

Expert's Report

On the degree programs:

“Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS)”

Offered by the **Avalon University School of Medicine (AUSOM)**, Willemstad Curaçao

Site visit to the University: 17 – 19 September 2024

Panel of Experts:

Prof. (em.) Dr. Nicolle Macho	Academic expert
Prof. Dr. Renata Marciniak	Academic member
Sanne Buzon, MSc	Professional expert
Ömer Faruk Sönmez, MPH	Student expert

Coordinator/Observer:

Dipl. Ing. (FH) Mario Grabner, MBA	CEO Accreditation Agency Curacao, AAC
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I. Preamble

The AAC carries out accreditations of doctoral, master, and bachelor programs. All accreditations are based on the AAC's standards and guidelines based on the ESG Guidelines, and the CHEA Quality Principles. The accreditation follows the usual procedural steps:

- Submission of a self-report
- Submission of self-documentation (Appendixes 1 to 8)
- Assessment by the Panel of Experts (PoE) including a Site Visit
- Creation of the Expert Report (ER)
- Final Decision by the Accreditation Commission (AC)

II. Procedure

The **Avalon University School of Medicine (AUSOM)** requested the AAC to accredit their “**Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS)**” program.

1. Methodical Procedure

The AUSOM applied for conceptual accreditation with the AAC by submitting the signed application on **September 29, 2023**. The Self-Report guidelines were provided to the AUSOM and were completed on **December 7, 2023**. The Accreditation Commission (AC) of the AAC reviewed the AUSOM's application request and approved it, resulting in the official opening of the accreditation procedure. The accreditation contract between AUSOM and AAC was signed on **February 29, 2024**.

In the contract it was stated that the AUSOM had to provide the self-documentation report (SDR) until **May 26, 2024**. The self-documentation was submitted on **May 23, 2024**.

The SDR contained the following standards:

- Standard 1: Institutional overview (**ESG 1.2.;1.6; 1.7. & US ii, iv**)
- Standard 2: Ethics and diversity (ESG 1.3. & US Vii)
- Standard 3: Design of programs (ESG 1.3. & US Vii)
- Standard 4: Quality Management and Improvement (**ESG 1.1.; 1.7.; 1.9.;1.10. & US i**)
- Standard 5: Administration and teaching staff (**ESG 1.3.;1.4.;1.5.;1.6 & US iii, v**)
- Standard 6: Student and stakeholders' engagement (**ESG 1.2.; 1.7.; 1.9.; & US vi**)
- Standard 7: Learning and teaching (**ESG 1.3., 1.4. & US i, vi, VII, VIII**)
- Standard 8: Program handbook (**ESG 1.1.;1.2.;1.3.;1.8., 1.9. & US ii, iii, vii, viii, ix**).

The SDR was reviewed by the AAC for completeness according to the AAC self-documentation guidelines. Consequently, the SDR was shared with the PoE for review (pre-site visit). No documentation or additional information was needed from AUSOM.

2. Appointment of the Panel of Experts (PoE)

The AAC selected experts through a call for Experts, where interested individuals could apply. The AAC reviewed the applications and nominated 4 experts. The AC reviewed the application and selection procedure, approving the nominations.

The approved experts are as follows:

Prof. (em.) Dr. Nicolle Macho	Academic expert
Prof. Dr. Renata Marciniak	Academic member
Sanne Buzon, MSc	Professional expert
Ömer Faruk Sönmez, MPH	Student expert

Site Visit (Onsite)

The AUSOM went through an onsite “Site Visit” on the 17th - 19th of **September 2024**. Attendees were the AAC working group, PoE, and the AUSOM working group. The individual points were discussed (see timeline site visit, attachment). During the last session on the 19th of September 2024, the Experts discussed and concluded that Avalon could be accredited with two Conditions (Standard 3).

Update March 2025:

Avalon was given accreditation with 2 conditions. On February 24th, 2025, Avalon provided updated documentation. In this documentation Avalon demonstrated that the 2 conditions given and all the recommendations given are fulfilled. Therefore, Avalon received full concept accreditation for the “**Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS)**” program.

General information on the University

Initially established in 2003 as Xavier School of Medicine in Bonaire, the institution relocated to Curaçao in 2010. This transition also marked a rebranding, leading to its current identity as Avalon University School of Medicine (AUSOM), a strategic move aimed at distinguishing it from another Caribbean medical institution. AUSOM holds charter accreditation from the Ministry of Health of Curaçao, empowering it to confer an M.D. degree.

AUSOM offers:

- 1) MD Degree
- 2) Bachelor of Sciences in Health Sciences
- 3) Premedical Sciences

III. Assessment of the study program

In this chapter, the experts assess the “**Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS)**” program.

Standard 1: Institutional overview (ESG 1.2.;1.6; 1.7. & US ii, iv)

Description

According to the information provided Avalon University School of Medicine in the Self-study Report (AUSOM) is a private institution of higher education offering different programs in the medical field. Established in 2003 as Xavier School of Medicine in Bonaire, the institution relocated to Curaçao in 2010. Following its relocation the name of the institution was changed to Avalon University School of Medicine (AUSOM) to ensure that the institution can better be differentiated from another Caribbean medical institution,

AUSOM holds charter accreditation from the Ministry of Health of Curaçao, empowering it to confer an M.D. degree. Since 2022, AUSOM is accreditation from the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine (ACCM) for six years and since 2023, it attained accreditation from the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions (CAAM-HP) for four years. Both accreditations are recognized by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME).

