

ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES

**for the
Caribbean Accreditation Authority**

for Education in Medicine

and other

Health Professions

CAAM-2 -- 2007

**For further information, contact:
The CAAM Secretariat
P.O. Box 5167, Kingston 6, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 927-4765
Fax: (876) 927-6781**

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Acknowledgement. The Liaison Committee on Medical Education of the United States and Canada has given permission to the Caribbean Accreditation Authority to use the format for adaptation of their document entitled 'Accreditation Procedures [LCME] 2002'.

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Initiating Accreditation

Medical, Dental and Veterinary Schools desirous of being accredited by the Caribbean Accreditation Authority should write requesting their accreditation to the Secretariat of the Authority at P.O. Box 5167, Kingston 6, Jamaica. It is unlikely that the accreditation process can be completed in less than a year, therefore requests should be submitted as soon as possible.

Pre-survey Preparation

By the CAAM Secretariat. Twelve to eighteen months beforehand, the CAAM Secretariat contacts the medical, dental or veterinary school to establish the dates for the site visit. A full visit will normally be arranged from a Sunday afternoon through the following Wednesday afternoon; limited visits should end a day earlier. Schools will be sent materials and instructions 12 months before the survey, so that they can compile an education database and undertake an institutional self-study. Completion of the education database can be facilitated by the Secretariat providing the database on computer diskette or by downloading the material from the CAAM web site.

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

Members of the survey team are appointed by the CAAM Secretariat before or as soon after as possible after the dates for the visit have been set. A team will have a chair and a secretary; full survey teams have two or three additional members and a limited survey team will usually have a single member besides the chair and secretary. At least one member of the survey team will be drawn from an international accreditation authority in the Commonwealth or the USA. The survey team membership will represent a balance of practitioners in the professional discipline, basic science and clinical educators. The composition of the team is made known to the dean as soon as it is established. The dean of the school may challenge any team member for possible conflict of interest.

Three months before the site visit, the survey team and the school are mailed information and

instructions about the visit schedule, the conduct of the visit, and compiling the survey report.

By the school. The school completes the medical, dental or veterinary education database within three or four months after it is received, 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 mailed to the CAAM secretariat (with enough copies for the members of the team) at least three months before the site visit. Instructions are found in the *Guide to the Institutional Self-Study for Programmes in Education in the appropriate discipline*.

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

The Survey Team

Members of survey teams are appointed by the CAAM secretariat at least three months before the site visit. Members composing the survey teams (see section above) are selected from a pool of practitioners in the appropriate discipline, basic science and clinical educators, educational researchers and administrators.

The survey team conducts a site survey to verify and update information compiled in the school's education database, clarify any issues that are unclear, view the environment and facilities for learning first-hand, and meet with administrators, faculty members, and students. The team will meet with the dean to explain its purpose and gain input in a conference at the beginning of the site visit, and meet with the dean and campus chief executive to summarize its findings about the programme's strengths and areas of non-compliance at the completion of the visit. The survey process, appointment of survey teams, survey report, and documents considered by the CAAM in reaching accreditation decisions are explained in the *'Procedures of the CAAM.'*

Role of The Students

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

The team secretary will collate written findings from each team member into a survey report that describes the programme of education and accounts for the school's compliance with each of the standards of accreditation as contained in the appropriate *'Standards for the Accreditation of Medical, Dental or Veterinary Schools in the Caribbean Community.'* The preparation, review, and processing of survey reports, and the information considered for accreditation determinations can be found in *'Procedures of the CAAM.'*

CAAM Meetings

The CAAM will meet once a year and at other times as determined by the Secretariat.

Accreditation Determinations

The CAAM bases its accreditation determination on the survey report, supplemented as necessary by information contained in the medical, dental or veterinary education database and the institutional self-study. Details of the CAAM's deliberations, acceptance of evidence, consideration of progress reports, and reporting of decisions are to be found in the document '*Procedures of the CAAM.*'

The usual period of full accreditation is six years. Schools may be asked to submit one or more progress reports in the interval, to address steps taken to correct specific areas of non-compliance, or describe the results of programme changes underway. Interim, 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 site visit by a team of evaluators or the CAAM secretariat. All of these matters are described in the document, '*Procedures of the CAAM.*'

Appeal Process

Schools (programmes) may appeal CAAM actions affecting their accreditation status. The appeal process consists of two steps:

- 1) review by an independent *ad hoc* review committee, and
- 2) CAAM review with or without an appeal hearing.

Actions of the CAAM subject to appeal include assignment of probationary status, withdrawal of accreditation, denial of accreditation, or refusal to consider for accreditation. The procedures for appeal are given in Appendix F of the document '*Procedures of the CAAM.*'

Complaints to the CAAM

Policies and procedures for handling complaints to the CAAM about institutional or programme quality are given in the document '*Procedures of the CAAM.*' Any person concerned about the quality of an undergraduate medical, dental, or veterinary education programme accredited by the CAAM may contact the Secretariat to discuss lodging a complaint. Only those complaints will be investigated that, if substantiated, may constitute non-compliance with accreditation standards. The CAAM 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 Secretariat should be contacted for information about guidelines and procedures.

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