

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

Nihon University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2024	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2032)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Nihon University

Overview

Nihon University defines its purpose and mission as “to contribute to world peace and the welfare of humanity by relying on the Japanese spirit, valuing Japanese tradition based in its history and culture, abiding by the constitution, cultivating the spirit of independent creativity, and by working for the development of culture” and “to develop cultured people who are of sound mind and body and conduct in-depth academic research by gathering a broad range of knowledge from around the world.” The graduate school’s purpose is “to teach and research advanced, specialized academic theory and applications, pursue in-depth understanding, and contribute to cultural development.” The University sets forth the educational philosophy of “independent creativity” and has formulated the Educational Constitution to articulate the types of individuals to be fostered, and the abilities and mindsets students should possess, with educational and research purposes established by the schools, colleges, departments, and graduate school programs. The University offers educational programs across a wide range of fields to undertake educational and research activities based on the three diploma, curriculum, and admission policies.

Following JUAA’s certified evaluation and accreditation in AY2017, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology identified issues related to the admission process of the Department of Medicine, School of Medicine, in AY2018, prompting JUAA to conduct an investigation. After the results revealed serious issues in the criteria involving “student enrollment,” “administration,” and “internal quality assurance” under the University Standards, JUAA cancelled the “accredited” decision in the AY2017 certified evaluation and accreditation results and determined the University failed to meet the University Standards. The University applied for JUAA’s supplementary review in AY2021 with remediation of the noncompliance issues. The review results confirmed that improvements had been made in response to the serious admission issues involving the Department of Medicine, School of Medicine. During the period of the supplementary review, however, a series of breaches of trust by then chair of the Board of Trustees and board member came to light. JUAA further investigated the University’s overall administration and uncovered serious problems related to the criteria of “administration” in the University Standards. The results concluded that the University

was “unaccredited” for JUAA’s University Standards. The areas requiring improvement pertaining to the “administration” criteria included appropriately appointing members of the Board of Trustees and other officials by not permitting arbitrary appointments made by certain executives; developing a system for properly checking the operation status of the Board of Trustees and its members, after the council and auditors failed to check the operations; and creating a new governance structure with proper functions, including a system for monitoring the Board of Trustees, to develop and implement effective and concrete improvement measures, thereby preventing the board members from engaging in insufficient discussions and improperly checking each other’s work.

In response, the school corporation undertook reforms to establish a sound administration structure, with a system introduced in July 2022 for its board members to be appointed through a new selection process to manage the structure. However, another series of wrongdoings involving the University’s sports club was exposed during governance reform. To investigate suspected illegal drug possession among club members, the University established a third-party committee in August 2023, consisting of experts on corporate governance and risk management as well as officials from an advisory body for the chair of the Board of Trustees and the president. The University also decided to review the management system of student dormitories for club members and to discuss steps to avoid a recurrence, including drug abuse prevention measures. The third-party committee’s investigation report was submitted to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and released to the public on the University website. In November 2023, the Board of Trustees decided to establish the Third-Party Committee Report Review Meeting to discuss responses, with a draft improvement plan formulated at the meeting after receiving the investigation report from the third-party committee. In January 2024, the Improvement Reform Meeting was formed to monitor and provide guidance on the plan. The University is making steady efforts in various ways to prevent a recurrence, such as checking the progress of governance reforms and providing proper follow-up guidance (student support) for the sports club.

The University is in the process of developing a system for ensuring transparency in personnel decisions to address the arbitrary selection by certain board members, a serious issue pointed out in the supplementary review results. Steady efforts should be made under the new system in the coming years. To properly check the operation status of the Board of Trustees and board members, the University has formulated regulations and other rules, but the operation of the system should be constantly monitored. The University was also urged to take effective and specific improvement measures by creating a new governance structure with proper functions, including a system for

monitoring the Board of Trustees. The review results confirmed improvements made to the system, including governance, along with its operations.

There are other areas of improvement the University should address, however, in line with JUAA's latest evaluation and assessment results. First, the University is making headway toward revamping the internal quality assurance structure, but the University-Wide Internal Quality Assurance Promotion Committee (hereafter "University-Wide Quality Assurance Committee"), positioned as a main organization promoting internal quality assurance, provides insufficient support for improvements based on the results of inspections and assessments carried out by the schools, colleges, and other programs. Efforts should be made to effectively operate the internal quality assurance system under university-wide management to make improvements. In addition, the self-studies of the teacher-training courses need to be promptly published. In terms of education, some schools, colleges, and graduate schools need to make corrections or improvements to appropriately establish the three diploma, curriculum, and admission policies. The methods for managing academic degrees across campus should also be reviewed. To ensure credit validity, the University specifies the maximum number of credits students can register for in a year, but makes exceptions resulting in a number of students registering for a high number of credits. To monitor and measure the student learning outcomes stated in the diploma policies, the schools, colleges, and graduate schools should properly measure and monitor the learning outcomes across campus. As for student enrollment, corrections or improvements need to be made for some schools, colleges, and graduate schools to address the management of their student quotas. A number of graduate schools should also conduct their own faculty development (FD) activities.

