

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

Kogakkan University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Mie, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2016	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2017 – March.31.2024)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Kogakkan University

Overview

Kogakkan University (hereafter, the University) has its roots in Kogakkan at Hayashizaki Bunko, a school in Ise Jingu that was opened in 1882, and started as a private university with two departments (Japanese literature and Japanese history) in the Faculty of Letters in 1962. After opening and reorganizing departments, faculties, and graduate schools, the University currently has Ise campus in Ise City, Mie Prefecture, with three faculties and six departments: four departments in the Faculty of Letters, one department of the Faculty of Education, and one department in the Faculty of Contemporary Japanese Society; and two graduate schools with four majors: three majors in the Graduate School of Letters and one major in the Graduate School of Education.

Prince Kayanomiya Kuninori, the Chief Priest of Ise Jingu, sent a proclamation in 1900 stating that “students shall learn morality and scholarship rooted in the history of Japan, and practice them in society to contribute to the development of civilization,” which became the University’s founding spirit, inherited from the long tradition of Shinto at Ise Jingu.

After its accreditation review from Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2009, the University reviewed its self-study system and formulated “Implementation Outline of Internal Quality Assurance System in Kogakkan University.” The University selected ten items, including “Achievement Evaluation of the Midterm Action Plan,” prescribed in the Implementation Outline, and decided to periodically conduct self-study and evaluation of these ten items. Also, the University has reorganized the review system and set up the Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee within the administrative organization. However, the division of roles between the committee and other councils is not clearly defined, and the review process and procedures for improvements are also ambiguous. Further efforts are expected to ensure proper function of the internal quality assurance system.

In an effort to organize a school in accordance with Shinto spirit, the University has set up a research institute and museum in addition to undergraduate schools, the specialist course, and graduate schools. These units have been comprehensively managed to help them organically work together for education and research, and Shinto spirit is reflected not only in the departments, specialist course, and graduate schools studying Shinto, but in university-wide education and research. It is commendable that Shinto spirit is reflected in the monthly cultural lectures series (which has continued from the foundation of the University) as well as in the university-wide common subjects such as “Introduction to Kogaku—Shinto and Japanese Culture,” “Ise Studies,” and “Study of Symbiosis in Ise-Shima” in the “Founding Spirit” subject group in the curriculum.

In regards to social collaboration and local contribution, it is worth noting that the Local Collaboration Promotion Office, which was newly set up to unify various related units, has concluded collaboration agreements with 20 organizations, including private companies and local governments, to promote striving to be “a university as a core of local revitalization and development of human talents who will contribute to the local community” by participating in the “Knowledge Base Development Project.” “Kogakkan University Television” has aired 24 works by students from 2014 to 2016 as well as “Kogakkan University Monthly Cultural Lectures” for citizens, and the work presented in “the 34th ‘Age of Regionalism’ Video Festival 2014” also aired on multiple cable television networks.

However, student admissions should be properly managed in some of the faculties and graduate schools. Although the previous accreditation pointed out that the average of the ratios of the last five years of enrolled freshmen to the freshman admission cap and the ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap were both high in the Department of Japanese Literature in the Faculty of Letters, no improvement has been made since then. These numbers should be improved promptly.

Notable Strengths

Mission and Purpose

- It is commendable that the University has made efforts to help students understand the founding spirit and the mission, and students' knowledge of these becomes widespread as confirmed by the result of student questionnaires distributed before graduation. The founding spirit and the mission based on the Shinto spirit are made known across the University, and they have been disseminated through learning guidance in each department as well as in university-wide common undergraduate subjects such as "Introduction to Kogaku—Shinto and Japanese Culture," and "Ise Studies," and "Studies of Symbiosis in Ise-Shima," which attempt to provide active learning.

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- It is commendable that the results of students' class evaluations are used for curriculum formation and help enhance the educational content and methods. After analyzing and examining the results of students' class evaluations conducted by the Curriculum Reform Review Committee in the Faculty of Letters, the Department of Shinto offered a new subject, "Shinto English," and the Department of Japanese Literature changed the names of some subjects. In addition, the Department of Japanese History added new subjects, including "Reading Basic Historical Documents," and the Department of Communication added new psychology-related subjects.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- It is worth noting that the "Kogakkan University Monthly Cultural Lectures" initiative, which started right after the foundation of the University, has carried out the mission of social contribution since the early stages of its history by returning the fruits of faculty research to citizens. On campus, the "Sagawa Memorial Shinto Museum of Kogakkan University" displays valuable materials relating to Shinto, providing students with an opportunity to get in touch with genuine objects, and also returns research results to society. It is also commendable that the University produced a museum guide with exhibit explanations in English as well as in Japanese to enable diverse visitors to learn and understand Shinto based on research results.
- It is commendable that a series of "Study of Symbiosis in the Ise-Shima Settlement and Independence Area" subjects is considered one of the University's distinctive activities to connect with the region, and has produced an effective result by interlocking students' growth and community revitalization. In particular, "Study of Symbiosis in the Ise-Shima Settlement and Independence Area III (Basic Theory on Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Industries)," "Study of Symbiosis in the Ise-Shima Settlement and Independence Area IV (Practical Theory on Sixth-Order Industrialization)" in the "Study of Symbiosis in the Ise-Shima Settlement and Independence Area I, II, III, IV" have accepted a diverse array of students into these subjects, including staff of the collaborating local governments, institutions, and organizations supported by the university; and workers in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, sixth-order industry, and the tourism industry. In addition, through these courses, the University has developed educational programs to foster "active citizens to think and act independently" and to make qualitative changes in university education and to develop a research system that focuses on regional problems.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- In all undergraduate schools and graduate schools, the content of the policies on degree award only focus on the ideal of human talents to foster educational objectives, but does not indicate the learning outcomes required to complete the degree. This should be improved.
- In all undergraduate schools and graduate schools, the curriculum design policies only describe the current curriculum but does not indicate basic ideas of educational content and methods. This should be improved.
- In the master's program in the Graduate School of Letters, undergraduate subjects are counted as a part of required credits for degree completion, without differentiating the evaluation methods for each program. This should be improved from the standpoint of educational quality assurance.
- In the Faculty of Education, the maximum number of credits a student is allowed to register for per year is set high at 52. This should be improved from the standpoint of a credit system.
- In all undergraduate schools and graduate schools, the syllabus is written in a uniform format, but quality of description of the content varies depending on the subject. This should be improved.
- In the master's program in the Graduate School of Letters, the research guidance plan is not clearly communicated to students. This should be improved.

Enrollment

- The admission policy of the Faculty of Letters is almost identical to the university-wide unified version. The policy should be improved to indicate the desired image of students and the content and level of required knowledge in the Faculty of Letters.
- The ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.38 in the master's program in the Graduate School of Education. This number should be improved.

Internal Quality Assurance

- The University has not sufficiently implemented periodic and systematic self-study. It developed an internal quality assurance system based on "Implementation Outline of Internal Quality Assurance System in Kogakkan University," but the roles of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee and that of various other councils have not been clearly defined. Hereafter, the University should specify the roles of each committee and council, procedure, and reviewing process to ensure proper function of the internal quality assurance system.

Area of Serious Concern

Enrollment

- The averages of the ratios of the last five years of enrolled freshmen to the freshman admission cap in the Department of Japanese Literature and the Department of

Japanese History in the Faculty of Letters are high at 1.28 and 1.25 respectively, and the ratios of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap are also high at 1.29 and 1.30 respectively. These numbers must be improved.