



Annual report 2020

Introduction

ACCM is an independent, not for profit organisation based in the Republic of Ireland. ACCM is invited by Governments of countries that may not have a national medical accreditation body, to act on their behalf in relation to the accreditation of medical education programmes leading to the MD degree. In the majority of medical schools currently under accreditation by ACCM, the student body is drawn predominantly from North America where the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) is the recognised authority for the accreditation of medical education programmes leading to a medical degree. Therefore, ACCM has developed standards of accreditation that are closely aligned with those of the LCME.

ACCM requires an accreditation agreement with each government appointing ACCM as its medical accrediting body that designates the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both parties. ACCM's activities are not confined to the Caribbean and ACCM currently has one accredited medical school in Jordan and a second is at an advanced stage in the Accreditation process.

Inspection visits to medical school pre-clinical, clinical, and administrative sites in the U.S., U.K. and Jordan are undertaken by members of the Commission. The ACCM Board meets twice a year and at intervals as required. During 2020, due to Covid-19 related travel restrictions, all meetings were conducted by videoconference.

ACCM submits inspection reports to all ACCM-accredited schools. and governments served. It also reports and presents, when requested to do so, on behalf of these governments to meetings of the U.S. Dept. of Education (NCFMEA) in Washington, D.C. The Medical Accreditation Company of Ireland CLG (MACI) is the holding company for ACCM and is registered with the Companies Registration Office of Ireland (CRO) and the Registry of Business Names. The financial activities of ACCM are managed through MACI, which is fully compliant with Irish company law and publishes annual independently audited accounts.

ACCM is a not-for-profit organisation whose only source of income is fees paid for its accreditation services. Its finances remained stable in 2020, despite the impact of the COVID pandemic. All ACCM-accredited schools retained their registration and paid their fees in full.

The following are ACCM's Commissioners:

Prof. Eilis McGovern (Chair)

Prof. Brian Lawlor (Vice-Chair)

Dr. Anthony Peacock (Hon. Secretary)

Mr. Philip Berman (Treasurer)

Prof. John Brock-Utne

Prof. David Croke

Dr. John Donohoe

Prof. Ray Fitzgerald

Sir Ian Gilmore

Prof. Clive Lee

Prof. Patrick Murray

Prof. Hilary Sanfey

Prof. Michael Turner

Brief biographies of all Commissioners are available on the ACCM website (www.accredmed.org).

Summary of the ACCM activities in the past year

1. Recognition

ACCM has not accredited any new schools in the past year and continues to act as the medical education accreditation body for the following countries/ territories/ kingdoms/ entities. ACCM has been granted authorisation and recognition by the governments of:

- St. Maarten
- Cayman Islands
- Federation of St. Kitts & Nevis
- Aruba
- Commonwealth of Dominica:
- Curaçao
- Guyana
- Anguilla
- St. Vincent & the Grenadines
- Belize:
- Montserrat
- Jordan

While the Heads of Agreement remains in place, at the present time ACCM does not accredit medical schools in Belize, Montserrat, Guyana or Anguilla.

In addition, The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) accepts the decisions of ACCM as the accrediting agency for Jordan.

ACCM has been recognised by the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) of the U.S. Dept. of Education and the ECFMG since 1995.

ACCM reports and presents to NCFMEA on a regular basis on behalf of the governments of the following countries:

- Cayman Islands
- Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis
- St. Maarten

ACCM has been granted recognition by the World Federation for Medical Education for a period of ten years until December 31st, 2026. ACCM is fully compliant with the Educational Commission on Foreign Medical Graduates' (ECFMG) requirements for an internationally recognised medical accrediting agency.

2. Maintenance of Accreditation

During an accredited period, an ACCM accredited medical school is required to maintain compliance with the *ACCM Standards of Accreditation for Schools of Medicine*. In order to ensure continued compliance, each medical school is required to complete and submit an extensive annual database that evaluates the activities of the school in the most recent academic year. All nine medical schools currently accredited by ACCM (Table 1) completed and submitted the required annual documentation in a timely manner. The submissions were reviewed by a designated member of the ACCM Board and deemed to be satisfactory.

