



THE CARIBBEAN ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY FOR EDUCATION IN MEDICINE AND OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Summary of the Accreditation Procedures for Established Schools

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Table of Contents

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Scope of the Document | 1 |
| Initiating the Accreditation Process | 1 |
| Pre-survey Preparation | 1 |
| Responsibilities of the CAAM-HP Secretariat | 1 |
| Responsibilities of the School | 2 |
| The Survey Team..... | 2 |
| Role of the Students | 3 |
| The Survey Report | 3 |
| CAAM-HP Meetings | 3 |
| Accreditation Determinations | 3 |
| The Appeal Process..... | 4 |
| Complaints to the CAAM-HP | 4 |
| Appendix - Documents available from the CAAM-HP | 5 |

SCOPE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is intended to provide schools with a short summary of some important aspects of the accreditation process as carried out by the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions (CAAM-HP).

It is not intended to be comprehensive and established schools seeking accreditation are advised to examine the more detailed '*Procedures of the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions*'. This and other relevant documents are available for download from the CAAM-HP website <http://www.caam-hp.org>. (Appendix pg. 5)

Please note that new schools (that is, schools in their initial phase of development) seeking CAAM-HP accreditation should consult the document entitled '*Accreditation Guidelines for New and Developing Schools*' with special reference to the section 'Minimum Requirements for Consideration by the CAAM-HP for a New School.' This document is available on the CAAM-HP website <http://www.caam-hp.org>.

INITIATING THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Medical, Dental, Veterinary and Nursing Schools desirous of being accredited by the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions (CAAM-HP) should indicate their request in writing to the Secretariat of the Authority. It is unlikely that the accreditation process can be completed in less than fifteen months; therefore, requests should be submitted as early as possible.

Once the request is made, the Secretariat will advise the school of the preparatory steps and responsibilities of both parties in the accreditation process. (See '*Guidelines for Accreditation Survey Visits*')

PRE-SURVEY PREPARATION

Responsibilities of the CAAM-HP Secretariat

In the case of established schools applying for the first time, the CAAM-HP Secretariat follows up with the school after the process has been initiated to establish the dates for the site visit. Schools are given instructions prior to the survey and can obtain guidance from the Secretariat regarding compilation of the education database in sufficient time for the school to complete the institutional self-study. The required database forms in editable format can be downloaded from the CAAM-HP website <http://www.caam-hp.org>. A full visit will normally begin on a Sunday afternoon through the following Friday afternoon but this varies depending on the size of the school and location of clinical training sites. Limited visits should end earlier.

Established schools that have already gone through the accreditation process and become due for another accreditation exercise are aware of their responsibilities and would have had prior knowledge of the year in which the next accreditation visit is due.

In the case of a focused limited survey the CAAM-HP notifies the school six months before the visit about the elements of a pre-survey mini-database addressing the items of CAAM-HP's concern to be evaluated on the visit.

Members of the survey team are appointed by the CAAM-HP Secretariat before or as soon as possible after the dates for the visit have been agreed on. A team will have a chair and a secretary; full survey teams may have up to six additional members and a limited survey team will usually have a single member besides the chair and secretary. Normally, at least one member of the survey team is drawn from an internationally accredited medical school in the United Kingdom or North America. The survey team membership will represent a balance of practitioners in the professional discipline, basic science and clinical educators. The curriculum vitae of the members of the survey team are sent to the dean as soon as it (the team) is established. The dean may challenge the participation of any team member for possible conflict of interest.

Three months before the site visit, the survey team and the school are sent information and instructions from the Secretariat about the visit schedule, the conduct of the visit, and compilation of the survey report.

Responsibilities of the School

The school completes the education database within four to six months so that it can be used as the basis for the institutional self-study. The dean appoints a self-study steering committee and subcommittees corresponding to the main elements of the database (e.g., Institutional Setting, Educational Programme, The Students, Faculty, Educational Resources, etc.) The database and a summary of the self-study are submitted to the CAAM-HP Secretariat at least three months before the site visit. A single hard copy of all documents should be submitted to the Secretariat. Schools must also submit electronic copies on flash drives (or other appropriate portable external devices) or make them available through secure, file sharing, web-based applications to facilitate circulation among survey team members. Instructions for conducting the institutional self-study are found in the guides to the Institutional Self-Study for Programmes of Education in the appropriate discipline.

The mini-database prepared for limited visits is completed in time for dispatch to the CAAM-HP Secretariat at least six weeks before the visit.

THE SURVEY TEAM

Survey team members (see above) are selected by the Secretariat from a pool of practitioners in the appropriate discipline, basic science and clinical educators, educational researchers and administrators.

