaican economy and society as graduates from public institutions. Private universities can additionally mobilise tuition, philanthropy and international partnerships to expand national educational capacity without requiring government to finance every institutional cost

directly. Their geographical and flexible delivery structures may also reach students for whom conventional university attendance would be difficult. These contributions make quality assurance more rather than less important because weak private provision would transfer costs to households while producing inadequate human capital. High-quality private provision, conversely, represents an additional national asset.

Research produced by private universities should similarly be incorporated more deliberately into Jamaica's national innovation and policy systems. Competitive national research funds should permit participation based on proposal quality and institutional capacity rather than public or private ownership. Ministries and public agencies could commission research from multidisciplinary consortia incorporating UWI, UTech, NCU, UCC and other qualified institutions where collaboration produces stronger national evidence. Such arrangements would reduce unnecessary institutional rivalry while increasing the country's total research capacity. Private universities could develop distinctive applied-research niches rather than attempting to reproduce the disciplinary structure of large comprehensive universities. Jamaica's limited research resources make strategic complementarity more rational than duplication.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The first recommendation is the establishment of a national higher-education outcomes dashboard administered or coordinated by an appropriate independent public authority. Every accredited institution should report standardised indicators covering admissions, student progression, completion, faculty qualifications, research outputs, graduate employment, professional-examination performance and selected alumni outcomes. Data should be disaggregated by programme, sex, age and other appropriate non-identifying characteristics so that aggregate institutional figures do not conceal major differences. Methodologies should remain consistent across public and private institutions because comparative accountability loses credibility when sectors report fundamentally different indicators. Public reporting would enable students, employers, researchers and government to make evidence-based judgements concerning quality. It would also allow high-performing private institutions to demonstrate excellence through evidence rather than institutional advertising.

The second recommendation concerns academic staff development and research expectations. Private universities should establish transparent academic-rank criteria integrating teaching excellence, scholarship, professional contribution, mentorship and service rather than permitting promotion to depend predominantly on administrative seniority. Research-active faculty require protected time, methodological support, competitive internal grants and incentives for publication in reputable peer-reviewed journals. Teaching-intensive academics should nevertheless be recognised for rigorous pedagogical innovation and professional scholarship rather than forced artificially into publication patterns disconnected from their institutional roles. Joint appointments and research collaborations with other Jamaican and international universities could expand expertise without requiring each institution to reproduce every specialised research facility. Faculty quality would thereby become an intentionally cultivated institutional capability.

The third recommendation concerns student quality and value added. Private universities should retain credible matriculation standards while continuing carefully designed alternative pathways for mature and non-traditional learners. Diagnostic testing at entry could establish baseline competencies in writing, quantitative reasoning, digital literacy and critical thinking, with equivalent assessments near graduation measuring learning gains. Such data would make it possible to distinguish universities that merely enrol strong students from universities that substantially improve student capabilities. Foundation programmes should be evaluated according to subsequent academic performance rather than merely the number of students they enable to enter degrees. This approach would make widening participation compatible with rigorous academic quality.

## DISCUSSION

The evidence does not support either of the two extreme narratives commonly applied to private higher education. It does not support the claim that private universities are necessarily academically inferior because both NCU and UCC have achieved institutional accreditation and possess identifiable academically accomplished lecturers, credible programmes and substantial graduate populations. Nor does it support an unqualified claim that accreditation proves excellence across research, student outcomes and international

influence because important comparative performance data remain unavailable. The strongest interpretation is that Jamaica possesses credible private-university capacity whose quality is real but unevenly documented across the five dimensions investigated. NCU currently benefits from greater historical depth and an established scholarly and alumni footprint, whereas UCC indicates substantial teaching scale, institutional dynamism and a developing research architecture. Both cases show why university quality should be analysed developmentally rather than through public-private stereotypes.

The analysis also reveals that **quality evidence itself is a component of institutional quality**. A university committed to continuous improvement should know who its students are at entry, what they learn, whether they complete, where they work, what employers think of them and how its research influences society. The absence of such information makes institutional decision-making more dependent on intuition and reduces public accountability. UCC's creation of an institutional-effectiveness function explicitly responsible for monitoring teaching, learning, research infrastructure, enrolment and other university activities indicates movement towards this evidence-oriented model. Comparable institutional-research capacity throughout Jamaican higher education would substantially improve national understanding of educational performance. Scopus visibility, graduate-tracer evidence and independent outcome measurement should become complements to accreditation rather than competing definitions of quality.