Table 1 Medical Schools Currently Accredited by ACCM

School	Accreditation Status
American University of the Caribbean (AUC), St. Maarten and Preston, UK,	Unconditional Accreditation status to 31/12/21
St. Matthew's University School of Medicine (SMUSOM) Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands	Unconditional Accreditation status to 30/06/25
Medical University of the Americas (MUA), Nevis,	Unconditional Accreditation status to 31/05/22
University of Medicine and Health Sciences (UMHS), St. Kitts,	Unconditional Accreditation status to 30/11/21
Xavier University School of Medicine (XUSOM), Aruba,	Unconditional Accreditation status to 31/05/25
Avalon University School of Medicine (AUSOM), Curaçao.	Conditional Accreditation status to 31/05/22
All Saints University School of Medicine (ASU), Commonwealth of Dominica,	Conditional Accreditation status to 31/05/22

St. James School of Medicine (SJ), St. Vincent and the Grenadines.	Conditional Accreditation status to 31/05/22
University of Jordan (UJ), Amman, Jordan.	Unconditional Accreditation status to 31/05/22

In addition to inspecting the pre-clinical medical school campus, ACCM carries out on-site inspections of all clinical facilities where the school maintains an educational presence and the administrative headquarters for the school, at least once during an accreditation cycle. The inspections conducted this past year are listed in Table 2. As a result of the travel restrictions imposed by COVID 19, many clinical site and administrative HQ inspections were conducted remotely by videoconference. A detailed inspection report including recommendations and a request to respond to these recommendations, is sent to each Medical School after all inspections. In the case of a full accreditation inspection of the pre-clinical campus the report is also shared with the government of the country. All medical schools who underwent an inspection responded in a timely manner and their response was deemed to be satisfactory.

Table 2. Summary of ACCM Inspection Activities by School. Three schools (Xavier, All Saints University and University of Jordan did not require inspections in 2020)

Inspection by School	Date
American University of the Caribbean	
Pre-clinical Campus Site at University of Central Lancaster.UK	February 2020
AUC Headquarters, Miami FL	April 2020
Clinical Site (virtual): Baton Rouge Medical Center, Baton Rouge, LA	September 2020
Clinical Site (virtual): Spring Grove Medical Center, Catonsville, MD	October 2020
St. Matthew's University School of Medicine	
Clinical Site (virtual): Mount Sinai Hospital, Chicago, IL	October 2020
Clinical Site (virtual): North Virginia Mental Health Center, Falls Church, VA	October 2020
Clinical Site (virtual): St. Agnes Hospital, Baltimore, MD	October 2020
Medical University of the Americas	

Clinical Site (virtual): St. Anthony's Hospital, Oklahoma City, OK	March 2020
MUA Headquarters (virtual): Devens, Massachusetts	March 2020
University of Medicine and Health Sciences	
Clinical Site (virtual): Larkin Community Hospital, Miami, Florida	October 2020
UMHS Headquarters, Portland, Maine	October 2020
UMHS 5 th Semester, Portland, Maine	October 2020
Avalon	
Clinical Site (virtual): Hartgrove Hospital, Chicago, IL	September 2020
Clinical Site (virtual): Raleigh general Hospital, Beckley, WV	October 2020
Avalon Headquarters (virtual): Youngstown, Ohio	October 2020
Fifth Semester Site (virtual): Youngstown, Ohio	October 2020
St. James	
Clinical Site (virtual): Hartgrove Hospital, Chicago, IL	September 2020
Clinical Site (virtual): South Texas Health Systems, Edinburg, TX	October 2020

3. New Applications

ACCM was approached about possible accreditation on behalf of a number of medical schools in the past year.

After a preliminary review, it was decided that seven schools did not meet the ACCM policies, procedures and /or guidelines for accreditation. Therefore, the applications were denied.

The following schools were considered to meet the ACCM policies, procedures and /or guidelines to advance to the next step in the application process. Therefore, these schools have been asked to submit a more detailed application for review.

