

Ross University School of Medicine

Accreditation with Conditions extended

September 2021 Update

The progress report from Ross University School of Medicine was presented to the CAAM-HP at its meeting held September 22-23, 2021. The Authority considered and accepted the report. It expressed deep concern at the lengthy period of time since the School had had its accreditation status re-evaluated, even though this was due to circumstances beyond everyone's control. The Board was hopeful that a site visit can be carried out in 2022 and therefore reminded Ross University School of Medicine to prepare for the long overdue evaluation by updating all the necessary documentation, including the Self Study.

May 2020 Update: *Accreditation Review Pending*

The case of Ross University School of Medicine is a unique one. The school was due for a full accreditation exercise early 2018. Ross was prepared for what would have been its third full accreditation survey of its basic science operations on the island of Dominica and clinical teaching sites in the United States when Hurricane Maria devastated the island in September 2017. Among other things, the school's physical facilities were extensively damaged, forcing the school to make alternate temporary arrangements for student accommodation and teaching off island and forcing the cancellation of the visit. Subsequently, the school was relocated to the island of Barbados in 2018. CAAM-HP conducted visits to the new site to determine its suitability and readiness for teaching in 2019 and the school, thereafter, was advised to prepare for a full accreditation review early 2020.

The new dates for the site visit were set for March 20-28, 2020 and all arrangements were in place. However, CAAM-HP has had to postpone the visit to Ross this time as a result of the threat and impact of the pandemic on health and travel. The visit will be rescheduled as soon as travel restrictions have been lifted and CAAM-HP is satisfied that there is no threat to the health and safety of its site visitors and staff.

The current accreditation status of Ross University School of Medicine's MD programme, i.e., Accreditation with Conditions, stands until a further determination is made following the next site visit.

July 2019 Update

The progress report from Ross University School of Medicine was presented to the CAAM-HP at its meeting held July 25-27, 2019. The Authority considered and accepted the progress report but reminded the institution that the Authority's processes must be followed and urged the school to focus its attention on actions required to address the issues identified, including tracking outcomes to ensure that introduced changes have been effective.

The school is preparing its documentation for the site visit due in early 2020.

July 2018 Update: *Accreditation with Conditions extended until December 2019*

The CAAM-HP at its meeting held July 29-31, 2018 considered and accepted the May 2018 progress report in response to issues previously flagged and expressed concern about outstanding matters.

The Authority was also presented with the following:

- (a) the university's situation regarding the significant impact of Hurricane Maria on its operations in Dominica and the planned relocation to a site in Barbados;
- (b) a request for an extension of the accreditation status in light of the above.

The Authority agreed to extend accreditation until December 2019. During the period, CAAM-HP will conduct focussed site visits to determine the suitability of the site in Barbados to accommodate students and also to determine the school's readiness for a full visit in 2020.

July 2017 Update

The CAAM-HP at its meeting held July 20-22, 2017 considered and accepted the 2017 progress report, noting that some issues had not been satisfactorily addressed including an analysis of attrition rates and the quality assurance of the elective rotations.

The Authority noted that the next full site visit is due in 2018.

July 2016 Update

The CAAM-HP at its meeting held July 27-29, 2016 considered and accepted the progress report of May 2016 in response to CAAM-HP's letters of July 28, 2014 and July 25, 2015 as well as the report of the January 2014 site visit.

The Authority noted the progress made to address the issues identified in its letter and the site visit report and looks forward to receiving the annual progress report for 2017.

July 2015 Update

The CAAM-HP at its meeting held July 23-25, 2015 considered and accepted the progress report of April 2015.

The meeting noted that good progress had been made in addressing issues cited in the site visit report of 2014. However, there were still areas that required further detail such as research and how the criteria for research were being used for faculty promotion. The meeting also felt that research activity was still quite low and that more information was needed on the role of faculty mentors as to whether they were from the clinical sciences or both clinical and basic sciences. In addition, the attrition rate still needed to be further analysed and addressed.

CAAM-HP looks forward to receiving the annual progress report for 2016.

July 2014 Determination: *Accredited with Conditions, 2014-2018*

The CAAM-HP thanked the Ross University School of Medicine for the work done in preparing the accreditation instruments and the arrangements made for the visiting team to the Medical School, January 18-25, 2014.

The CAAM-HP at its meeting held July 28, 2014 considered and accepted the site visit report of the *ad hoc* assessment team comprising:

1. Dr Stephen Ball
2. Professor Robert Carroll
3. Dr Damian Cohall
4. Professor Russell Pierre (Team Secretary)
5. Dr Rhonda Sealey-Thomas
6. Professor Samuel Leinster (Team Chair)

Decision: The meeting accorded accreditation to the Ross University School of Medicine's programme for four years, 2014-2018 with the condition that the issues flagged in the survey report and in this letter are addressed, and reported on in the school's annual reports to CAAM-HP in 2015 recognising that some of the issues flagged can be addressed within a relatively short period of time.

October 2013 Update

The CAAM-HP thanked Ross University for its progress report of August 2013 and commended the university for its efforts to address issues and acknowledged new efforts to improve the student experience.

The CAAM-HP looks forward to the accreditation visit in January 2014.

June 2012 Update

The CAAM-HP at its meeting held June 22-23, 2012 considered the progress report and commended the University for the steps taken to address the issues identified in earlier correspondence. The CAAM-HP also communicated the following concerns:

1. What are the factors which led to the improved pass rate among first-time takers of the USMLE Step I?
2. What opportunities for repeat are there for those students who fail the USMLE Step I on the first attempt?
3. Clarification of the decelerated curriculum track option is required.

June 2011 Update

The CAAM-HP in considering the progress report at its meeting, June 24-25, 2011 sought explanation of the following:

- the high attrition rate in the first year of the programme
- the ‘non-academic regulatory issues’ in respect of the closed Bahamas site
- any change of ownership of the University

July 2010 Update

CAAM-HP, at its meeting held July 2010, considered the 2010 progress report and noted that the areas of concern identified were not addressed in the report.

May 2009 Determination: *Accredited with Conditions, 2009-2013*

Ross University is an offshore University located on the island of Dominica in the Eastern Caribbean. The university had its medical education programme assessed from June 7-14, 2008 by a six member team which included the following persons:

1. Dr. Kim Blake
2. Dr. Marhtelise Eersel
3. Dr. Trevor McCartney
4. Dr. Jørgen Nystrup
5. Dr. Sharon Peters
6. Dr. Robert Carroll (Team Chair)

CAAM-HP at its meeting on May 29-30, 2009 considered and accepted the report by the *ad hoc* assessment team as well as Ross University's Responses to the request for additional information.

Decision: CAAM-HP, noted that there was substantial compliance with its standards but cognisant of concerns expressed in the survey report, determined that accreditation with conditions be granted to the Ross University for the period 2009-2013. Ross University School of Medicine is expected to produce annual reports addressing the areas of concern. The next full accreditation survey will be carried out in 2013.

Ross University School of Medicine uses the USMLE 1 and 2 examinations as its graduating point and CAAM-HP has recommended to CARICOM countries that graduates of Ross University should do the Caribbean Association of Medical Councils (CAMC) examination or its equivalent before registration for independent practise in their countries.