K12 ACADEMICS — INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERIES

Studying in Barbados

A guide for international students & families — how Barbados's higher education works, the student visa, English-medium study at UWI Cave Hill, and its US-model medical schools.

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2026 EDITION

ABOUT K12 ACADEMICS

The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

TWO DRAWS: UWI CAVE HILL AND US-MODEL MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Barbados offers two distinct draws: the **University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill campus** — a respected, English-medium regional university — and **US-model medical schools** (notably Ross University School of Medicine, relocated to Barbados in 2019) that prepare students for the **USMLE and US residencies**. It's an English-speaking, stable, welcoming Caribbean nation. Students get a **student visa**. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal, immigration, or medical-licensing advice. Barbadian rules, tuition, and recognition change, and **medical licensing depends on where you'll practice — verify accreditation and recognition**. Confirm details with your university, Barbados Immigration, and the relevant mission.

1

STEP 01 OF 10

Understand Why Students Choose Barbados

WHAT TO KNOW

Barbados offers **a respected English-medium regional university (UWI Cave Hill), US-model medical schools with a USMLE/US-residency pathway, no language barrier for English speakers, and a stable, safe Caribbean setting** — two very different routes in one country.

BY THE NUMBERS

UWI Cave Hill	US-model MD	English
regional university	USMLE pathway	stable & safe

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Barbados's **two routes → a regional English university or a US-model MD** — and pick the one that fits your goals (regional degree vs US medical career).

GOOD TO KNOW

Barbados uniquely combines a **regional English university (UWI)** with **US-model medical schools** — serving very different students.

2

STEP 02 OF 10

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Two tracks: **UWI Cave Hill** (the regional university — seven faculties, English-medium, degrees recognized across the Caribbean and internationally) and **US-model medical schools** (Ross University School of Medicine, plus American University of Barbados, Bridgetown International University, and others) that admit mainly US/Canadian and international students.

BY THE NUMBERS

UWI Cave Hill	Ross	+ others
regional university	US-model MD	med schools

HOW TO HELP

Choose **UWI Cave Hill** for a regional English degree, or a **US-model medical school** (Ross and others) for a US-oriented MD — confirming accreditation and recognition.

WATCH OUT

For medicine, confirm the school's **accreditation (e.g., CAAM-HP/ACCM, WFME-recognized)** and its USMLE/residency track record.

3

STEP 03 OF 10

Get the Student Visa

WHAT TO KNOW

International students need a **student visa/permit**. Your university (UWI or your medical school) assists with immigration; you'll provide an acceptance/enrolment letter, proof of funds, and health insurance. Apply early through the institution and Barbados Immigration.

BY THE NUMBERS

Student visa	Acceptance + funds	Apply early
+ university help	& insurance	via Immigration

HOW TO HELP

Apply for the **student visa/permit** with your institution's help (acceptance letter, funds, insurance), through Barbados Immigration — apply early.

GOOD TO KNOW

Both UWI and the medical schools have **student-services teams** that guide immigration — lean on them.

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STEP 04 OF 10

Apply to Universities (or Medical Schools)

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply **directly**. For **UWI Cave Hill**, apply as for any UWI campus (certificate to postgraduate; two intakes). For a **US-model medical school** (Ross), expect **US-style admissions** (a bachelor's with science prerequisites, and often the MCAT). English is the medium throughout.

BY THE NUMBERS

UWI	Med schools	English
standard admissions	US-style (MCAT/prereqs)	medium throughout

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly** — to UWI Cave Hill (standard admissions) or to a medical school (US-style, with prerequisites and often the MCAT) — in English.

GOOD TO KNOW

US-model medical schools use **US-style admissions** (science prerequisites, often the MCAT) — plan accordingly.

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STEP 05 OF 10

Plan for Tuition & Scholarships

WHAT TO KNOW

UWI Cave Hill charges tuition (lower regional rates; standard international rates — confirm your category). **US-model medical schools** follow US tuition models (higher), but many — including Ross — are eligible for **US federal student loans** (for US students) and offer scholarships. Budget by route.

BY THE NUMBERS

UWI	Med schools	US loans
regional vs international rates	US-model (higher)	for eligible US students

HOW TO HELP

Budget by route — UWI Cave Hill's tuition (regional rates lower) or a medical school's US-model fees (with US federal loans for eligible US students, and scholarships).

GOOD TO KNOW

Several Caribbean medical schools (including Ross) are **eligible for US federal loans** for US students — a key funding route.