The survey team conducts a site visit to verify information compiled in the school's education database, clarify any issues, view first-hand the environment and facilities for learning and meet with administrators, faculty members, and students. At the start of the visit, the team will meet with the dean and the school's executive to explain its purpose and gain input from them. At the

end of the visit, the team will again meet with the dean and school's executive to summarise its findings about the programme's strengths and areas of non-compliance.

The survey process, appointment of survey teams, survey report, and documents considered by the CAAM-HP in reaching accreditation decisions are outlined in *'Procedures of the CAAM-HP'*.

ROLE OF THE STUDENTS

The document *'Students' Role in the CAAM-HP'* describes the important role that students play in the accreditation process. Students in a school preparing for an accreditation survey are expected to organise their own analysis of the educational programme, courses and curriculum, student support services, and the learning environment. They should be members of various committees conducting the institutional self-study. Groups of students will also be scheduled to meet with surveyors during the school's site visit.

THE SURVEY REPORT

The team secretary incorporates the written findings from each team member into a final report that describes the programme of education and the school's compliance with each of the standards of accreditation as contained in the appropriate Standards for the Accreditation of Medical and other individual health professions programmes. Further information on the preparation, review, and processing of survey reports, and the requirements for accreditation determinations can be found in *'Procedures of the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions'*.

CAAM-HP MEETINGS

The CAAM-HP will meet once a year and at other times as necessary.

ACCREDITATION DETERMINATIONS

The CAAM-HP bases its accreditation determinations on the final survey report. In CAAM-HP's letter of accreditation, schools are asked to submit annual progress reports indicating steps taken to address specific areas of weakness or non-compliance, or describe the results of programme changes underway. Limited, focused surveys may be scheduled when an on-site visit is deemed necessary.

In some instances, the period of renewed accreditation is contingent upon review of a progress report, or on the findings of a limited site visit by a team of evaluators or the CAAM-HP Secretariat. All of these matters are described in the document, *'Procedures of the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions'*.

THE APPEAL PROCESS

Schools may appeal an adverse CAAM-HP decision within seven days of receipt of CAAM-HP's letter. Actions of the CAAM-HP that are subject to appeal and the procedures for such appeals are laid out in Appendix H of the document *'Procedures of the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions'*.

COMPLAINTS TO THE CAAM-HP

Policies and procedures for handling complaints to the CAAM-HP about programme quality are described in the document *'Procedures of the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions.'* Any person concerned about the quality of an undergraduate medical, dental, veterinary or degree nursing education programme accredited by the CAAM-HP may contact the Secretariat to discuss lodging a complaint.

Substantiated complaints will be investigated only if they constitute non-compliance with accreditation standards. The CAAM-HP will not intervene on behalf of an individual complainant regarding, for example, matters of admission, appointment, promotion, or dismissal of faculty or students. The CAAM-HP Secretariat should be contacted for information about guidelines and procedures.

Complaints about the CAAM-HP itself, its practices and standards, or the conduct of surveys should be forwarded to the Secretariat.

Appendix - Documents available from the CAAM-HP

- Summary of the Accreditation Procedures for Established Schools
- Procedures of the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions
- Standards for the Accreditation of Medical Schools in the Caribbean Community
- Standards for the Accreditation of Dental Schools in the Caribbean Community
- Standards for the Accreditation of Veterinary Schools in the Caribbean Community
- Standards for the Accreditation of Degree Nursing Programmes in the Caribbean Community
- Standards for the Accreditation of Nutrition and Dietetics Degree Programmes in the Caribbean Community
- Accreditation Guidelines for New and Developing Schools
- Students' Role in the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions
- Guidelines for Accreditation Survey Visits
- Guide for Writing a Report on a Visit of a Survey Team
- Guide to the Institutional Self-Study for Programmes of Education in Medicine
- Guide to the Institutional Self-Study for Programmes of Education in Dental Medicine
- Guide to the Institutional Self-Study for Programmes of Education in Veterinary Medicine
- Guide to the Institutional Self-Study for Degree Programmes of Education in Nursing
- Instructions for Completing the CAAM-HP Medical Education Database and Institutional Self-Study
- Instructions for Completing the CAAM-HP Dental Education Database and Institutional Self-Study
- Instructions for Completing the CAAM-HP Veterinary Education Database and Institutional Self-Study
- Instructions for Completing the CAAM-HP Nursing Education Database and Institutional Self-Study
- Medical Education Database
- Dental Education Database
- Veterinary Education Database
- Nursing Education Database
- Database Form for Required Courses and Clerkships for Medicine
- Database Form for Required Courses and Clerkships for Dental Medicine
- Database Form for Required Courses and Clerkships for Veterinary Medicine
- Database Form for Required Courses and Clerkships for Nursing
- Annual Medical School Questionnaire
- Annual Dental School Questionnaire
- Annual Veterinary School Questionnaire

All of the above documents are available on the CAAM-HP website www.caam-hp.org