AUSOM offers:

- 1) MD Degree
- 2) Bachelor of Sciences in Health Sciences
- 3) Premedical Sciences

The mission of the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences program at Avalon University as stated in the provided information is to cultivate a cadre of skilled and conscientious professionals who can adeptly navigate the complexities of the healthcare industry. And their vision according to the supplied information is centered on preparing students to become competent and responsible professionals in the healthcare industry.

An organizational chart is provided.

Experts Evaluation

In its institutional overview AUSOM provides evidence of its legal status as well as providing a clear and well-defined mission statement. However, the vision statement should be redefined and be more visionary.

The strategic objectives are stated and set in a 1, 3, or 5-years’ timeline but they do not specify timeframes within which these objectives are expected to be achieved or reviewed. 6 strategic objectives are listed: Alignment with Mission and Strategic Plan,

Outcome-Based Model and Learning Objectives, Curriculum Design and Student Support, Learning Outcomes and Continuous Improvement, Student Engagement and Evaluation and Educational Goals Alignment. Missing are however timeframes within which these objectives are expected to be achieved or reviewed so under the strategic plan time frames are given.

Avalon's strategic plan has short-term, medium-term, and long-term measurable outcomes/success indicators for each of the goals identified in its strategic plan which defines the goals in categories of education, clinical training, faculty, and research that need to be achieved based on an action plan with timelines and evaluated by measurable outcomes. The strategic plan also indicates the data to be collected within the specified time frames (every semester, annually, and every 2-4 years) for the evaluation of the programs and the plan execution. It also defines who is responsible for the collection, processing, and presenting these data.

The governance and management Avalon University (chart is provided) follows a structured organizational framework outlined by its board of trustees (BOT), which serves as the highest governing body. The BOT, composed of five independent and autonomous members. They are elected for four-year terms, with the option to serve up to two consecutive terms. They have responsibility for important parts e.g. the annual budget, institutional learning objectives, strategic planning, curriculum, admission policies, and faculty oversight. The BOT selects the CEO/President and oversees the appointment of the chief academic officer (dean of the school of medicine). The president reports directly to the board, thus emphasizing transparency and accountability in leadership. The organizational structure extends to the dean's office, where the dean of Bachelor of Sciences plays a key role in managing academic affairs, faculty, students, and accreditation processes. The dean collaborates closely with the president and two vice presidents, who handle business aspects such as marketing, recruitment, and finances. This approach ensures a balanced focus on both academic and administrative functions. Faculty and student involvement in governance is facilitated through their participation in various committees.

AUSOM's target market are recent high school graduates, allied health professionals, pre-medical students and career changers both international (USA, Canada, Nigeria, India etc.) and national/regional (Curacao and Caribbean Islands). Long-term the University should analyze in detail the potential labor not just of the United States but also the Canadian market as well as the markets of the European Union (EU) member states since Curacao is a country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands and thus students have easy access to the EU market.

Recommendations:

1. The university should revise its vision statement and following the revision publish both the vision and mission statement on its website.
2. For more transparency and for building trust among students, staff and other stakeholders a short history of Avalon University (when it was founded, by whom, how big it was initially and how big it is now) should also be added to the website.

Conclusion:

Standard 1 has a total score of 79 points. There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is fully implemented with no significant weaknesses and gaps. There are no conditions here but two recommendations.

Standard 2: Ethics and diversity (ESG 1.3. & US Vii)**Description**

AUSOM in its Self-Documentation Report states that integrity and respect for diversity are essential for the running of the school. Therefore, it has policies in place to ensure equal opportunity for all members of the university community, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, religion, or socioeconomic status. These policies prohibit discrimination and harassment and provide mechanisms for reporting and addressing complaints. All policies can be found in the student handbook, faculty and staff handbooks. Formal procedures for handling student affairs, including appeals, complaints, pregnancy, sickness, and diversity-related issues ensure that students receive support and that their rights are safeguarded.

Diversity is addressed about individual characteristics of campus community members such as race, gender, sexual orientation/identity, religion, political philosophy, age, and socioeconomic status, among others. Diversity is believed to be essential to fulfilling Avalon University mission.

Experts Evaluation

A comprehensive anti-discrimination and harassment and unlawful discrimination policy is in place and explicitly states that discrimination based on factors such as race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or veteran status is prohibited in all aspects of the university life, including admissions, employment, academic programs, and campus activities. Timelines are also stated including a timeline for appeals. Formal procedures for handling student affairs, including appeals, complaints, pregnancy, sickness, and diversity-related issues ensure that students receive support and that their rights are safeguarded.

Conclusion.

Standard 2 has a total score of 86 points. There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is fully implemented with no significant weaknesses or gaps. No conditions or recommendations for this standard.

