

HOW TO GET YOUR SCHOOL ONLINE IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

This applies to government and government assisted schools of Trinidad and Tobago

As a teacher at a Trinidad primary school, I found it quite challenging to learn the jargon and navigate my way through the process of getting my school online in the midst of COVID19. It took me weeks and after many tutorials read and YouTube videos watched, along with the assistance of some very kind-hearted individuals (Mr. Patrick and Mr. Dale Dolly) along the way I was successful in creating exactly what we wanted for our school. I do hope that the following makes your process a lot easier.

THE STEPS BELOW WILL HELP YOU ACQUIRE A DOMAIN NAME, SET UP A WEBSITE AND APPLY FOR G SUITE FOR EDUCATION.

1. Creating an online presence can begin with creating social media pages (Facebook, Instagram) for your school to quickly get messages/notices/information out to your followers as well as highlight events and post memories of school activities.
2. If you are interested in something more official like a school website or an online learning platform for your school then the following steps are for you.
 - a. Firstly, you would need to acquire a **domain name** to work towards having a website and learning platform. The Trinidad and Tobago Network Information Centre (TTNIC) manages the registration of domain names within the TT (Trinidad and Tobago) Top Level Domain. Third Level Domains under **edu.tt** are cost free with free hosting for local, registered, educational institutions and can be registered at www.edu.tt.
 - i. Go to the website provided above and click on search. Type in the name of the domain name you would like to have for your school. For example, you can use initials for your school or the full name (MRCS.edu.tt or maravalrc.edu.tt). When you click search again it will tell you if that name is already in use by another school or if it is available for you to use.
 - ii. If the name is available and you would like to use it then go back to www.edu.tt and click on register. Enter your domain name in the empty field and select the type of school from the drop box below. Then hit the click button.
 - iii. To complete the registration process you need to email a letter from your principal authorizing the application. This letter should be scanned and emailed to **admin@nic.tt**. Once received and approved the domain (and hosting) will be activated.
 - iv. You will receive an email from admin@nic.tt confirming that your domain has been activated
 - b. Once you have acquired a domain name now you can **create a website**.
 - i. Go to <https://sites.google.com/new>
 - ii. Choose from the template gallery or choose a blank page to start working on your website.
 - iii. If you need assistance creating your site you can find tutorials on YouTube like this one <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnr-0UC50Y> or you can use the help section of google sites and be guided by a written tutorial.

- iv. Once you have previewed your site you will need to publish it. You should preview your site as it would look on a computer and mobile device. The preview button shows you both views.
 - v. After your site has been published you will now need to connect your **domain name** to your **website**. The help section of Google Sites will tell you how to “Use a custom URL for your site”. You can also find a tutorial on YouTube like <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOLxPWOGYWs>
 - vi. Go to Google Search Console and enter your domain name
 - vii. NOTE when required to put in your domain name that’s is what you received from www.edu.tt. (yourschoolname.edu.tt)
 - viii. If Google does not recognise the user account as having access to the domain name you will have to verify domain ownership by **DNS records**. Copy the Google site verification code given. This is where www.edu.tt comes in again.
 - ix. Send an email to admin@nic.tt again this time asking for their assistance. Let them know that you have used Google sites to create your school website and that you are now attempting to connect your domain name to that site. Kindly ask that they paste/upload the verification code you were given by Google sites into your domain/DNS records. It may take some time for the records to go through so check back in a day or two after admin@nic.tt confirms that the record has been added on your behalf.
 - x. Once the record has been added you still need to verify the domain so go back to Google Search Console enter your domain name (MRCS.edu.tt) again and try to verify.
 - xi. Once the domain has been verified it can be added to the site you created for the school. Go to google site and open up your school website. Follow the example given in this tutorial video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOLxPWOGYWs> **at 4minutes 17seconds in the video** -Go to settings, click on Custom URL’s, put in you domain name with “www.” in front of it.
 - xii. You once again need the assistance of your domain provider www.edu.tt. You need to email admin@nic.tt again. Kindly inform them that for your custom URL to map to your site on new Google Sites, you need to create a CNAME entry with your domain host. Place the following information into your email:
 1. **Create a new CNAME entry.**
 2. **Enter the subdomain name, for example, the "www" of www.YourURL.com.**
 3. **Type in the host name ghs.googlehosted.com. This will point your URL to your Google site.**
 - xiii. Once admin@nic.tt emails you and confirms that your above request has been done you can go into your browser and type your school’s new web address – www.schoolname.edu.tt (you are checking to see if your website can be found by searching online or typing the direct address)
 - xiv. If it does not come up give it some time and try again in a day or so.
- C. Once your website has been set up and your domain name is officially assigned to your website, now you need to apply for **G Suite for Education** so that your entire school can be run on the **Google Classroom platform** for free.
- i. Go to https://edu.google.com/products/gsuite-for-education/?modal_active=none in order to sign up for G Suite for Education.