## LIMITATIONS

This study's principal limitation is its reliance on secondary and publicly accessible evidence, including institutional documents. Although claims were weighted by source independence and university-produced material was treated as institutional rather than independent evidence, public webpages cannot substitute for audited longitudinal datasets or primary evidence from students, graduates, employers and academic staff. The absence of these stakeholder data limits objectivity and prevents direct estimation of learning gain, employer satisfaction, graduate earnings and causal institutional value added. Public evidence is also uneven across NCU and UCC: NCU's century-long lineage and more extensive publicly documented alumni history create greater visibility than UCC's younger graduate network. Bibliometric sources use different coverage rules, so the research-output figures reported here are descriptive signals rather than a valid head-to-head ranking unless a common database and observation period are used. Accordingly, this study evaluates the weight and limits of available evidence rather than producing a definitive league table of Jamaican universities.

A further limitation concerns attribution of graduate achievements to universities. Individuals entering higher education possess pre-existing ability, motivation, socioeconomic resources and social networks, and many subsequently complete additional qualifications elsewhere. The career success of one distinguished alumnus cannot reasonably be attributed entirely to the institution from which that individual first graduated. The same caution applies to research impact because collaborations can involve multiple universities and external organisations. Future quantitative analysis should use graduate-level longitudinal data and bibliometric affiliation records capable of distinguishing association from institutional contribution. The framework developed here is intended to facilitate precisely such future empirical testing.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should use a mixed-method, multi-stakeholder design. A common Scopus observation window should compare total publications, publications per full-time-equivalent academic, field-weighted citation impact, international collaboration and highly cited outputs. In parallel, graduate-tracer data should compare employment, occupational match, earnings, entrepreneurship and postgraduate progression across NCU, UCC and appropriate comparators, while employer surveys should assess communication, critical thinking, technical competence, professionalism and innovation. Student entry and exit assessments should estimate learning gain, and interviews or surveys with academic staff should examine teaching conditions, research support and institutional quality culture. Applying the same instruments, sampling rules and reporting period to both universities would directly address the present study's evidential asymmetry and permit stronger tests of the Private University Quality and Development Framework.

Research should also examine alumni influence through social-network and leadership analysis rather than celebrity-style listings. Institutional alumni databases could be linked, with appropriate privacy protections, to occupational sectors, executive leadership, entrepreneurship, public service, professional associations and international mobility. Researchers could then estimate whether universities disproportionately supply leaders to education, health, business, religion, government, technology or civil society. Similar methods could assess the economic contribution of alumni-owned firms and the extent to which diaspora graduates facilitate trade, investment and knowledge exchange with Jamaica. This would transform alumni influence from an impressionistic quality indicator into a measurable form of national and transnational social capital. Jamaica's private universities provide an especially promising setting for such work because their missions and graduate populations differ substantially.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the quality of Jamaica's private higher-education institutions cannot be assessed credibly through accreditation, reputation or institutional ownership alone. The evidence concerning NCU and UCC indicates nationally recognised quality-assurance systems, identifiable high-level academic expertise, structured admissions standards, substantial graduate populations, influential alumni networks and meaningful though differently developed research activity. These findings contradict simplistic assumptions that private status is synonymous with poor academic quality. At the same time, insufficient public evidence concerning faculty-wide research productivity, student learning gains, graduate earnings, employer evaluations and long-term alumni outcomes prevents the stronger conclusion that all dimensions of private-university performance are demonstrably excellent. Jamaica has progressed further in **assuring minimum institutional quality** than in publicly measuring comparative university performance and societal impact. The distinction between assurance and demonstrated excellence is the most important empirical conclusion of this study.

The paper's principal theoretical contribution is the **Private University Quality and Development Framework**, which connects academic capital, student transformation, graduate economic contribution, alumni influence and knowledge-development impact in a single evaluative model. The framework recognises that a university can create exceptional value by transforming non-traditional students even when its intake is less selective than that of elite institutions. It similarly recognises that teaching-intensive universities can make major developmental contributions without matching research-intensive universities publication for publication, while still requiring authentic scholarly engagement. For Jamaica, NCU indicates the advantages of historical depth, established alumni networks and identifiable research traditions, whereas UCC indicates the potential of institutional scale, flexible delivery, international partnerships and a rapidly developing research architecture. Their future standing will depend increasingly on whether these strengths can be translated into independently measurable learning, scholarship and societal impact. Private higher education should be judged neither indulgently nor prejudicially, but by the intellectual and developmental value it demonstrably creates.