Standard 3: Design of programs (ESG 1.3. & US Vii)

Description

Avalon University offers three programs:

- 1) The premedical program is a non-degree granting, four semester program that incorporates the basic undergraduate courses that are the prerequisite courses required for the MD program.
- 2) The MD program has a 4-year curriculum leading to the Doctor of Medicine degree. Students must pass the USMLE States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE) Step 1 and at the end of the program the USMLE Step 2 is required for graduation.
- 3) The Bachelor of Sciences (BS) in Health Sciences is a two-year program and consists of 6 semesters. This program utilizes a hybrid curriculum with the first year (3 semesters) completed online (can be completed from home), and the second year (3 semesters) completed in-person at the campus. The full workload in the program is 130 credit hours (US credit hours system). The BS program is an accelerated two-year program, with the first year completed online and the second year completed at the Avalon campus in Curacao. Upon successful completion students will earn a BS degree and gain automatic admission into the MD program.

The institution describes the process for the design, approval and review of the programs offered and shows how they align with the institutional strategy. The student handbook presents the course/module narratives including the program's intended achievements in the learning outcomes, encompassing both subject-specific and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills. A combination of different learning modalities is used: (e-)textbooks, virtual clinical simulations, (online) and so on.

Experts Evaluation

A two-year program with 26 courses leading to a bachelor's degree is very challenging for students even with the mix of online and on campus classes. Each subject requires significant time and effort to understand and master, having so many of them in such a short time can be overwhelming. Additionally, rapidly moving through numerous subjects can affect the depth of understanding and retention as well as impact students' well-being, potentially leading to stress and burnout if not managed effectively.

All programs offered at AUSOM follow a U.S.-modeled program however presently the Bachelor Sciences in Health Sciences curriculum is listing the courses by semester and year. To ensure that students and other institutions understand the program and all its courses must be numbered e.g. BIOL 101, BIOL 102, BIOL 201, BIOL 202 depending on whether they are first- or second-year level courses. This type of numbering allows a straightforward transferability of the courses to another university

The Bologna Process (1999) harmonized various systems of European higher education to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher-education

qualifications and increase its international competitiveness thus transferability of courses or degrees. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) typically has 180-240 ECTS credits (minimum of 60 credits per academic year) that are needed to receive a bachelor's degree. Students must also submit a bachelor thesis/project minimum credits for this course are 3 ECTS maximum are 6 ECTS. The dissertation course e.g. BS 499 Bachelor Thesis/Project/Dissertation must be added to the program and a grade must be awarded. Additionally, the title of the Bachelor Thesis/Project/Dissertation must be on the transcript.

Program and learning outcomes should be linked in a table for ease of reading and understanding. Some of the Learning goals, learning objectives and learning outcomes are occasionally unclear or not used in the correctly. Some of the learning goals lack clarity and should be where unclear be revised. All should learning goals therefore have to be reviewed. Additionally, all outcomes need to be reviewed and revised (shortened). In general, most courses have too many learning objectives see Physics 1 or Biology 2. Some of the program learning outcomes are also difficult to achieve, such as "*Proficiency in Research and Data Interpretation*." Students are required to complete four research projects, which is insufficient to attain proficiency in research even if you add the research for the Bachelor Thesis/Project/Dissertation.

Semesters 5 and 6 offer the students numerous interesting topics which are also potential Bachelor Thesis/Project/Dissertation topics. To pick the correct topic for a Bachelor Thesis/Project/Dissertation webinars/talk should be offered on the topics which are covered in Semester 6 thus allowing students to find a topic which truly interest them and in which they can excel.

Conditions:

1. Numbering of all courses to allow for identifying the level of the course as well as ensuring easy transferability of the courses to another university.
2. Dissertation/Bachelor Thesis must be added to the program e.g. BS 499 Bachelor Thesis/Dissertation and must have at least 3 credits (max.6). The title of the dissertation and the grade must be added to the transcript

Recommendations

1. All courses should have US Credits and ECTS credits.
2. Review all learning outcomes to ensure they are correctly categorized and defined and aligned with the program learning outcomes – e.g. in a table format.
3. Recheck your learning goals for clarity and where unclear revise.
4. The courses in semesters 5 and 6 should be reshuffled so that the dissertation/bachelor thesis is in the last semester
5. To wisely chose a dissertation topic students should get webinars/talks offered on the topics which are covered in Semester 6 so that they know if these topics would interest them for their dissertation/bachelor thesis topic

Conclusion

Standard 3 has a total score of 67 points. There is evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is well implemented but there are as mentioned above issues which need to be addressed.

Standard 4: Quality Management and Improvement (ESG 1.1.; 1.7.; 1.9.;1.10. & US i)

Description

The goals of AUSOM's Quality Management are to assure and maintain the highest possible quality of its programs, teaching-methods, (teaching) staff, research, educational facilities and educational results and to make sure the quality of the programs delivered to Avalon's graduates comply with endorsed international standards and codes. To ensure that these goals are met AUSOM has set up numerous committees that work together with its internal and external stakeholders (e.g. clinical coordinator).

AUSOM's internal quality assurance is embedded in its policies, protocols, procedures, standards and codes of conduct which are drawn-up and reviewed. The key task for this lies with the quality improvement committee which is responsible for the overall continuous quality improvement of the University programs and for implementing and evaluating strategic planning. It evaluates the curriculum and other related aspects, such as the mission and objectives of the university, educational resources, governance, and leadership, including administration through data collection, analysis, and suggesting improvement measures concerning the key indicator profiles such as curriculum development, student satisfaction, the effectiveness of teaching, student grading and the entire process of teaching and learning. Based on the suggestion received from the quality improvement committee, the curriculum committee sets the strategies and creates an action plan for improvement; it will be evaluated in their meetings and documented accordingly.

