

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

Ryutsu Keizai University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Ibaraki, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2021	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.1.2022 – March 31, 2029)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Ryutsu Keizai University

Overview

In line with the mission of “advancing academic research in distribution through school education in the current era known as the distribution revolution age and thereby fostering outstanding individuals capable of contributing to the betterment of social welfare and the enrichment of culture,” Ryutsu Keizai University has as its purpose “to impart broad-based knowledge, to strive to cultivate personality, and conduct academic research and education on a range of social sciences and thereby fostering outstanding individuals capable of contributing to the development of industry and the enrichment of culture.” In order to achieve its mission and purpose, in 2020 the University formulated a medium-term business plan for 2020 to 2024 and is currently working on educational and research activities.

Regarding internal quality assurance, regular checks and reviews have not been properly conducted since the previous University Accreditation. Even though individual faculties and graduate schools conduct checks and reviews, organizations and procedures are not adequately in place to collect the results on a university-wide level and use them for university-wide checks and reviews. This has led to a situation where there are inconsistencies between faculties even though degree award policies (diploma policies) and curriculum design and implementation policies (curriculum policies) have been established for undergraduate and graduate division curricula, and where some graduate schools essentially have the same admission policy for different degrees. Thus educational management for ensuring internal quality assurance is not functioning properly. In addition, even though the University has an internal quality assurance system centered on the Self-Checking and Assessment Committee that is responsible for internal quality assurance, most checks and reviews related to educational management are carried out by the University Council that is made up of the same members. Therefore, there are issues with the function and procedures of the internal quality assurance system, which should be improved. However, the new executive team headed by the president appointed this year seems to be eager to solve these internal quality assurance issues, establishing the new position of vice-president, for example. The JUAA hopes improvements are made going forward.

As for education, each faculty and graduate school has designed its curriculum

in accordance with the degree award policy and curriculum design and implementation policy. A subject numbering system and course-taking model have been created to offer subjects in a way that allows study in a desirable order, thereby helping students learn in a systematic manner. Furthermore, the University offers extensive student guidance and support, including Introductory Education in the first year, a support program for helping students develop their learning skills after the first year, and pre-enrollment learning support and essay writing seminars held by the Education and Learning Support Center, etc.

The University offers a range of financial support programs that enable students to continue studying at the University even under COVID-19 pandemic conditions, including the Special Scholarship Student Program for providing financial support to outstanding students, as well as the RKU Learning Environment Development Scholarship and the Emergency Scholarship Student Selection in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic that were established in 2020. These are commendable endeavors. In addition, in the area of social cooperation and social contribution, the University engages in activities under the cooperation agreement with Ryugasaki City and Matsudo City, as well as the Logistics Industry-Government-University Collaboration Consortium centered around the Distribution Sciences Laboratory and the Logistics Innovation Project: Research Hub Creation and Human Resources Development for Realizing Advanced Logistics that aim to achieve the University's mission. It is highly commendable that the University is contributing to the distribution and logistics industry and producing continuous achievements through these initiatives.

However, there are not a few issues that should be improved. First, in terms of the identification of education and learning outcomes, some faculties and graduate schools do not have an appropriate curriculum design and implementation policy, and learning outcomes are not appropriately identified in graduate programs. This should be improved. As for student enrollment, the student enrollment quota fill rate in many graduate schools and the transfer student quota fill rate in some faculties do not satisfy the standards. This should be improved to ensure proper student quota management. The graduate schools have the same admission policy for different degrees, which also requires improvement. Furthermore, the individual graduate school programs do not clearly present the method and schedule for research supervision to students. This should be corrected. In addition, although the situation is expected to be improved by April 2022, up until 2021 some faculties, departments, and graduate schools had less full-time professors and research supervision assistant

professors than the number required by law. These issues have been caused by the fact that the University has not conducted regular, organizational checks and reviews since 2013 up to the current University Accreditation and thus failed to ensure the continuous and effective functioning of its internal quality assurance system. Therefore, the JUAA urges the University to reconstruct its internal quality assurance system and correct these issues immediately.

