

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

Hiroshima City University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Hiroshima, 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 Hiroshima City University

Overview

Hiroshima City University defines its purpose as “aiming to become an international university that contributes to the realization of world peace and the prosperity of local communities through taking advantage of its strength in the sciences and arts, teaching and researching in specialized academic fields, and nurturing future generations with a future-oriented sensitivity and creativity, while returning superior educational and research outcomes to the community to contribute to the development of culture and the society,” based on the founding principle of “an international university contributing to the realization of world peace and the local communities through taking advantage of its strength in the sciences and arts.” The graduate school sets forth the purpose of “teaching and researching academic theory and practice, pursuing in-depth understanding, and contributing to the advancement of culture.” To achieve these purposes, the University formulated the Medium-Term Plan and the Annual Plan in line with the Medium-Term Goals set out by Hiroshima City. The University also created the Hiroshima City University Future Vision in 2021 as a long-term plan for the period up until 2044. Under this vision, the University formulated the current Third Medium-Term Plan with the key objective of building an educational and research base related to educational quality assurance and peace studies.

Under the Third Medium-Term Plan, the University actively engages in social contribution activities related to peace at an international level as a public university established by Hiroshima City. The University’s affiliated Hiroshima Peace Institute and the Graduate School of Peace Studies based in the institute organize various events that include a public lecture series and research forums to achieve the University’s founding principle and purposes. The University is also working to develop a database on peace studies to serve as a network hub for archives and other facilities in Hiroshima. To expand these initiatives, the University is collaborating with other universities and external research institutes to newly establish the Hiroshima Platform for Peace Studies and Education in order to create a knowledge hub for peace. The University’s efforts to actively promote peace studies from Hiroshima are highly commendable.

The University has formulated the Internal Quality Assurance of Education (Overall Picture) to establish an educational quality assurance system and promote

sustainable quality assurance, and adopted curriculum assessment and other measures to continuously evaluate and improve its curricula. The faculties and graduate schools strive under their systematic curricula to appropriately monitor the student learning outcomes stated in the diploma policies by creating rubrics for graduation research and master's theses and conducting self-assessments through student surveys in line with the Curriculum Assessment Checklist as indicators for measuring the achievement of the learning outcomes. Notably, the faculties initiated Curriculum Consulting in AY2021 to develop a mechanism for improving lesson methods and revising the curricula by gathering opinions on lesson subjects and curricula from students through group work reflecting on four years of study, with faculty and department course instructors aggregating and reporting the data to the Internal Quality Assurance Expert Panel. This is a highly commendable educational quality assurance initiative involving student participation.

Regarding internal quality assurance, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee responsible for promoting internal quality assurance plays a leading role in conducting university-wide inspections and assessments in terms of promoting the University's education and medium-term plan, in line with the Hiroshima City University Internal Quality Assurance Policy (hereafter "Internal Quality Assurance Policy") and the Hiroshima City University Internal Quality Assurance Procedures (hereafter "Internal Quality Assurance Procedures"). As for educational quality assurance, the faculties, graduate schools, and other programs carry out inspections and assessments in accordance with the University Standards, and the Internal Quality Assurance Expert Panel compiles and reports the results to the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. To assure the internal quality of the medium-term plan, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee inspects and assesses the performance of the Annual Plan and compiles the Activity Performance Report, which is discussed by the Education and Research Council, Management Council, and Board of Directors, before being reported to Hiroshima City, which established the University. The report is also evaluated by the Hiroshima City Public University Corporation Evaluation Committee. To address the issues identified in these inspections and assessments, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee issues requests for improvement to the faculties, graduate schools, and other programs, and each division undertakes improvement efforts, thereby operating the university-wide PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle.

There are several areas of improvement the University should address, however. First, some faculties and graduate schools inadequately describe the contents of the three diploma, curriculum, and admission policies, and these policies need to be

described more appropriately for each course and degree to be awarded. Second, some graduate schools fail to clarify the screening criteria for master's theses and themed research papers, nor do they adequately conduct their own faculty development (FD) activities. These issues should be addressed. Next, the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is high in one department, but low in one graduate school, pointing to the need to thoroughly manage student quotas. The University should also provide appropriate training for academic assistants.