Experts Evaluation

Avalon University has set up all relevant policies and processes to make sure that they have a coherent institutional quality assurance system in place that forms a cycle for continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the institution.

The Quality Improvement Committee's key task is to ensure the continuous quality improvement of the University programs and for implementing and evaluating strategic planning. The Committee is mainly composed of internal stakeholders, which has its advantages in terms of in-depth knowledge of the institution and organizational commitment, but it is also important to be open to the possibility of including 2 to 3 external stakeholder input to enrich the discussions and decisions of the improvement committee. According to the documents only the clinical coordinator is an external stakeholder.

Transparency is ensured due to the University publishing e.g. its quality policy on the university website. The vision and mission stated in the Avalon University Quality Policy differs however from those presented in the AUSOM Strategic Plan 2023-2025. It is essential that the vision and mission are consistent across all institutional documents. Policies and procedures are electronically saved and available for the administration, faculty and students. Any updates at Avalon University's Bachelor of Sciences in Health

Sciences are also available on the university's official website and in the student and faculty handbooks. These updates include changes in curriculum, teaching methods, or assessment methods.

The quality improvement procedures at Avalon University are updated at regular intervals (every semester, annually) and communicated to all stakeholders, including the students, faculty, and administration. The strategic plan is revised every 2-3 years and is published on the school's website and available to all faculty members, students, and other stakeholders. The quality plan is available on Avalon's website. The strategic plan includes goals, aspirations, and measurable outcomes. As measurable outcomes are established, the university's quality control, quality improvement, and quality assurance activities are ensured.

AUSOM monitors, gathers, and analyzes data or information from the performance indicators. A brief description of each KPI (Key Performance Indicator) would be helpful to ensure that the interpretation is always the same. The results from the performance measures are circulated to the students, faculty, and relevant stakeholders through emails, committee meeting minutes, student/faculty handbooks, and newsletters on the website and social media.

Recommendations:

1. Use the same mission and vision statement across all institutional documents.
2. Make SOP's (Standard Operating Procedure) for document management.

Conclusion

Standard 4 has a total score of 83 points. There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is fully implemented with no significant weaknesses or gaps.

Standard 5: Administration and teaching staff (ESG 1.3.;1.4.;1.5.;1.6 & US iii, v)

Description

Avalon University has a designated building where its administration, staff and faculty are located. The campus also provides students' residences (dorms) and is opposite the administration building. Each classroom and lab have computer and projector facilities and audio-visual aids. Classrooms are used for didactic lecture sessions and small-group discussions. Teaching space is appropriate for the size of the student body. The administrative building serves as the main campus for managing various academic and operational aspects of the institution. It houses offices for key administrative personnel responsible for academic affairs, student affairs and other administrative functions. Additionally, to the classrooms there are study areas, the library and labs. The whole set-up ensures good communication and coordination among different departments, faculty and students.

The IT infrastructure set up by AUSOM allows that the entire BSHS program can be delivered virtually if needed. Faculty was trained on use of the necessary technologies (Google classroom/Google meet platform). The Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences has 12 full-time and 3 part-time faculty members (CVs are in the Self-Study).

A comprehensive recruitment process exists as well as comprehensive faculty and staff appointment guidelines. Qualified faculty needs to demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching, research, and collaboration. The Ad Hoc Faculty Search Committee of Avalon plays a major role in the recruitment process, evaluating candidates based on their credentials, testimonials, and scholarly activities. The committee's recommendations are then reviewed and approved by the Dean of the Bachelor of Sciences and the President.

Many opportunities for professional growth exist both for faculty and staff and financial support is given and easily available to attend e.g. national and international conferences, workshops, training programs.

Experts Evaluation

Avalon University campus is at World Trade Center Curaçao, Piscaderaweg, Willemstad. One Building houses administration, staff and faculty as well as the classrooms, study areas, the library and labs. The whole set-up ensures good communication and coordination among different departments, faculty and students. The campus also provides students' residences (dorms) which are located opposite the administration building. Each classroom and lab have computer and projector facilities and audio-visual aids.

The entire BSHS program can be delivered virtually if needed due to the excellent IT infrastructure set up by AUSOM. Faculty was trained on use of the necessary technologies (Google classroom/Google meet platform). The Bachelor of Science in

Health Sciences has 12 full-time and 3 part-time faculty members (CVs are in the Self-Study).

A comprehensive recruitment process exists as well as comprehensive faculty and staff appointment guidelines. Qualified faculty needs to demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching, research, and collaboration. The Ad Hoc Faculty Search Committee of Avalon plays a major role in the recruitment process, evaluating candidates based on their credentials, testimonials, and scholarly activities. The committee's recommendations are then reviewed and approved by the Dean of the Bachelor of Sciences and the President.

Regarding professional growth development faculty and staff are encouraged and financial supported to attend e.g. national and international conferences, workshops, training programs.

Recommendation:

1. For the hiring process the decision-making group should be an uneven number.

Conclusion

Standard 5 has a total score of 85 points. There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is fully implemented with no significant weaknesses or gaps.

