

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

Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Shiga, 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 Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology

Overview

Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology defines its educational philosophy inherited from its predecessor as “nurturing ‘thinkers in action’ with well-rounded character traits and scientific rationality who respect peace and humanism above all else.” The Institute sets forth the purpose of providing education “to develop well-rounded character traits and a broad range of knowledge befitting the new era, based on the Basic Act on Education and the School Education Act, and cutting-edge bioscience expertise with scientific rationality.”

The Institute established the fifth medium-term activity plan (AY2020-AY2024) in 2019 to present its ideal of an institute and outline six basic strategies that include “clarifying admission strategies,” “enhancing its research capabilities to ensure high-quality education,” and “improving the internal quality assurance of its education.” In 2022 the Institute announced the Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology’s Comprehensive Reform in Response to the Needs of the Local Community and the Times as its vision with the three pillars of “community contribution,” “reorganizing its faculty,” and “making the Institute a public school.”

The Institute promotes internal quality assurance in accordance with the procedures of the Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology Internal Quality Assurance established with the President Council positioned as an organization responsible for promoting university-wide internal quality assurance. Specifically, to conduct internal quality assurance activities, the results of the self-studies conducted by the committees in charge of each activity of the faculty and graduate school are reported to the Faculty Activity Review Committee and the Graduate School Activity Review Committee, with their review results reported to the President Council. The council examines the reports and requests the review committees to formulate improvement measures and activity plans. In response, the review committees issue instructions for improvement to the committees in charge of the faculty and graduate school activities. In this way, the Institute has developed a multilayered PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle to make improvements.

As for education, the Institute has appropriately designed the curricula based on the diploma and curriculum policies, with curriculum maps and course charts created

and publicized to clarify the connection between the curriculum structure and the diploma policy. The undergraduate program arranges the subjects necessary to build an academic foundation for first-year students, along with experiment subjects, with the aim of raising normative awareness befitting of university students and conducting experiments safely and accurately, thereby connecting to the Specialized Subjects for the second and higher years. The Institute also offers Basic Experiments in Natural Sciences I and II, Applied Experiments I and II, and Applied Computer Practical Training for students to acquire various experimental techniques.

Among the Institute's distinctive initiatives is Peer Support launched in AY2018 as a student support system in which trained student tutors provide all new students with yearly individual consultations. It is highly commendable that this system offers new students tailored assistance with their studies and campus life, while providing student tutors with opportunities to develop a sense of independence and other qualities.

Moreover, the Institute actively engages in social cooperation and contribution activities in line with the Social Cooperation and Contribution Policy, and is working to "provide support to enhance science education for elementary and junior high school students and their teachers in an effort to return its educational and research outcomes with the aim of overcoming the regional shortfall in human resources in the science field," among other policy objectives. The Institute collaborates with Nagahama City, where it is located, to offer the Nagahama Learning Laboratory, Summer Science Classroom for Children and Parents, and Children Learning Class led by multiple faculty members in charge of experiments and practical training. It is highly commendable how the Institute takes advantage of its strengths to continuously develop human resources in science.

There are several areas of improvement and recommendations the University should address, however, apart from these distinctive initiatives. First, some departments have low ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap, and the faculty's student quotas need to be thoroughly managed. Second, the graduate school has no mechanism in place to monitor the student learning outcomes stated in its diploma policy, fails to specify the research guidance methods and schedules as research guidance plans, and does not conduct its own faculty development (FD) activities. These issues should be addressed. In terms of education and research environment, the Institute needs to make systematic efforts to secure research hours for faculty members. As for management, with regulations pertaining to organizations inadequately developed, the Institute should streamline the system to inspect and assess the appropriateness of the administrative organization as a whole to make various improvements and enhancements.

In the years ahead, the Institute is expected to begin concrete discussions led

by the President Council regarding the above items requiring improvements to upgrade the educational and research activities of the faculty, graduate school, and other programs. The Institute is also expected to advance its distinctive initiatives, thereby progressing further.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- The Student Tutor System (Peer Support) was established for students serving as tutors to offer consultation to new students through individual interviews and other means. Tutors helping new students adapt to campus life has contributed to fewer students with anxiety problems. Moreover, the system provides tutors with growth opportunities as they are tasked with planning and proposing most of the system management. Furthermore, the Student Advisor System is in place for students to provide study support under the supervision of faculty members. These commendable initiatives effectively support students in terms of campus life and learning.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- Full-time faculty members play a central role in offering the Nagahama Learning Laboratory, Summer Science Classroom for Children and Parents, and Children Learning Class open to all elementary and junior high school students in Nagahama City, with faculty members and students working as lecturers continuously carrying out projects aimed at deepening children's curiosity. In addition, Summer Science Classroom for Children and Parents annually accepts students from neighboring high schools as management staff as part of their schools' integrated studies and work experience programs. It is commendable that the Institute collaborates with the community to undertake initiatives using its strengths, thereby contributing to the development of human resources in science for regional industries and technologies.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The graduate school monitors student learning outcomes based on the assessment of degree completion, with no mechanism in place to evaluate the achievement of the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy. The graduate school is planning to create tables illustrating the connection between lesson subjects and each item of the diploma policy in the same way as the faculty, and more efforts should be made in the coming years to develop methods and indicators for monitoring and evaluating the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy before carrying out the measurements.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The graduate school does not conduct its own FD activities for educational improvements. This issue should be addressed with the master's and doctoral programs as a whole or each graduate program appropriately implementing these activities.

Education and Research Environment

- There are no rules and regulations pertaining to the faculty members' research opportunities to secure research hours as well as assigned teaching hours and other tasks, with the Institute making insufficient systematic efforts in this regard. This situation should be improved.

University Management

- The Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology Organization Regulations does not stipulate the roles of each teaching and learning organization. The Institute needs to appropriately clarify the organizations involved in its decision-making and other processes. In addition, no regulations have been formulated regarding the administrative organization's management and instruction system, pointing to the unclear positions of the staff meetings and other bodies. These issues should be addressed.

Recommendation

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The Master's Program and Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Bioscience do not specify the research guidance methods and schedules as research guidance plans. This issue must be corrected with these items specified and clarified to students beforehand.

Student Enrollment

- The average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years is low at 0.83 in the Department of Medical Bioscience, Faculty of Bioscience. The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are also low at 0.89 in the Department of Frontier Bioscience, Faculty of Bioscience, 0.78 in the Department of Medical Bioscience, Faculty of Bioscience, and 0.89 in the Faculty of Bioscience (all undergraduate programs). These ratios must be improved with the faculty's student quotas thoroughly managed.