In the years ahead, the University is expected to strengthen its internal quality assurance system under the president's leadership and undertake educational and research activities in line with its founding principle of contributing to world peace and the community. The University is also expected to steadily produce educational outcomes and fulfill its role as a public university established by Hiroshima City by continuously developing human resources who can play an active role in both local and international communities.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The University conducts Curriculum Consulting) as part of its curriculum assessments. To improve its education program, the University has developed a mechanism for students expected to graduate to hold group work discussions on the notable strengths and areas of improvement of lesson subjects and curricula, with the results compiled by course instructors in the faculties and departments and reported to the Internal Quality Assurance Expert Panel. This approach helps understand and compile the challenges of improving teaching methods and tasks for future curriculum reform, while providing students with opportunities to reflect on their own growth. This is a commendable educational quality assurance initiative involving student participation, with these efforts expected to improve the university-wide curriculum.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The University strives to create and maintain world peace as a public university established by Hiroshima City, and its affiliated Hiroshima Peace Institute continuously undertakes various activities, including organizing the Hiroshima

Peace Seminar and international symposiums to discuss world peace through current affairs and from academically broad perspectives and developing a database on peace studies, with its academic research outcomes returned to the wider society. In addition, the University collaborates with the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and other universities in the city and prefecture of Hiroshima to establish the Hiroshima Platform for Peace Studies and Education. It is commendable that the University is expanding its activities in collaboration with other institutions to create a system underscoring the importance of peace in the international community, with its efforts to promote peace studies from Hiroshima expected to progress further.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The diploma policy is not established for each degree to be awarded in the Faculty of Information Sciences, Graduate School of International Studies (Master's Degree Program and Doctoral Degree Program), and Graduate School of Information Sciences (Master's Degree Program and Doctoral Degree Program). In addition, the Graduate School of Information Sciences (Master's Degree Program and Doctoral Degree Program) does not specify the student learning outcomes, including knowledge, skills, abilities, and other qualities, necessary to award its degrees. These issues should be addressed with these items established and clarified.
- The curriculum policy is not established for each degree to be awarded in the Faculty of Information Sciences, Graduate School of International Studies (Master's Degree Program and Doctoral Degree Program), and Graduate School of Information Sciences (Master's Degree Program and Doctoral Degree Program). Moreover, the basic concept of curriculum implementation is not stated in the curriculum policies of the Graduate School of International Studies (Doctoral Degree Program), Graduate School of Information Sciences (Master's Degree Program and Doctoral Degree Program), and Graduate School of Peace Studies (Master's Degree Program and Doctoral Degree Program). These issues should be addressed with these items established and clarified.
- The Graduate School of International Studies (Master's Degree Program) requires the submission of a master's thesis or themed research paper for course completion,

but the screening criteria for these papers are identical. This issue should be addressed with the screening criteria clarified separately for theses and research papers.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap in AY2023 is high at 1.21 in the Department of Biomedical Information Sciences, Faculty of Information Sciences. This ratio should be lowered with the faculty's student quota thoroughly managed.
- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.11 in the Graduate School of Information Sciences (Doctoral Degree Program). Improvement measures such as introducing an online admission system have been adopted, but the ratio remains low. More efforts are needed to ensure that the graduate school's student quota is thoroughly managed.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The Graduate School of Arts does not conduct its own FD activities. Efforts are needed to implement these activities.

Education and Research Environment

- The Hiroshima City University Teaching Assistant Guidelines stipulates that teaching assistants (TAs) are tasked with providing research guidance assistance at graduate school, but doctoral students are providing such assistance to master's students. This issue should be addressed with appropriate training conducted in light of the role of TAs.

Recommendation

Student Enrollment

- None of the graduate schools have established an admission policy for each degree program. This situation must be corrected with the policy clearly stated.