

INTERNATIONAL JOINT ACCREDITATION STANDARDS PROJECT

Quality assurance
in university education

The "International Joint Accreditation Standards (IJAS)" project demonstrates the quality and strengths of universities to the international community.



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Cross-border Quality Assurance Framework

PROJECT BACKGROUND

As globalization accelerates and digital transformation—including AI-driven and technology-enhanced education—continues to reshape higher education, international mobility of students and faculty is steadily increasing. Under these circumstances, ensuring international recognition, transparency, and credibility of higher education quality has become a shared global challenge. Quality assurance (QA) agencies are therefore expected to conduct accreditation activities that are both highly reliable and internationally aligned.

International Joint Accreditation Standards Project (iJAS Project) is a cross-border quality assurance framework launched in 2018 by the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) and the Taiwan Assessment and Evaluation Association (TWAEA).

Expanding Across Borders



The project supports the internationalization strategies of higher education institutions (HEIs) by providing a joint accreditation framework based on internationally shared standards. A key feature of the iJAS is its emphasis on institutional internal quality assurance (IQA) systems, while also providing a foundation for broader quality assurance approaches. It examines how institutions establish, operate, review, and continuously improve their quality assurance systems in alignment with their missions and strategic goals. Through joint evaluation conducted collaboratively by multiple QA agencies, the project promotes mutual understanding of higher education systems and contributes to quality enhancement across national borders.

Since its inception, the iJAS Project has steadily expanded through collaboration among quality assurance agencies in Asia. In 2021, Thailand's Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) joined the project, followed by the Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (MNCEA) in 2024 and the Center for Education Accreditation, Vietnam National University - Ho Chi Minh City (CEA VNU-HCM) in 2025. Through this growing network, iJAS is evolving into a regional platform for international joint accreditation in Asia.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND BENEFITS

Institutions accredited under the iJAS framework are recognized through an internationally aligned, collaboratively conducted joint accreditation process. Participation in the iJAS Project empowers institutions to:

- Enhance their international credibility and visibility
- Strengthen their competitiveness in the international higher education landscape
- Attract motivated internationally minded students, faculty members, and researchers
- Promote academic exchange and collaboration among universities in Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Mongolia, and Vietnam
- Provide a reliable reference for international cooperation agreements, including joint and dual degree programs, credit transfer, and student and faculty mobility

Participating Quality Assurance Agencies

JUAA Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA)

The Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) was established in 1947 by 46 universities, modeled on several U.S. accreditation agencies, and certified by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in 2004 as the Certified Evaluation and Accreditation (CEA) Agency for universities. JUAA is a voluntary organization of higher education institutions whose mission is “to promote the qualitative improvement of higher education institutions in Japan through the voluntary efforts and mutual assistance of member institutions, and to contribute to international cooperation in education and research.”

The Association conducts CEA for universities and professional graduate schools, such as business, law, and public health, and leads program accreditation in fields including veterinary medicine and dentistry. It also promotes research through the Research Institute for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (RIQAHE), established in 2018 to advance innovation in quality assurance. RIQAHE develops projects and hosts seminars to foster dialogue among stakeholders. Through strategic global partnerships, professional exchanges, and rigorous external review by INQAAHE, the Association reinforces its standing and credibility in the international quality assurance community.

TWAEA Taiwan Assessment and Evaluation Association (TWAEA)

The Taiwan Assessment and Evaluation Association (TWAEA), established in 2003, is a non-profit quality assurance agency dedicated to advancing higher education through objective, fair, and integrity-driven evaluation.

TWAEA provides external quality assurance services and promotes evaluation practices responsive to policy priorities and institutional development. Its core activities include institutional and program accreditation, quality audits, and the development of quality assurance frameworks.

Over the years, TWAEA has undertaken evaluation initiatives commissioned

by Taiwan's Ministry of Education. Its international engagement spans Europe and Asia, including support for quality assurance initiatives in Macao, Thailand, and Vietnam, as well as participation in joint accreditation and cross-border collaboration. It also coordinates an international survey on student learning experiences, enabling comparative insights across regions. A significant milestone was achieved in 2024 with TWAEA's recognition under the INQAAHE International Standards and Guidelines (ISG), reflecting its continued alignment with global quality assurance practices and reinforcing its role as a trusted partner in the international higher education community.

CEA VNU-HCM Center for Education Accreditation, Vietnam National University - Ho Chi Minh City (CEA VNU-HCM)

The Center for Education Accreditation, Vietnam National University - Ho Chi Minh City (CEA VNU-HCM), established in 2013, is a public, independent, and autonomous non-profit agency mandated by the Ministry of Education and Training to enhance higher education quality in Vietnam. Committed to international integration, the Center serves as a bridge connecting Vietnam's higher education system with global QA practices, promoting transparency, trust, and mutual recognition.

