

University Accreditation Results
(Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for university)

Kyoai Gakuen University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Gunma, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2023	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2031)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Kyoai Gakuen University

Overview

Kyoai Gakuen University defines its basic principle as “Love and Live Together,” which is a modern interpretation of its founding spirit of “Kyoai (Love Each Other).” To this end, the University promotes “student-centered learning” and “harmony with the community” as its action guidelines (mottos). The school corporation’s medium-term plan is formulated every three years to realize the founding spirit. The medium-term plan starting in AY2021 lays out the University’s vision of “becoming a university operating under an advanced educational quality assurance system with the pillar of its curricula aimed at establishing cutting-edge learning and human resource development.” Based on this vision, the University conducts educational and research activities with specific achievement targets using key goal indicators (KGI) for the domains and items in educational content, organization, environment, and management as well as the key performance indicators (KPI) for the outcomes of its three-year plan and the activities of each academic year.

The University undertakes educational activities to achieve the purpose of “promoting the visualization of student learning outcomes and evaluating the outcomes of the curriculum policy” (laid out in the educational content section of the medium-term plan. Specifically, the University has drawn up three diploma, curriculum, and admission policies, established “12 Kyoai Abilities” to be acquired through study in accordance with the diploma policy, and clarified these abilities as the learning outcomes based on the University’s basic principle. To achieve this objective, curriculum maps and charts are designed to systematically organize the curricula. The University utilizes the e-portfolio “Kyoai Career Gate (KCG)” for students to update their achievement status each academic year and share their skills learning progress in interviews with faculty members. The publicly accessible resume data system called “Kyoai Career Gate+Showcase (KCG+S)” has also been introduced to provide employers and others with evidence-based information on students’ learning activities and experiences. These are highly commendable initiatives that contribute to the visualization of student learning outcomes and the verification of learning activities. The University uses these initiatives to improve its educational programs, for example, by designing a new curriculum for AY2023 based on the issues identified after visualizing the learning outcomes. The University is

expected to accumulate student learning outcomes for further utilization.

The University also conducts regional contribution activities in cooperation with government agencies, municipalities, and local businesses to promote learning through community engagement. Through regular subjects, students participate in a wide variety of projects to address various issues in Gunma Prefecture, where the University is located. This initiative enables the University to effectively realize the action guideline (motto) of “harmony with the community” by training and developing human resources who will play an active role in the community, encouraging student independence, and upgrading lesson subjects aimed at cultivating “glocal” talents.

While promoting students’ independent learning and actively measuring student learning outcomes under the systematic curricula, as above mentioned, there are several areas of improvement the University should address related to the internal quality assurance system. The University conducted a self-study in AY2021 and an educational program review of a seven-year cycle in AY2022. However, after the inspection and assessment results are reported to the Internal Quality Assurance Committee serving as a responsible internal quality assurance organization, improvement efforts are made by other committees, centers, and bodies with no support provided by the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. The Self-Inspection and Evaluation Committee and the Educational Program Review Meeting are also in place, but both are convened in tandem by the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. This situation indicates that only the Internal Quality Assurance Committee is actually operating. It is understandable given the faculty size that each meeting body inevitably consists of overlapping members, with information accessible to all faculty members. However, the University should address this issue with the meeting bodies in charge of internal quality assurance organized based on their actual status and improvement measures taken by each organization through the support of the promotion body. Also, the maximum number of credits students can register for in a year is specified, but subjects related to qualifications are excluded. The syllabuses describe the contents of study outside the class and other information to encourage students to secure study time, but students who take courses to acquire qualifications tend to have a high number of registered credits. This issue should be addressed to ensure credit validity. In terms of student enrollment, certain majors have insufficient quota fulfillment. The University is well aware of the need to review its student recruitment methods, and is expected to continue to step up its recruitment efforts. As for finance, the University is expected to formulate a financial plan that includes measures to achieve the financial targets in order to establish a solid financial base to sustainably carry out its educational and research activities.

The University encourages student-led activities inside and outside the class, and offers support to foster student independence. In addition, the University stresses the importance placed on education through collaboration with the community, and the president, vice presidents, and faculty and staff members are working together to take creative and innovative steps to provide students with opportunities for new experiences. With the new curriculum aimed at addressing local issues from a global perspective, the University is expected to streamline its internal quality assurance system and structure to maintain and enhance these unique initiatives.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The University defines the learning outcomes based on its basic principle as “12 Kyoai Abilities,” and enhances students’ learning motivation with the e-portfolio Kyoai Career Gate (KCG), in which students input their achievement status on an annual basis and share their skills learning progress with faculty members in interviews. Radar charts are also used to visualize the students’ four years of learning outcomes. As a further step, the publicly accessible resume data system called Kyoai Career Gate+Showcase (KCG+S) has been introduced to provide employers and others with evidence-based information on students’ learning activities and experiences. Based on issues identified after visualizing the learning outcomes, the University has designed a new curriculum. It is commendable that these initiatives are being utilized to improve educational programs as well.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- To realize “harmony with the community,” one of the action guidelines (mottos) established to implement the University’s principles, the University collaborates with government agencies, municipalities, and local businesses to carry out a variety of projects, such as promoting food education through farming and addressing challenges in areas with a declining and aging population. The Regional Project Work (RPW) subjects have also been introduced to encourage students’ learning through community engagement. It is commendable that the University’s years of regional contribution activities have helped improve employment rates in Gunma Prefecture and surrounding areas, and train and develop human resources who will play an

active role in the community. Starting in AY2023, these subjects have been upgraded to lesson subjects aimed at cultivating “glocal” talents, with positive outcomes expected.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The Internal Quality Assurance Committee is positioned as a responsible quality assurance body, with the Self-Inspection and Evaluation Committee set up to implement self-studies and the Educational Program Review Meeting formed to conduct inspections and assessments from a comprehensive perspective every seven years in principle. However, the Self-Inspection and Evaluation Committee and the Educational Program Review Meeting are convened in tandem by the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. In addition, the results of inspections and assessments conducted by other committees, centers, and bodies are reported to the Internal Quality Assurance Committee, but improvement efforts made by these organizations receive no support from the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. To address these issues, the meeting bodies tasked with internal quality assurance should be reorganized based on their actual status, with the organizations’ improvement efforts supported by the body responsible for internal quality assurance.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The University sets an upper limit on the number of credits students can register for in a year, but as subjects related to qualifications are excluded, the number of registered credits remains high for students studying in the Regional Childhood Education Major or taking the teacher training course. The syllabuses explain that these students need to secure study time outside of class hours, but the measure inadequately ensures credit validity. This issue should be addressed in light of the purpose of the credit system.

University Management

- The ratio of next fiscal year’s excess of carry-over expenditures to operating income remains high, and the ratio of financial assets to the required reserve fund continues

to trend downward. This situation indicates that the University is far from establishing the solid financial base necessary to sustainably conduct its educational and research activities. The University should address this issue by reviewing the existing medium-term plan based on its financial status and formulating and implementing a medium- to long-term plan, including specific measures, to establish a sound financial base.