- ii. Follow the onscreen guide to sign up – you will be asked for:
 1. The school name and type of school
 2. Your school website and number of students
 3. Your country and school phone number (868-123-456)
 4. Your school address (physical location)
 5. Your personal email address can be used here so that Google contacts you directly as the applicant OR the school email address if you have access to it to check for emails from Google. If you choose to put the school email use an email address that is easily accessible and currently in use by the school, one which the school had before applying for a domain etc.
 6. Your domain name – click “yes I have one that I can use” then enter the domain name received in STEP 2-A-iv above (MRCS.edu.tt)
 7. Your name as the applicant on behalf of your school
 8. Create your sign in information as the admin for the G Suite (admin can be changed after you set up the account)
- iii. Once your application is complete you have a 14 day trial period while your application is processed (unfortunately this may take longer due to COVID19). You will also be required to verify your domain. Follow instruction here to verify your domain https://support.google.com/a/answer/183895#generic_TXT
- iv. You may need the assistance of your domain provider (admin@nic.tt) again to verify the domain. Simply email the instruction/codes/records etc that you are provided with so that they may enter it into your domain.
- v. Google will email you (the applicant) confirming your application and requesting information to complete your application process

To qualify for G Suite for Education, we require that organizations meet the following criteria:

1. K-12 or higher educational institution
2. Non-profit (If US based, 501(c)3 accreditation should be provided)
3. Accredited by a generally accepted accreditation body.

In order for us to confirm your eligibility, please respond to this email with the following information (in English):

1. Name of your school or organization;
2. Type of education provided;
3. Official website of the institution
4. Institution's official accreditation document stating educational status (scanned copy);
5. Official document stating non profit status (Please provide a scanned copy);
6. Email Address of school's management (e.g. Principal).

In addition, please provide us your contact Email (not related to G Suite account) and Your Title/Role/Position/Affiliation with the educational institution you're applying for.

Also, kindly look for your School name from any government directory and send us the Screenshot as well:

If this does not work for you, please let us know by responding to this message. For clear examples of what is and is not eligible, please visit this site (<https://support.google.com/a/answer/134628?hl=en>). Our hours of operation are between 7 AM - 4 PM PST, Monday to Friday.

Have a wonderful day!

- vi.
- vii. In replying to the email, you may find it difficult to get the school's official accreditation document stating educational status and the official document stating non-profit status. You may use the Ministry of Education official listing to confirm your school. Attach a screenshot of your school on the ministry list in your email to Google, after you place the necessary link in your email as a response to their request
 1. Primary schools
http://www2.ttconnect.gov.tt/gortt/wcm/connect/98231a004b3a6b2f9376f7d0ad85b8bc/MOEd_Primary_Schools.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=98231a004b3a6b2f9376f7d0ad85b8bc

2. Secondary schools

http://www2.ttconnect.gov.tt/gortt/wcm/connect/a893be804b3a6b48947df7d0ad85b8bc/MOEd_Secondary_Schools.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

- viii. Once you supply Google with all the requested information they will reply with approval or denial of your request. Your principal will also be emailed to confirm that you have been given permission to apply on behalf of your school and that it will be used for the benefit of your ENTIRE SCHOOL.
 - ix. Once approved you may now set up your school for G Suite for Education. Follow any of the online tutorial to set up your school and become familiar with the possibilities. This allows you to give each staff member a school related email account as well as all students at your school.
3. I hope that these steps have been helpful and that you are successful in your attempts to get your school online.
 4. I would like to thank Mr. Patrick at www.edu.tt and Mr. Dale Dolly at Trinity College Moka for their patience and assistance in this process.