Standard 6: Student and stakeholders' engagement (ESG 1.2.; 1.7.; 1.9.; & US vi)

Description

Since its start in September 2023 the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences program has attracted a diverse student population (USA, Canada, India, Nigeria, Curacao, Ireland etc.). This diversity leads not surprisingly to many cross-cultural exchanges which ensure a broadening perspective within the classroom and outside of the classroom.

Students are part of all standing committees as members except the student promotion committee. Student members are part of the following committee: Admissions Committee, Curriculum Committee, Research and Ethics Committee, Disciplinary Committee: The committee is ad-hoc and will be assigned whenever there is an issue., Quality Improvement Committee, Library and Educational Resource Committee. Outside being involved in committee's student engagement is also found in the Student Governing Association (SGA). SGA serves as a platform for students voice their opinions, organize extracurricular activities, and contribute to the campus community.

The admission process considers diverse backgrounds and experiences alongside academic achievements and is published on the website, program book, student handbook and admissions handbook. Admission guidelines are clearly stated such as proof of a secondary diploma and the requirement for proficiency in English which is the language of instruction at AUSOM.

Internal stakeholders (administrators, faculty, students and staff) are very involved in making sure that AUSOM maintains and improves the quality, safety and effectiveness of its programs and the institution. External stakeholders are also involved in this process.

Experts Evaluation

An extensive framework for engagement for both internal and external stakeholders has been set up. Administrators, Faculty and Staff are strong internal stakeholders in the numerous committees which AUSOM has set up, to only name some, quality, safety and effectiveness of its programs and the institution. However, all committees do not have strong external stakeholders involved especially in committees dealing with future employment e.g. curriculum committee. This committee should have ideally two external stakeholders involved to ensure that industry standards are met, and that the employability of students is enhanced.

Conclusion

Standard 6 has a total score of 86 points. There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that fully addresses requirements of the standards. The approach is fully implemented with no significant weaknesses or gaps. No conditions or recommendations for this standard.

Standard 7: Learning and teaching (ESG 1.3., 1.4. & US i, vi, VII, VIII)

Description

As previously stated, the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences program is a two-year, 6 semesters program. This program uses a hybrid curriculum with the first year (3 semesters) completed online and the second year (3 semesters) completed in-person at the campus. The full workload in the program is 130 credit hours (US credit hours system). Each semester lasts for 15 weeks, and student workload is 20-23 credit hours per semester. Every course has a detailed syllabus which includes course objectives and course description, learning objectives, educational resources (e.g. textbooks both online and in the campus library). Test, Grading and Assessment rules utilized during the semester include formative and summative assessments, blueprinting, and course learning formats. Each semester has their defined workload indicated in the syllabi and can be found in the Syllabus Book, the student handbook and on the official website of the University.

Avalon University takes a strong approach to diversity in teaching and learning, emphasizing the importance of an interactive, student-centered environment. The teaching methods described, such as didactic lectures, small group discussions, presentations, laboratory sessions, and case-based discussions, are varied and allow for accommodation of different learning styles and individual needs. The responsibility of teachers in selecting appropriate instructional formats and the oversight of the curriculum committee ensure alignment with educational objectives.

Test and Assessment Rules, different assessment methods are used (e.g. multiple-choice questions (MCQs), short answers, lab exams, and oral exams), Grading Rules and Research and Academic Writing including dealing with Plagiarism as well as the Admission Procedure and Recognition of Certificates are set up. Students find in the student handbook clear guidelines and procedure for grade appeals and are informed that every writing assignment is checked for plagiarism by either Turnitin or Grammarly.

The grades of all courses are entered into a student information system. The systematically collected and analyzed data regarding examination outcomes, identifies trends, patterns, and areas in need of improvement. Through the evaluation processes (the Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) and Curriculum Committee assist), the identified problems are addressed, teaching methods are refined, and student support mechanisms are enhanced, thus the quality and effectiveness of its academic programs are continuously improved.

Students receive a diploma (only after completion of the program) and transcript of records, which provide detailed information about their academic achievements and qualifications obtained through the program. Furthermore, graduates can request a diploma supplement, further enhancing the recognition and comparability of their degree on an international scale.

Experts Evaluation

The different types of learning, teaching-methods and ways of testing offered to the students at ASOUM ensure that students can reach their learning goals. Including more interactive and experiential learning opportunities, such as simulations and role-playing or flipped classroom learning, can also enhance leadership and teamwork skills. Preparing students for advocacy and their public health roles could be promoted through community-based projects, and partnerships with public health organizations.

Bloom's Taxonomy with its 6 levels (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) is a valuable tool that can be used to create more effective instruction. New or revising existing curricula, the relevance of course goals and learning outcomes benefit from its application. The goal being to encourage higher order thought in students by building up from lower-level cognitive skills documented by increasing these skills from the 100 to the 400 level courses. Objective assessments (multiple-choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank) tend to focus only on the two lowest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy: remembering and understanding and should be used sparingly in higher level courses.