Windsor University School of Medicine	St. Kitts
Al Balqa Applied University	Salt, Jordan
American International University West Africa (AIUWA)	Gambia
JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research, Mysuru	India

The following schools submitted detailed applications with all required documentation. As they appear to meet the policies, procedures and /or guidelines for accreditation they will undergo an onsite full accreditation inspection when travel restrictions are removed.

Aureus School of Medicine ASM	Aruba
Arabian Gulf University (AGU)	Bahrain
Jordan University of Science & Technology	Jordan

4. Governance Activities

The ACCM Chair, Dr. John Donohoe, completed his second term in May 2020 and was replaced by Professor Eilis McGovern. Previously, the roles of honorary secretary and honorary treasurer were combined and held by one person. These roles were separated, and Mr. Philip Berman was elected as honorary treasurer for a three-year term. A finance committee was established under his leadership and a new Finance Policy was agreed.

An Executive Management Group was created to manage the daily activities of the Commission. This group reports to the ACCM Board.

Over the last year, the ACCM Board undertook a detailed review and update of a number of ACCM Documents in order to ensure comparability with LCME and NCFMEA requirements. The ACCM Standards of Accreditation, the ACCM Procedures for Accreditation, the annual and cohort database questionnaires, and the institutional self-study questionnaire have undergone substantial revision. In addition, several new documents were created including a Governance Policy which outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Commission and the members of the Board, and an independent student analysis questionnaire. Additional new documents include a number of Standard Operating Policies. Finally, the ACCM website has been updated.

5. COVID - 19

The ACCM Board responded to the challenges of the COVID -19 pandemic in a number of ways.

- The ACCM Board created a document entitled *Guiding Principles for ACCM Operation During the COVID -19 Pandemic* to define the ACCM guidelines and procedures for the conduct of virtual inspections. This policy document was distributed to all schools and is on the ACCM website.
- Throughout the year, the Board monitored the LCME, NCFMEA and WFME websites for guidance during the pandemic. A new site was added to the website to

address the FAQs raised by the school during this challenging time based on the advice offered by these accreditation bodies.

- An electronic survey was developed to evaluate how the ACCM accredited medical schools were adapting to the challenges of the pandemic. This survey was distributed every four months to coincide with each new student intake. All schools responded in a timely manner. In summary, all schools had pivoted from classroom teaching to a remote delivery platform and clinical rotations were suspended for a short period of time at the start of the pandemic. Clinical rotations were replaced by simulated case-based sessions. To date, none of the schools have experienced a decrease in enrolment or financial hardship.

6. Accreditation Policies

As noted above, ACCM conducted a substantial policy revision last year. The following Standard Operating Policies were either created or underwent major revision:

- Review of New Applicant Schools
- Governance Policy
- Guidelines for Operating During the Pandemic
- ACCM Internal Procedures for Inspections
- Finance Policy
- Complaints Policy

7. Accreditation Procedures

The ACCM Procedures for Accreditation are intended to provide schools of medicine with information about the accreditation process used by ACCM and are reviewed annually by the ACCM Board. These Procedures underwent substantial revision in the last year and were distributed to all medical schools accredited or seeking accreditation by ACCM. The Procedures can be viewed on the ACCM website.

8. Accreditation Standards

The ACCM Standards for Accreditation are based on the guidelines of the LCME and are revised on a regular basis to ensure comparability with LCME, and NCFMEA requirements. They are also compatible with WFME Standards.

The ACCM Standards for Accreditation underwent substantial revision in 2020. Feedback on the proposed changes was sought from ACCM-accredited schools prior to their final adoption.

Once approved, new or revised standards are published in the ACCM Standards of Accreditation for Schools of Medicine, in the Self-study Questionnaire and / or Annual Database Questionnaire. The ACCM Standards of Accreditation for Schools of Medicine are organized according to 13 accreditation standards. The ACCM will consider performance in all the elements associated with each standard in the determination of the compliance of the programme with that standard. These revised Standards were circulated to all schools accredited by the ACCM in July 2020. These documents are also available on ACCM's website.