As explained above, although the University engages in commendable initiatives in the areas of education and student support, there exist serious issues that require correction and improvement. Under its new structure headed by the new president, the University has announced its intention to solve these issues by restructuring its internal quality assurance system and enabling the system to function effectively. Therefore, the JUAA hopes the University overcomes the issues and develops its many distinctive initiatives even further to bring about further progress in the future.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- The University offers financial support under the Special Scholarship Student Program. Specifically, the University provides a scholarship to aspiring students who have achieved outstanding grades on the condition that they receive portfolio guidance and participate in RKU Future Skills Challenge activities, aiming to nurture leaders who are outstanding both academically and in character. With the help of dedicated advisors, scholarship students conduct research on a topic of their choice to acquire skills that will be useful in the future, such as problem-solving skills and information processing skills. This is a commendable program that has led to the development of model students.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The University has participated in the Logistics Industry-Government-University Collaboration Consortium for over 10 years, contributing to the development of advanced human resources by holding seminars, etc. for exploring ways to improve onsite operations in companies. In 2018, the University launched the Logistics Innovation Project that aims to create a hub for conducting research on social systems and local logistics as well as developing advanced logistics human resources, under which it has engaged in activities related to logistics and distribution businesses and educational

programs. For instance, as part of the project, the Logistics Innovation Promotion Center studies and formulates recommendations on disaster response measures based on public-private and intercompany cooperation from a logistics perspective. Through these activities, the University provides opportunities for exchanging information with the relevant industry groups, explores the future of industry-academia cooperation, and contributes to the industry, which is commendable in light of the University's mission and purpose.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- Even though the Self-Study Committee is the organization responsible for conducting analyses on the basis of the results of checks and reviews and considering measures for improvement, its members are identical to those of the University Council, which is the supreme body in charge of educational affairs, and essentially almost all of the measures for improvement are considered by the University Council. Therefore, the roles and authorities of each of the two organizations are unclear. In addition, the University failed to conduct any university-wide self-study during the period between the previous University Accreditation and 2020, and feedback for improvement is not adequately provided to individual divisions even today. Therefore, under the supervision of faculties and graduate schools by the internal quality assurance promotion organization, the University should make improvements to ensure the functioning of internal quality assurance.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The Faculty of Distribution and Logistics Systems' Department of Distribution and Logistics Systems and the Graduate School of Law Master's Course do not clearly present the basic ideas on curriculum implementation. This should be improved.
- Although learning outcomes are identified in each faculty, the relationship of learning outcomes with the assessment of academic achievement and the GPA system is unclear. This should be improved. In addition, although the University intends to identify learning outcomes in its graduate schools on the basis of the assessment of academic achievement in the respective subjects, the correlation between the indicators and criteria for assessment of academic achievement and

the degree award policy is unclear. This should be improved.

Student Enrollment

- The Graduate School of Economics and the Graduate School of Distribution and Logistics Systems have almost identical admission policies for their master's and doctor's courses, respectively. This should be improved. The admission policy of the master's and doctor's courses in the Graduate School of Sociology only describes the goal for human resources development, which should be improved.
- The fill rate of the ratio of the number of transfer students to the transfer student quota is low at 0.15 in the Faculty of Sociology's Department of Tourism and 0.00 in the two departments of the Faculty of Law. This should be improved to ensure proper undergraduate student quota management.
- The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.35 for the Graduate School of Economics Master's Course, 0.00 for Graduate School of Economics Doctor's Course, 0.20 for the Graduate School of Sociology Master's Course, 0.00 for the Graduate School of Sociology Doctor's Course, 0.08 for the Graduate School of Distribution and Logistics Systems Master's Course, 0.13 for the Graduate School of Distribution and Logistics Systems Doctor's Course, and 0.10 for the Graduate School of Law Master's Course. This should be improved to ensure proper graduate student quota management.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- Regarding faculty personnel affairs-related procedures, the University determines whether to promote or hire faculty members internally solely on the basis of an examination by the relevant faculty council or graduate school committee. However, regarding faculty organization, consideration should be made to the organizational development of university education and graduate school education that is required by law, and improvements should be made to ensure the president's authority. Furthermore, the University should conduct regular checks and reviews regarding faculty appropriateness from a university-wide perspective in the Self-Study Committee, among other bodies, to make improvements.

Recommendation

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The Graduate School of Law Master's Course presents the method of research supervision to students as part of a research supervision plan, but does not clearly indicate the schedule for research supervision. Furthermore, all the other graduate school programs do not clearly present the method and schedule for research supervision to students. This should be improved.