AUSOM's research guidelines are largely confined to the Research Proposal Form). This document covers a wide range of important topics needed to develop a research protocol however it should provide more advice, suggestions and information on how to develop each element. The Research Proposal Form must cover all essential points, such as the title page, acknowledgments (optional), abstract, table of contents, lists of abbreviations/symbols/figures/tables, introduction, literature review, methodology, results and discussion and limitations, conclusion, references, statement of independent work, Appendices. Length of thesis 40-60 pages

Recommendations:

1. Check Bloom's taxonomy especially for learning outcomes– e.g. do not use proficiency
2. Supply a clear outline/template of what must be covered in the dissertation and supply it to each student through the handbook(s).
3. Midterm and finals should not be solely given with multiple-choice especially for the higher-level courses (300 and 400 level)

Conclusion

Standard 7 has a total score of 79 points. There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is well implemented with no significant weaknesses or gaps.

Standard 8: Program handbook (ESG 1.1.;1.2.;1.3.;1.8., 1.9. & US ii, iii, vii, viii, ix).**Description**

The Program handbook provides both general and specific information for the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS). All relevant information is included starting with the vision and mission, education goals, admission criteria, admission process, graduation criteria, learning objectives, career opportunities, BS curriculum, module description, assessment and grading, scholarships, grants learning and student support, safe environment and the academic calendar.

Experts Evaluation

The Program Handbook provides all relevant information for the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS). For better transferability both ECTS and US credits should be included in all syllabi.

Recommendation:

1. Unify format and ensure that resources are correctly cited in syllabi, an introduction with a short history of the University to the handbook might be useful.

Conclusion

Standard 8 has a total score of 78 points. There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is well implemented with no significant weaknesses or gaps.

IV. Summary of Findings

Conditions

	Conditions
Standard 1	None
Standard 2	None
Standard 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Numbering of all courses to allow for identifying the level of the course as well as ensuring easy transferability of the courses to another university. 2. Dissertation/Bachelor Thesis must be added to the program e.g. BS 499 Bachelor Thesis/Dissertation and must have at least 3 credits (max.6). The title of the dissertation and the grade must be added to the transcript
Standard 4	None
Standard 5	None
Standard 6	None
Standard 7	None
Standard 8	None

Recommendations

	Recommendations
Standard 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise Universities/Program vision to ensure that it is a vision. 2. Also make the mission and vision publicly available that means that is to be on the website.
Standard 2	None
Standard 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add ECTS credits to each course 2. Review all learning outcomes to ensure they are correctly categorized and defined and aligned with the program learning outcomes – e.g. in a table format 3. Recheck your learning goals for clarity and where unclear revise 4. Soon semesters 5 and 6 should have reshuffling of the courses so that the dissertation is in the last semester 5. To wisely chose a dissertation topic students should get webinars/talks offered on the topics which are covered in Semester 6 so that they know if these topics would interest them for their dissertation topic
Standard 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make SOPs for all your document so that finding information is easier ones you have this their need of a communication plan in writing. 2. Use the same mission and vision statement across all institutional documents
Standard 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For the hiring process the decision-making group should be an uneven number.



Standard 6	None
Standard 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Check your Bloom's taxonomy – e.g. do not use proficiency2. Supply a clear outline/template of what must be covered in the dissertation and supply it to each student through the handbook.3. Midterm and finals should not be solely given with multiple-choice especially for the higher-level courses
Standard 8	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Unify format and ensure that resources are correctly cited in syllabi, an introduction to the handbook might be useful.



V. Results

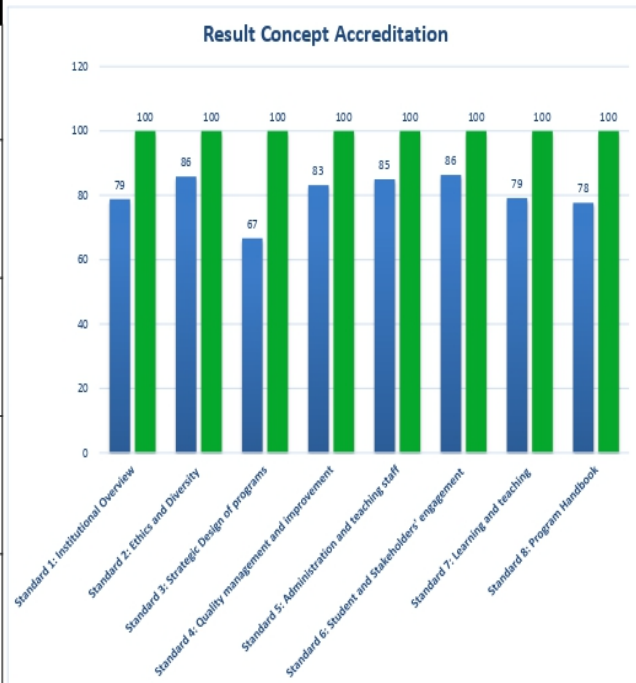
RESULT MATRIX Concept & Program Accreditation

	Total	Max. Points
Standard 1: Institutional Overview	79	100
Standard 2: Ethics and Diversity	86	100
Standard 3: Strategic Design of programs	67	100
Standard 4: Quality management and improvement	83	100
Standard 5: Administration and teaching staff	85	100
Standard 6: Student and Stakeholders' engagement	86	100
Standard 7: Learning and teaching	79	100
Standard 8: Program Handbook	78	100
Total	643	800
Percentage %	80%	