The University undertakes various distinctive initiatives focused on educational improvements reflecting student views, students' self-directing activities, and social cooperation and contribution. First among these initiatives is the outstanding Student FD CHAmmiT meeting themed on educational improvements, where students exchange opinions and compile their requests to the University into proposals by each school and college. Responses are prepared after discussions among students, faculty, and staff, with students' opinions adopted for better lessons and other improvements. The independent creativity Project for supporting extracurricular activities proposed by students contributes to community cooperation and interactions among students from different schools and colleges. It is highly commendable that the University actively takes advantage of its strengths as an institution offering a wide variety of academic programs. In terms of industry-academia-government collaboration and community contribution,

the Nihon University Business, Research and Intellectual Property Center (NUBIC) and the College of Engineering collaborate with industry-academia-government organizations to study and address challenges faced by firms in the Koriyama area of Fukushima Prefecture, with their efforts producing positive outcomes, such as the commercialization of products. The University is making outstanding efforts under the university-wide mechanism to respond to the needs of local communities and return its research outcomes to society.

The University has fundamentally reformed its management structure, established a new governance structure, and improved the internal quality assurance system in response to JUAA's certified evaluation and accreditation results. Amid the ongoing process of revamping the governance structure and creating a sound school management under a new president, the University is expected to continue its improvement efforts while verifying the effectiveness of the structures and systems in place. In the years ahead, the University is expected to operate the processes of university-wide inspections, assessments, improvements, and enhancements, along with the verification, to identify challenges through self-directed inspections and assessments, in addition to the above issues, before undertaking improvement efforts, thereby advancing its numerous distinctive initiatives to progress further.

Notable Strengths

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The Student FD CHAmmiT meeting is organized as an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to gather and exchange opinions on education and deepen their understanding. Students are encouraged to pay more attention to the quality of education they receive and ways for improvement, before compiling the talks into Proposals to Schools and Colleges. After discussions among students, faculty, and staff in each school and college, the Responses to Students to their proposals and views on the ideal schools and colleges are released to the public. These activities have led to educational improvements that include creating facilities and upgrading practical education. It is commendable that a systematic mechanism is in place to reflect student views for a better education.

Student Support

- The independent creativity Project for supporting extracurricular activities proposed by students offers assistance for projects aimed at cultural development and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with students from different schools and colleges interacting with each other. Participating students submit outcome reports at the end of their projects, with awards and other forms of recognition presented for outstanding activities. These efforts enable students to develop the ability to “To be self-directed, To think independently, and To pave one's own way” while working with other students from different schools and colleges. It is commendable that the University takes advantage of its characteristics as an institution comprising faculties and graduate schools in various specialized fields of study to realize the educational philosophy of “independent creativity.”

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The Nihon University Business, Research and Intellectual Property Center (NUBIC) was established as an organization promoting the transfer of technical research outcomes and other resources to private enterprises, and actively collaborates with government agencies and industry to contribute to society through the creation of new industries and other projects. For example, NUBIC and the College of Engineering work with industry groups, government agencies and other organizations in the Koriyama area of Fukushima Prefecture to study various challenges faced by local firms and provide solutions based on their needs. The Koriyama Area Technopolis Incubation Center, established in the College of Engineering through cooperation with municipalities, helps revitalize regional industries, such as using the outcomes of joint research between faculty members and companies to develop geothermal-powered heaters into practical use for greenhouses. The University is making commendable efforts to return its research outcomes to society through the university-wide promotion and support of industry-academia collaboration.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The University-Wide Quality Assurance Committee is positioned as an organization responsible for promoting university-wide internal quality assurance, but

improvement activities based on the results of self-studies carried out by the Self-Study Committee for Schools, Colleges and Other Programs are mainly undertaken by each school and college's Internal Quality Assurance Promotion Committee for Schools, Colleges and Other Programs, which issues instructions for improvement to the relevant sections. This situation indicates that university-wide issues are not identified from the inspections and assessments of the schools, colleges, and other programs. The University should address this issue by exploring and establishing an improvement support (management) mechanism for the University-Wide Quality Assurance Committee to constructively operate the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle for each school, college, and program, and by clarifying the coordination to effectively operate the university-wide internal quality assurance system.