Ultimately, the quality of a Jamaican university should be visible in what happens **between admission and societal impact**. Lecturer qualifications matter because students require intellectually capable teachers, while student-intake quality matters because universities need learners adequately prepared to benefit from advanced education. Graduate employment and economic contribution matter because tertiary education must create productive human capability, and alumni influence matters because university effects continue throughout professional careers and across national borders. Research matters because institutions claiming university status must participate in the production, criticism and application of knowledge rather than functioning solely as credential providers. National development integrates all five dimensions because Jamaica benefits when high-quality teaching produces capable graduates whose scholarship, leadership, enterprises and professional practices subsequently improve society. The ultimate test of private higher education is not whether it is private, but whether the knowledge and human capability it produces create enduring public value.

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## Appendix A. Illustrative NCU/WIC Alumni Cases

The cases are illustrative, not exhaustive, and are retained as supplementary evidence rather than as a ranking of graduate quality.

| No. | NCU/WIC Alumnus/Alumna                | Field                                                                        | Country/Region of Major Influence        | Selected Evidence of Influence                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Significance to NCU Quality Assessment                                                                                                             |
|-----|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | <b>Dr Wilmore C. Webley</b>           | Microbiology, immunology, vaccinology and higher education                   | United States / Jamaica / Global science | BSc in Medical Technology from NCU; Professor of Microbiology and Senior Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; Fulbright Scholar; researcher in infectious disease, immunology and vaccine development. | Particularly strong evidence of NCU undergraduate preparation leading to internationally recognised scientific research and university leadership. |
| 2   | <b>Paul H. Douglas</b>                | Accounting, finance and global religious administration                      | United States / Global                   | WIC graduate; Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, an international church organisation; approximately four decades of denominational financial leadership.                                   | Indicates international financial and organisational leadership by an NCU/WIC graduate.                                                            |
| 3   | <b>Hon. Charles Washington Misick</b> | Government, politics and public administration                               | Turks and Caicos Islands / Caribbean     | WIC alumnus; Premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands.                                                                                                                                                                                               | Provides strong evidence of NCU/WIC alumni reaching the highest level of elected governmental leadership outside Jamaica.                          |
| 4   | <b>Andrew "Andy" Ingraham</b>         | Tourism, hospitality, entrepreneurship and multicultural travel              | United States / The Bahamas / Caribbean  | Distinguished NCU alumnus; founder of the National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators and Developers; influential advocate for Black participation in hotel ownership and tourism.                                                        | Indicates international entrepreneurship and influence in hospitality and tourism.                                                                 |
| 5   | <b>Dr Herbert J. Thompson, CD</b>     | Biochemistry, higher education, university administration and public service | Jamaica / Caribbean / United States      | Graduate of NCU, formerly West Indies College; pursued further studies at La Sierra and Loma Linda Universities and earned a PhD in Biochemistry from UWI;                                                                                          | Indicates the capacity of the WIC/NCU educational tradition to produce graduates who progress into                                                 |