Its core functions include external QA at institutional and program

levels, training prospective accreditors, including the issuance of certificates of completion, and building capacity for higher education institutions. The Center also contributes to national QA policy development and aligns standards with regional and international frameworks.

Supported by transparent governance and a strong expert network, CEA VNU-HCM upholds professionalism and integrity, strengthening its role as a leading accreditation agency in Vietnam and a trusted global QA partner.

MNCEA Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (MNCEA)

The Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (MNCEA) is an independent external quality assurance agency established by the Government of Mongolia in 1998. Its mission is to enhance the quality, transparency, and international recognition of education at all levels.

MNCEA currently comprises 34 officers and is responsible for accrediting HEIs, TVET providers, and secondary and preschool institutions that offer foreign programs and curricula, as well as for credential evaluation to support qualification recognition in line with regional and global conventions. The Council is supported by a network of over 1,000 external

evaluators.

Operating within a coherent policy framework, MNCEA integrates qualifications framework development, implementation, and recognition, while overseeing the Mongolian National Qualifications Framework and ensuring consistent, standards-based quality assurance across the education sector.

MNCEA actively collaborates with global accreditation bodies and quality assurance organizations to promote cross-border accreditation and strengthen international engagement.

ONESQA Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA)

The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) is a public organization dedicated to educational quality assurance in Thailand, aiming to enhance education provision and support institutions in delivering high-quality learning outcomes. It also develops and trains external assessors to ensure rigorous evaluation standards.

Internationally, ONESQA is recognized by the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and listed in its Aligned Agencies Database. Its role is further endorsed by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI), which

designated ONESQA as an authorized external quality assessment agency in 2021. The Office maintains active collaboration with global QA networks such as INQAAHE, APQN, and AQAN.

ONESQA's mission is to implement an external quality assessment system aligned with IQA, promoting continuous improvement. Guided by five strategic pillars—transparency, market mechanisms, high-quality assessors, curriculum, and technology—it advances real-time reporting, international partnerships, professional development through the ONESQA Academy, outcome-based QA, and AI-driven digital systems to deliver effective, data-driven assessments.

ACCREDITATION

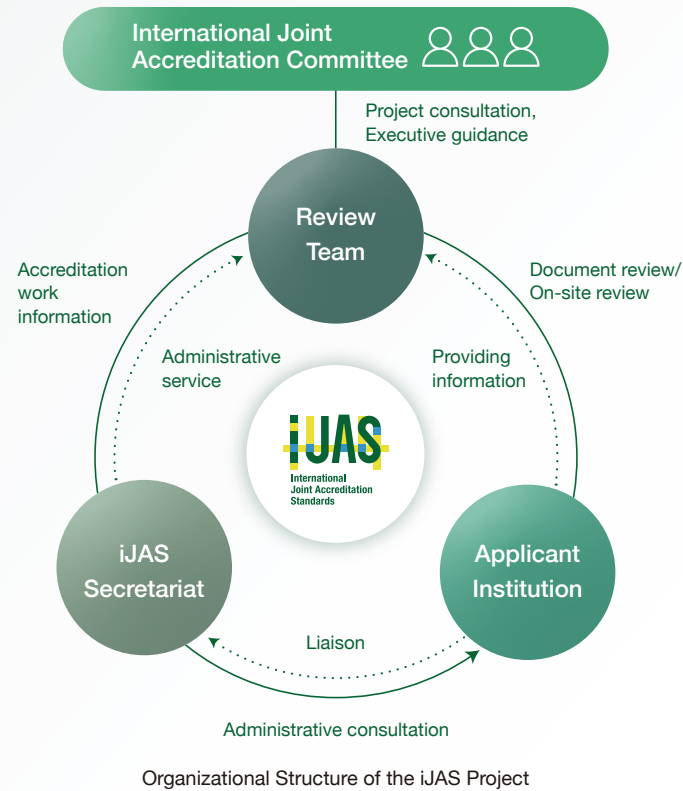
SCAN ME FOR MORE INFORMATION

On Handbook of International Joint Accreditation and Application Form



ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

The “International Joint Accreditation Committee” (hereafter referred to as the “Accreditation Committee”) shall be set up by this project to ensure the smooth and thorough conduct of the evaluation process. A “Review Team” shall be formed for each applicant institution based on their nationality and institutional characteristics under the supervision of the Accreditation Committee. Furthermore, to provide support for the iJAS Project, JUAA and TWAEA, as the two founding agencies, shall jointly establish a Secretariat (hereafter referred to as the “iJAS Secretariat”). The Review Team shall be composed of five members. Senior professors with administrative experience or senior administrative staff related to evaluation/quality assurance activities, or senior industry executives should in principle be invited to serve on the review team. Of the five reviewers, one shall be from the country of the applicant institution, and the remaining four shall be selected from other countries. The planned organizational structure of the project is shown on the right.