Minimum to accredit with or without conditions: **> 300 Pts.** (of 500) in total of standards 1,3,4,5,7
and in total of all 8 standards minimum > 50% (> 400 Points)

393

Scoring description	Score
Poor No systematic approach is evident. Information provided has no concrete evidence. There is a noticeable absence of any implementation of an approach.	0 - 15
Minimal There are indications of a systematic approach to the basic requirements of the standards. Implementation of the approach is in the early stages. Making it difficult in some areas to achieve the basic requirements of the standard	15 - 35
Sufficient There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the basic (fundamental) requirements of the standards. The approach is considerably implemented but still has certain areas which need further implementation	35 - 55
Above average There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that addresses the overall requirements of the standards. The approach is well implemented with no significant gaps	55 - 75
Excellent There is clear evidence of an efficient systematic approach that fully addresses the requirements of the standards. The approach is fully implemented with no significant weaknesses or gaps.	75 - 100



VI. Recommendation of Panel (accreditation decision)

The Panel recommends that Avalon University School of Medicine is granted an accreditation with the 2 conditions (Standard 3).

1. Numbering of all courses to allow for identifying the level of the course as well as ensuring easy transferability of the courses to another university.
2. Dissertation/Bachelor Thesis must be added to the program e.g. BS 499 Bachelor Thesis/Dissertation and must have at least 3 credits (max.6). The title of the dissertation and the grade must be added to the transcript

The accreditation is subject to the conditions mentioned above. The conditions must be implemented. The implementation of the conditions must be documented in written and reported to AAC by May 2nd, 2025, at the latest.

The accreditation will be valid for a period of 3 years starting with 03.11.2024 and is valid until the 03.11.2027 under the condition that the conditions listed in the Expert Report are implemented, documented, and reported to AAC in due time. After the conditions are implemented, you will get the final certificate.

VII. Final Comments

The Panel was impressed by the dedication of Avalon's "we care philosophy and atmosphere" which benefits all members – administration, faculty staff but mostly the students. The work which was done to ensure that the visit was a success was impressive. Congratulations to all and very best for the future!

Attachment: Site Visit Agenda

“Bachelor of Science in Health Science” (BS) Accreditation Site Visit to the Avalon University School of Medicine (AUSOM) Date **17.09 – 19.09.2024**

Day 1+2 (15.09 + 16.09): Pick up and rest day

The arrival of the Experts and transfer from the Airport to the Hotel. Check-in at the hotel
(Organized by AUSOM – flight information will be provided by AAC to AUSOM)

Day 3 (17.09): Introductions, Strategic Positioning, and Institutional Processes & Procedures

Time	Session
8:30	Transfer from hotel to the University <i>(transfer arranged by AUSOM)</i> . All meetings take place at the AUSOM - Piscaderaweg z/n, Willemstad, Curacao.
9:00 – 09:50	AAC members and PoE gather to prepare for the Site Visit presentations and discussions. A question list will be created. Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE
10:00 – 10:50	Site – Visit Overview & Introductions Key stakeholders from the AAC and AUSOM will discuss the purpose and goals of the site-visit, allowing for introductions and an overview of the upcoming schedule. A brief presentation of the institution's history (Standard 1.1), the institutional Vision and Mission (Standard 1.2) and the leadership (Standard 1.3) of AUSOM will be given. Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Shokat Fatteh; Chancellor ○ Dr. Samir Fatteh; President ○ Self-study Committee members ○ Dr. Sateesh Arja; Dean of the School of Medicine Self-study committee members are Dr. Sireesha Bala, Dr. Praveen, Kottathveetil, Dr. Reshma Fatteh, Dr. Alaa Altahir, Dr. Andrii Shmarhalov and Ms. Simi Paramaban.
11:00 – 11:50	Discussion about AUSOM's Strategic Objectives

	<p>Stakeholders of the AAC will meet with the Management of AUSOM to discuss their strategic objectives. (Standard 1.2)</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Shokat Fatteh; Chancellor ○ Dr. Samir Fatteh; President ○ Self-study Committee members ○ Dr. Sateesh Arja; Dean of the School of Medicine
12:00 – 13:00	Light Lunch of the PoE
13:00 – 13:30	<p>AUSOM and the Educational Market and Risk Management Presentation and discussion about AUSOM's position in the health science market (Standard 1.4).</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr Sireesha Bala; Dean of Bachelor of Sciences in Health Sciences ○ Dr. Reshma Fatteh; Associate Dean of Admissions ○ Dr. Samir Fatteh; President ○ Dr. Sateesh Arja; Dean of the School of Medicine
13:30 – 13:50	<p>Ethics and Diversity Presentation and discussion of Ethics and Diversity (Standard 2)</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr Sireesha Bala; Dean of Bachelor of Sciences in Health Sciences ○ Dr. Reshma Fatteh; Associate Dean of Admissions ○ Dr. Samir Fatteh; President ○ Dr. Sateesh Arja; Dean of the School of Medicine
14:00 – 14:50	<p>Quality Management Presentation and discussion of AUSOM's strategies, policies, and processes to ensure and enhance the overall quality of education (Standard 4)</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Shokat Fatteh- Chancellor ○ Dr. Samir Fatteh- President