6

STEP 06 OF 10

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa you show **proof of funds** covering tuition and living, plus **health insurance** and standard documents; medical schools also require a **deposit**. Your institution advises on exact amounts. Confirm the current requirements with the university and Barbados Immigration.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds	Deposit	+ insurance
tuition + living	for med schools	& documents

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds and insurance** (plus a deposit for medical schools) — your institution advises on amounts; confirm with Barbados Immigration.

GOOD TO KNOW

Medical schools typically require a **non-refundable deposit** to confirm your place — budget for it.

7

STEP 07 OF 10

Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

English is Barbados's **official language and the medium of instruction** throughout — at UWI and the medical schools — so there's no language barrier for English speakers, and no separate language test is usually required.

BY THE NUMBERS

English	No barrier	Throughout
official & medium	for English speakers	UWI & med schools

HOW TO HELP

Study **entirely in English** — no language barrier for English speakers at UWI or the medical schools.

GOOD TO KNOW

For English speakers, **language is not a barrier** in Barbados — a key advantage.

8

STEP 08 OF 10

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After your visa, **arrange housing, complete registration, and set up banking and insurance**. Most students are based in or near **Bridgetown**. Barbados is **stable, safe, and welcoming**, with a warm climate and strong infrastructure, and (for medical students) affiliated teaching hospitals.

BY THE NUMBERS

Housing + registration	Banking + insurance	Based
first tasks	set up	near Bridgetown

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **housing, registration, banking, insurance** — in stable, safe Barbados; medical students train at affiliated hospitals.

GOOD TO KNOW

Barbados is **stable, safe, and well-developed** — a comfortable base, with good infrastructure and teaching hospitals for medical students.

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STEP 09 OF 10

Understand the Offshore-Medicine Pathway

WHAT TO KNOW

Barbados is part of the wider **Caribbean offshore-medicine** landscape (which also includes Grenada's St. George's University, St. Maarten's AUC, Saba, Antigua's AUA, and others). The model: a **US-style MD**, basic sciences in the Caribbean, then **clinical rotations mainly in the US/UK**, targeting the **USMLE and US residency Match** (Ross placed 453 graduates into residencies in 2025).

BY THE NUMBERS

US-style MD	USMLE	Wider Caribbean
basic sciences + US clerkships	+ US residency Match	SGU, AUC, Saba, AUA

HOW TO HELP

Understand the **offshore-medicine pathway** (US-style MD, Caribbean basic sciences, US/UK clerkships, USMLE, US Match) — and compare schools on accreditation, USMLE pass rates, and Match outcomes.

WATCH OUT

When comparing Caribbean medical schools, weigh **accreditation, USMLE pass rates, and residency Match outcomes** — they vary significantly by school.

10 STEP 10 OF 10

Thrive & Practice After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

For **UWI** graduates, a recognized regional degree opens Caribbean and international careers. For **medical** graduates, the goal is the **USMLE and a US residency** (or your target country's licensing route) — so verify accreditation and recognition, and prepare for the exams. Confirm current pathways.

BY THE NUMBERS

UWI	Medicine	Verify
regional/international careers	USMLE + US residency	accreditation & recognition

HOW TO HELP

Plan by route — UWI for regional/international careers, or the **USMLE and US residency** for medicine — verifying accreditation and recognition, and preparing for the exams.

GOOD TO KNOW

For medicine, **passing the USMLE (or your target country's exam) and matching into residency** is the essential step — choose an accredited school with strong outcomes.

QUICK REFERENCE

Studying in Barbados: The Essentials

A snapshot — recognition and accreditation vary (especially for medicine), so confirm with your university, Barbados Immigration, and the relevant council.

The system

Two routes: UWI Cave Hill (a respected English-medium regional university, seven faculties, degrees recognized across the Caribbean and internationally) and US-model medical schools (Ross University School of Medicine and others).

The visa

International students need a student visa/permit; the university (UWI or your medical school) assists with immigration; you provide an acceptance letter, proof of funds, and insurance.

Applying & tuition

UWI: standard admissions (regional vs international tuition rates); medical schools: US-style admissions (prerequisites, often the MCAT) and US-model tuition, with US federal loans for eligible US students; English throughout.

Offshore medicine

Barbados is part of the wider Caribbean offshore-medicine landscape (with Grenada's St. George's, St. Maarten's AUC, Saba, Antigua's AUA); the model is a US-style MD, Caribbean basic sciences, US/UK clerkships, and the USMLE/US Match.

After study

UWI graduates pursue Caribbean/international careers; medical graduates target the USMLE and a US residency — verify accreditation, recognition, and USMLE/Match outcomes before committing.

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