|   |                                  |                                                                                          |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   |                                  |                                                                                          |                         | served as President of NCU and subsequently as Chancellor of the University College of the Caribbean; also served as a selected Commissioner of the Electoral Commission of Jamaica.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | scientific scholarship, senior university leadership and national public service, providing evidence of alumni influence across academic and institutional domains.                                                                                                   |
| 6 | <b>Dr Neville Eden Gallimore</b> | Medicine, politics, public service and national leadership                               | Jamaica / Caribbean     | Alumnus of West Indies College (now NCU); trained as a medical doctor; entered Jamaican representative politics and won seven consecutive parliamentary elections; served for approximately 31 years as an elected Member of Parliament and held senior public leadership responsibilities.                                                                                                            | Provides evidence of the WIC/NCU alumni tradition extending beyond academia and business into medicine, sustained parliamentary service and national leadership, illustrating the institution's contribution to Jamaica's professional and public-service leadership. |
| 7 | <b>Dr Milton D. Morris</b>       | Political science, public-policy research, higher education and institutional leadership | Jamaica / United States | WIC alumnus (Class of 1962); earned a PhD in Political Science from the University of Maryland; served as Assistant/Associate Professor at Southern Illinois University, Ford Foundation Research Fellow, Research Associate/Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, Senior Vice President for Research at the Joint Center for Political Studies, and Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University. | Indicates the international reach of the WIC/NCU educational tradition through advanced scholarship, university teaching, policy research and leadership within prominent US research institutions.                                                                   |
| 8 | <b>Dr Newton U. Cleghorne</b>    | Religion, education and organisational leadership                                        | Jamaica / United States | BA in Theology from WIC; later earned graduate degrees at Andrews University; extensive ministerial, educational and youth-leadership career in Jamaica and the United                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Indicates the transnational religious and educational influence of WIC/NCU.                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|    |                              |                                                                        |                                                         | States.                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |
|----|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9  | <b>Dr Paul Andrew Bourne</b> | Social epidemiology, public health, statistics, education and research | Jamaica / Caribbean / International scholarly community | NCU doctoral alumnus; extensive research and publication record addressing health, education, social science, governance and Jamaican development issues.                                       | Illustrates postgraduate alumni contribution to knowledge production and evidence-based national discourse.                   |
| 10 | <b>Dr Ronald Blake</b>       | Agriculture, youth development and institutional leadership            | Jamaica / Caribbean                                     | NCU doctoral alumnus; senior leadership in the Jamaica 4-H Clubs and agricultural/youth-development initiatives.                                                                                | Indicates application of advanced education to agriculture, youth entrepreneurship and national human-capital development.    |
| 11 | <b>Tishauna N. Mullings</b>  | Social development, entrepreneurship and community transformation      | Jamaica / United Kingdom / Africa                       | NCU alumna and 2012 valedictorian; founder of NexxStepp Lifelong Educational Services; programmes reported to have reached more than 10,500 people; work extends to Jamaica, the UK and Africa. | Strong example of an NCU graduate translating education into international social entrepreneurship and community development. |
| 12 | <b>Dr Linford Pierson</b>    | Government and public administration                                   | Cayman Islands / Caribbean                              | WIC alumnus; former Caymanian government minister and participant in numerous public and private boards.                                                                                        | Indicates alumni contribution to Caribbean governance and institutional leadership.                                           |
| 13 | <b>Dennis Morgan</b>         | Business, hospitality and tourism                                      | Jamaica / Caribbean                                     | WIC alumnus; Jamaican hotelier and businessman.                                                                                                                                                 | Illustrates private-sector entrepreneurship and contribution to a major Jamaican economic sector.                             |
| 14 | <b>Shirlene Henriques</b>    | Nursing and healthcare                                                 | Cayman Islands / Caribbean                              | WIC alumna; recognised for extensive professional service in nursing in the Cayman Islands.                                                                                                     | Indicates the regional export and influence of NCU/WIC-trained human capital in healthcare.                                   |
| 15 | <b>Dr Melva Spence</b>       | Counselling psychology and advocacy                                    | Jamaica / International professional sphere             | NCU alumna; counselling psychologist and advocate; selected as NCU's 2023 "Product Sample."                                                                                                     | Illustrates professional influence in psychology, counselling and human development.                                          |
| 16 | <b>Stennett H. Brooks</b>    | Religious administration and organisational                            | United States                                           | NCU/WIC-associated alumnus; former president and long-serving treasurer of the Northeastern                                                                                                     | Illustrates senior organisational leadership in a substantial North                                                           |

|    |                                  |                                             |                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                      |
|----|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                  | leadership                                  |                                 | Conference of Seventh-day Adventists; active in New York alumni leadership.                                                                                                                  | American religious institution.                                                                      |
| 17 | <b>Dr John Duncan</b>            | Education and educational leadership        | Bermuda / Caribbean             | Earned a PhD in Educational Leadership from NCU in 2012; long-serving educator in Bermuda's public-education system; research interests include Black male achievement and moral leadership. | Indicates the international reach of NCU's doctoral programmes in educational leadership.            |
| 18 | <b>Dalvin Dwayne Hill</b>        | Information technology and higher education | United States / Jamaica         | Earned an Associate degree in Computer Science at NCU; subsequently became, at age 21, the youngest person reported at the time to complete a master's degree at Mercy College in New York.  | Illustrates academic progression and international postgraduate achievement following NCU education. |
| 19 | <b>Pearline Dawes Higgins</b>    | Education                                   | Jamaica / Caribbean             | NCU alumna and retired educator; recipient of NCU's President's Medallion.                                                                                                                   | Represents the institution's long-standing contribution to education and professional service.       |
| 20 | <b>Gary Gardener</b>             | Technical and vocational education          | Antigua and Barbuda / Caribbean | NCU alumnus; has served as a second marker and moderator for TVET curriculum at the University of the West Indies in Antigua and Barbuda.                                                    | Indicates regional educational and TVET contribution.                                                |
| 21 | <b>Casmina Bryan</b>             | Education                                   | Jamaica                         | NCU education graduate; recognised as Jamaica's 2024 Teacher of the Year.                                                                                                                    | Provides an externally visible indicator of graduate quality in the national education system.       |
| 22 | <b>Reverend Wayan Wellington</b> | Religion and youth leadership               | Jamaica / Caribbean             | NCU postgraduate alumnus; leadership in church and youth-development structures.                                                                                                             | Indicates influence in religious administration and youth development.                               |
| 23 | <b>Dr Witford Reid</b>           | Medicine and science                        | Jamaica / International         | Earned an Associate degree in Biology from WIC in 1983; subsequently obtained medical training internationally and returned to teach microbiology and physiology at WIC.                     | Illustrates progression from NCU/WIC science education into medicine and tertiary teaching.          |