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-study Committee members ○ Dr. Sateesh Arja- Dean of the School of Medicine
15:00 – 15:50	<p>Program Design and the Learning & Teaching System Presentation and discussion of the educational framework and pedagogical approach of AUSOM's learning experience (Standard 3).</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-study Committee
16:00 – 16:50	<p>AAC Working Session with Optional Q&A AAC Members & PoE convene to reflect and debrief the day and prepare for Day #4. AUSOM working group can be available for optional Q&A to further discuss topics presented during Day #3.</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group
17:00 -	<p>Joint Dinner organized by AUSOM</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group

Afterward, transfer to the hotel (organized by AUSOM)

Day 4 (18.09): AUSOM Campus & Academic Program Deep Dive

Time	Session
8:30	Transfer from hotel to the University (transfer arranged by AUSOM) All meetings take place at the AUSOM - Piscaderaweg z/n, Willemstad, Curacao.
9:00 – 09:50	AUSOM Campus/Distance Learning Platform Presentation and discussion of the technology stack that will power AUSOM's academic and administrative operations. Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Amin Fatteh- COO and CITO ○ Dr Sireesha Bala- Dean of Bachelor of Sciences in Health Sciences ○ Ms. Elisette Croes-Librarian ○ Dr. Andrii Shmarhalov- Curriculum Committee chair
10:00 – 11:30	Academic Program Deep Dive: Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS) Presentation and discussion of the curriculum, learning outcomes, and industry relevance of the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BS) (Standard 3 + 8) Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-study Committee members
11:40 – 11:50	Research at AUSOM Presentation and discussion of the research activity in the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences program (Standard 7.3). Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Sirving Keli- Associate Dean of Research ○ Dr. Lambo- Ethics and Research Committee chair ○ Dr. Reshma Fatteh- Research Committee member ○ Mr. Manoj Koullukkad- Research Committee member ○ Dr. Traig Ahmed- Research Committee member
12:00 – 13:00	Light Lunch of the PoE

13:00 – 13:50	<p>Student support & Experience at AUSOM Presentation and discussion of the student experience and support planned for AUSOM learners (Standard 7).</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Praveen Kottathveetil- Associate Dean of Student Affairs ○ Dr Suma Alluri- students' Promotions Committee chair ○ Mrs. Simi Paramban- Campus Nurse ○ Ms. Martha Bergonje- Psychology counsellor ○ Ms. Sherissa Marinus- Campus Director ○ Dr Sireesha Bala- Dean of Bachelor of Sciences in Health Sciences
14:00 – 14:50	<p>Administration and Faculty Presentation and discussion of AUSOM's approach to managing and planning related to human capital needs (Standard 5).</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Samir Fatteh- President ○ Dr Sireesha Bala- Dean of Bachelor of Sciences in Health Sciences ○ Dr. Amin Fatteh- COO and CITO ○ Dr. Sateesh Arja- Dean of the School of Medicine
15:00 – 15:50	<p>Meet & Greet with AUSOM Faculty and Students Stakeholders from the AAC will meet with AUSOM teachers and students to hear about their overall teaching and learning experience at the AUSOM (Standard 6).</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Andrii Shmarhalov- Faculty member • Dr. Alaa Altahir- Faculty member • Dr. Tarig Ahmed- Faculty member • Mr. Manoj Kollukkad- Faculty member • Dr. Rohit Kumar- Faculty member • Mrs Athira Jim- Faculty member • Ms. Shama Fateh- Faculty member <p>Student representatives from the BS program</p>
16:00 – 16:50	AAC Working Session with Optional Q&A

	<p>AAC Members & PoE convene to reflect and debrief the day and prepare for Day #4. AUSOM working group can be available for optional Q&A to further discuss topics presented during Day #3.</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group
17:00 -	<p>Joint Dinner (Last day) organized by AUSOM</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group

Afterwards, transfer to hotel (organized by AUSOM)

Day 5 (19.09): PoE Working Session and De-Brief

8:30	<p>Transfer from hotel to the University (transfer arranged by AUSOM)</p> <p>All meetings take place at the AUSOM - Piscaderaweg z/n, Willemstad, Curacao.</p>
09:00 – 11:00	<p>AAC Working Session AAC Members & PoE convene to reflect and debrief the 3 days. AUSOM working group can be available for optional Q&A to further discuss topics presented during Day #3-4</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE
11:00 – 12:00	<p>First overview and general assessment of each of the 8 standards.</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC Members & PoE • AUSOM Accreditation Working Group
12:00 – 13:00	Light Lunch of the PoE
13:00	Transfer to the Hotel

Day 6 (20.09):

In the morning transfer to the airport (organized by AUSOM).
Individual Departure of experts.

For preparation:

- All discussions will be held in the English language. If required, please make sure that translation is available.
- Please make sure that all people involved from the University are informed about the time and place of the discussions.
- All discussions should take place in the same room so the experts will not have to move between the talks.
- Please make sure there are name placards for all people involved (University, panel, and coordinators) to facilitate the flow of the discussions.
- Please make sure there are soft drinks and coffee/tea available for the PoE during the day.
- For the lunch break please arrange a light meal for the panel that also considers the needs of vegetarians.
- Please inform AAC about the room for the discussions and how to get there.