Organizational Structure of the iJAS Project

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility to apply for the iJAS project is open to any college or university established under the laws and regulations of its respective country.

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

The iJAS Standards consist of five integrated criteria that evaluate institutional fitness for purpose, strategic alignment, and continuous improvement of institutional quality assurance systems, while supporting innovation, stakeholder engagement, and future-oriented development.

STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 5
Institutional Mission, Governance & Strategic Sustainability	Internal Quality Assurance & Accountability	Teaching, Learning & Student Achievement	Faculty Development & Research Engagement	Social Engagement & Global Connection

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The key stages of the accreditation process is shown in the figure below. Five weeks before the on-site review, the Review Team provides the institution with a “Request for Clarification List,” and the institution submits its responses two weeks before the on-site review. The on-site review is then conducted by the Review Team. Following this, a draft evaluation report is prepared and sent to the institution, which has the opportunity to submit comments on factual errors before the evaluation results are finalized.



ACCREDITATION RESULT

ACCREDITATION RESULT		DESCRIPTION
Accredited	Valid for 6 years	The institution fully meets all requirements of the international joint accreditation standards, provides sufficient supporting information, and demonstrates the capacity for continuous improvement.
Not Accredited		The institution has not yet sufficiently demonstrated achievement of its educational objectives and does not satisfy the basic requirements of the international joint accreditation standards.

Accreditation results under the iJAS framework can be classified as either “Accredited” or “Not Accredited” in accordance with iJAS Standards. Accreditation certificates are issued in English, but may also be provided in the institution’s local language upon request. The results are published on the iJAS website and in relevant public documents, and may be disseminated on appropriate occasions to inform stakeholders.

MESSAGE FROM ACCREDITED UNIVERSITIES



Prof. Motoo Furuta
Former Rector
Vietnam Japan University
(Vietnam)

Vietnam Japan University (VJU) was established with the vision of becoming a research-oriented and innovative institution, emphasizing advanced technology and engineering disciplines that embody the strengths and cooperative spirit of both Vietnam and Japan. In an effort to enhance its governance system in accordance with Japanese standards, VJU has identified and adopted an internationally recognized set of accreditation criteria to conduct a comprehensive self-assessment, followed by applying for the iJAS accreditation.

Throughout the self-assessment process, the university has gained valuable insights into its existing strengths and areas for further improvement. We sincerely appreciate the constructive feedback provided by the external review team, whose recommendations have been instrumental in guiding us toward greater operational efficiency and higher educational quality.

We would also like to express our deep gratitude to the iJAS Secretariat for their kind and dedicated support throughout our self-assessment and accreditation journey. Based on our experience, we strongly encourage other universities to consider adopting the iJAS framework for Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance. Though concise, these standards comprehensively encompass the essential requirements for quality evaluation in higher education institutions.



Dr. Sompong Raksatham
President
Nakhon Si Thammarat
Rajabhat University (Thailand)

The recognition of iJAS accreditation, a distinguished mark of excellence in international cross-border quality assurance, is a profound honor for me as President of Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University (NSTRU). We take immense pride in this achievement, as NSTRU stands as the first university in Thailand to earn iJAS accreditation.

The achievement demonstrates our dedication to quality assurance and international recognition. The iJAS framework guides NSTRU's efforts to strengthen its position as a leading higher education institution, expanding its visibility in the region and beyond. This accreditation has transformed the University's philosophy with a global approach: 'Light of the Community, Strength of the Nation, and Gateway to the World' with ONESQA, JUAA, and TWAEA, as a bridge to international standards.

By achieving iJAS Accreditation, NSTRU both strengthens its international reputation and proudly preserves its distinctive Thai identity. In alignment with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI), Thailand, the University integrates standards that preserve Thai arts and culture, while at the same time fulfilling rigorous international benchmarks. Building on this milestone, NSTRU has taken bold steps forward. The University has entered into an academic partnership with Chengdu University to launch an undergraduate Dual Degree program, allowing students to study two years at NSTRU and two years in Chengdu. Looking ahead, NSTRU is eager to collaborate with other iJAS-accredited universities to develop dual and joint degree programs—expanding student mobility, responding to stakeholder needs, and strengthening international partnerships while advancing academic excellence.

I extend my congratulations to the iJAS for its outstanding achievement in establishing a new benchmark in international quality assurance for higher education. Beyond strengthening institutional credibility, iJAS serves as a vital platform for fostering cross-border academic collaboration, promoting resilience, and driving sustainability.

With appreciation for all who have contributed to this accomplishment, I wholeheartedly wish iJAS continued success, enduring influence, and inspiration as a global model for universities striving to elevate educational quality.