|    |                                       |                                                    |               |                                                                                                                                  |  |
|----|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| 24 | <b>Erma Rosamond Parchment Brooks</b> | Education and youth development                    | United States | WIC graduate; served for approximately 41 years in youth and education work in the Northeastern Conference in the United States. |  |
| 25 | <b>Dr Vivienne Quarrie</b>            | Education, leadership, administration and religion | Jamaica       | Interim President of NCU from June 16, 2026 to August 31, 2026.                                                                  |  |

## Appendix B. Illustrative UCC Alumni Cases

The cases are illustrative, not exhaustive. Honorary degree recipients are excluded unless an earned UCC qualification is independently documented.

| No. | UCC alumnus/<br>alumna | Qualification/<br>connection   | Field                                       | Evidence of<br>influence or<br>achievement                                                                                                                                     | Relevance to<br>university quality                                                                                  |
|-----|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | <b>Ammoya Patrick</b>  | UCC alumna                     | International affairs, diplomacy            | Named Most Outstanding Diplomat at the 2025 Best Diplomats United Nations Simulation Conference in the United States, competing among more than 70 delegates from 38 countries | Provides direct evidence of an alumna attaining international recognition in diplomacy and global-policy simulation |
| 2   | <b>Lashawn Mills</b>   | Bachelor's degree in Marketing | Entrepreneurship, marketing, public service | Co-owner of Bricks Chemical Distributors; certified digital marketer; former Jamaican Youth Parliamentarian; Justice of the Peace                                              | Indicates entrepreneurship, civic participation and application of marketing education                              |
| 3   | <b>Euvine P. Dare</b>  | BSc in Business Administration | Business and management                     | Advanced to a senior position in a major private-sector organisation after UCC graduation and subsequently completed an MBA in the United Kingdom                              | Indicates occupational mobility and international postgraduate progression                                          |
| 4   | <b>Skeita Smith</b>    | BSc in Marketing, 2009         | Entrepreneurship and automotive sector      | Business owner operating Ideas to Business and Couture Motors Limited                                                                                                          | Illustrates entrepreneurship and application of business/marketing education                                        |
| 5   | <b>Ralston</b>         | UCC degree                     | Information technology                      | Six-time Honour                                                                                                                                                                | Illustrates graduate                                                                                                |

|    |                                                |                                                          |                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                      |
|----|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Campbell</b>                                |                                                          |                                              | Roll student who subsequently worked as a software technician while pursuing civic leadership                                                                                         | participation in Jamaica's technology workforce                                      |
| 6  | <b>Lurline Halliman</b>                        | BSc in Human Resource Management, <i>magna cum laude</i> | Human-resource management and administration | More than 20 years of administrative experience supporting senior managers in public and private organisations; recognised for organisational efficiency and professional performance | Indicates professional and organisational contribution                               |
| 7  | <b>Rusheyne Lovindeer Roberts</b>              | UCC alumna                                               | Professional/community leadership            | Identified by the UCC Alumni Association among alumni contributing financially to scholarships                                                                                        | Indicates alumni philanthropy and reinvestment in tertiary access                    |
| 8  | <b>Oneil Dowe</b>                              | UCC alumnus                                              | Professional/community leadership            | Identified among UCC Alumni Association scholarship donors                                                                                                                            | Illustrates graduate contribution to educational opportunity for subsequent students |
| 9  | <b>Sean Thelwell</b>                           | UCC student/alumnus-associated graduate community        | Logistics and operations management          | Remembered by UCC for professionalism and academic commitment; institution established the Sean Thelwell Memorial Scholarship in Logistics and Operations Management.                 | Indicates institutional recognition of professional and academic character           |
| 10 | <b>UCC entrepreneurial alumni collectively</b> | Multiple programmes                                      | Entrepreneurship and SMEs                    | Alumni Association maintains relationships with graduate-linked and partner enterprises across design, technology, catering, automotive services, consultancy and related sectors.    |                                                                                      |