- The University has failed to release the self-studies of the teacher-training courses as educational information required to be made public under the Regulation for Enforcement of the Education Personnel Certification Act. Prompt action is needed to release this information.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The diploma policy has not been established for each degree to be awarded in the Master's Program in the Graduate School of Law; Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Law; Master's Program in the Graduate School of Journalism and Media; Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Bioresource Sciences; Master's Program in Computer Science in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Doctoral Program in Computer Science in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Master's Program in Materials and Applied Chemistry in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Doctoral Program in Materials and Applied Chemistry in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Master's Program in Quantum Science and Technology in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; and Doctoral Program in Quantum Science and Technology in the Graduate School of Science and Technology. The school code stipulates that all graduate schools confer academic degrees, but the management methods are unclear. Improvements should be made to clarify the management methods for academic degrees and to appropriately establish policies that clearly state the student learning outcomes for each degree to be awarded.

- The Department of Medicine, School of Medicine, does not state the basic concept of curriculum design in its curriculum policy. The curriculum policy has not been established for each degree to be awarded in the Master's Program in the Graduate School of Law; Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Law; Master's Program in the Graduate School of Journalism and Media; Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Bioresource Sciences; Master's Program in Computer Science in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Doctoral Program in Computer Science in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Master's Program in Materials and Applied Chemistry in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Doctoral Program in Materials and Applied Chemistry in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Master's Program in Quantum Science and Technology in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; and Doctoral Program in Quantum Science and Technology in the Graduate School of Science and Technology. The basic concept of curriculum design is not stated in the curriculum policies of the Doctoral Program in Japanese Language and Literature in the Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences; Doctoral Program in Sociology (Sociology Course) in the Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences; Doctoral Program in Sociology (Social Welfare Course) in the Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences; Master's Program in the Graduate School of Risk Management; Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine; and Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies. The basic concept of curriculum implementation is not stated in the curriculum policies of the Master's Program in Sociology (Social Welfare Course) in the Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences; Doctoral Program in Psychology in the Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences; Master's Program in the Graduate School of International Relations; Master's Program in the Graduate School of Sports Sciences; Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; Master's Program in the Graduate School of Industrial Technology; and Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Industrial Technology. The Master's Program in the Graduate School of Economics and the Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of International Relations do not state the basic concepts of curriculum design and implementation in their curriculum policies. Improvements should be made to appropriately formulate the curriculum policies.
- To ensure credit validity, the schools and colleges, excluding the School of Medicine, School of Dentistry, School of Dentistry at Matsudo, and School of Pharmacy,

specify the maximum number of credits students can register for in a year, but make exceptions for teacher training and qualification courses, resulting in students who seek to take these courses registering for a high number of credits. Course guidance and other types of advice are provided for these students, but the measures are insufficient to ensure credit validity. This issue should be addressed in light of the purpose of the credit system.

- To measure and monitor student learning outcomes, the schools and colleges use assessment tests to monitor the abilities stated in the Educational Constitution, but the measurement focuses on certain abilities and does not fully cover the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policies of the schools, colleges, and other programs. The schools and colleges also use other data, including class evaluation surveys and qualification examination pass rates, for measuring and monitoring, but the connection between the evaluation indicators for these data and the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policies is vague. Moreover, the graduate schools measure and monitor students learning outcomes based on class evaluation surveys and the dissertation screening process, but the connection between the evaluation indicators and the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policies is unclear. Improvements should be made for the schools, colleges, and graduate schools to appropriately measure and monitor the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policies.

Student Enrollment

- The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.43 in the Master's Program in the Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences; 0.23 in the Master's Program in the Graduate School of Business Administration; 0.10 in the Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Business Administration; 0.28 in the Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Economics; 0.23 in in the Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Science and Technology; and 0.19 in the Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Bioresource Sciences. These ratios should be improved with the graduate schools' student quotas thoroughly managed.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences, Graduate School of

Integrated Basic Sciences, and Graduate School of Dentistry do not conduct their own FD activities. This issue should be addressed with these activities appropriately implemented.

Recommendation

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences provides only one curriculum policy for the master's and doctoral programs of Japanese Language and Literature. Corrections need to be made to establish a curriculum policy for each degree program.
- The school code states that the screening of master's theses can be substituted for themed research outcomes in the Master's Program in Architecture and Architectural Engineering in the Graduate School of Industrial Technology, but the criteria for this type of screening are not specified. This situation must be corrected.

Student Enrollment

- The Graduate School of Literature and Social Sciences provides only one admission policy for the master's and doctoral programs of Philosophy and Japanese Language and Literature. Corrections need to be made to establish an admission policy for each degree program.
- The average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years is low at 0.75 in the Department of Chemical Biology and Applied Chemistry, College of Engineering. The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.73 in the Department of Law (Second Division (Evening)), College of Law, and 0.75 in the Department of Chemical Biology and Applied Chemistry, College of Engineering, but high at 1.02 in the Department of Medicine, School of Medicine, 1.03 in the Department of Dentistry, School of Dentistry, and 1.09 in the Department of Dentistry, School of Dentistry at Matsudo. These ratios must be corrected with the student quotas of the colleges and schools thoroughly managed.