

**Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for  
Professional Graduate Business School**

Konan University Graduate School, Graduate School of Social  
Science, Department of Accountancy



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Hyogo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2014	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2015 – March.31.2020)	

**Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results  
for the Accounting Professional Program,  
the Graduate School of Social Sciences, Konan University**

The Accounting Professional Program in the Graduate School of Social Sciences (hereafter, the Program) was established based on the founding idea of Konan Gakuen: “By emphasizing cultivation of character and promotion of health, and respecting individuality to develop the innate ability of each individual,” it aims to “train accounting professionals equipped with advanced expertise and broad knowledge in order to carry out practical and creative activities to respond to rapid economic change.” As part of the competencies students are expected to acquire, the Program promotes high ethics, an international mindset, IT skills, and skills in identifying, analyzing, and solving problems in the business sector in addition to knowledge of accounting.

However, due to a change in the operation of the certified public accountant examination system in Japan and related fundamental environmental changes in professional graduate schools in the field of accounting, the Program decided to stop recruiting students after 2015 because it will be not possible to continue fulfilling its social mission as a professional training institution in the future. In spite of this situation, the Program decided to apply for certified evaluation and accreditation in order to maintain its educational standards as a professional graduate school until the students who entered the program in 2014 complete their degrees.

This accreditation review has identified four features of the Program. First, the Program’s curriculum is formulated with a central focus on education to produce personnel equipped with high professional ethics as accounting professionals. By assigning Professional Ethics as a required subject and offering Management Ethics as an elective, the curriculum aims to cultivate professional-level ethics in the accounting field. It is also commendable that the Program facilitates study by dividing the subjects into seven groups (Financial Accounting, Administrative Accounting, Auditing, Legal, Management and Economy, Information and Statistics, and Individual Guidance) so that students can acquire broad range of knowledge beyond accounting.

The second feature is the Program offers detailed, systematic student guidance. At the beginning of each school term, a level check test is administered to all students, and the Program guides students’ selection of courses, taking their requests into account while utilizing a step-up table. It is commendable that the Program makes efforts to offer guidance that responds to each student’s situation, most of who aim to pass the certification examination.

The third feature offered by the Program is that faculty members observe each other’s classes. In order to improve the quality of education, it is important to develop the faculty’s teaching skills in addition to enriching the contents of education. In the Program, faculty members improve their teaching techniques by observing other faculty’s class sessions and exchanging honest feedback. Only a few professional graduate schools in this field make such an effort, and this effort is considered to be one of the distinct features of the Program.

The fourth feature offered by the Program is that students who have passed the essay method test of certified public accountant examination are supported by the Program including practitioner faculty of the Total Support Committee and receive advice for advancing their careers after completing the program. The Program systematically deals with problems accounting graduates face. It has made a concerted effort to be actively involved in helping graduates resolve problems after completion of the program, while in most of other schools it is common for the alumni association deals with such issues.

While the Accounting Program may be commended for these distinct features, its decision to stop recruiting students after 2015 due to the lack of incoming students

presents a problem. It is still debatable whether the Program could have made further efforts, for example, to improve its admission practices and effectiveness in selecting applicants, in spite of the changes to the certified public accountant examination. Although the current numbers of both the ratio of enrolled incoming students to the incoming students admission cap and the ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap are serious concerns, Japan University Accreditation Association (hereafter, JUAA) does not require but only suggest improvement because the Program has already decided to stop recruiting students.

The decision to stop recruiting students is a matter of university administration and as an accreditation organization, JUAA is not in the position to discuss the appropriateness of the decision. However, JUAA strongly recommends the maintenance of the educational level for current students and continuous support for graduates. In addition, how Konan University makes use of the educational experiences accumulated in the field of accounting since the establishment of the program in 2006 remains an important issue for the future. At the site visit of accreditation review this time, the president of the university mentioned the ongoing legacy of the Program, and JUAA watches the university carefully and with expectations.