

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

Aino University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Osaka, 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 Aino University

Overview

Aino University, founded on the spirit of “human education based on Philo-Sophia,” sets forth the educational philosophy of “Saluti et solatio aegrorum (To heal and comfort the sick),” and defines its purpose as “fostering talented professionals who can contribute to the enhancement of culture and the advancement of medical care and welfare by providing students with a broad range of knowledge and practical expertise, while cultivating a vigorous spirit of independence and a strong sense of responsibility.” The University is also taking further steps by promoting “sym-medical,” a new approach to medical care through dialogue and collaboration among various professionals, with the aim of developing interprofessional education in a practical way to realize patient-centered healthcare. Based on the founding spirit and educational philosophy, the University has formulated medium-term goals to achieve the purposes of its undergraduate and graduate schools, and laid out four targets shared with the school corporation that include “measures and future investments to strengthen the quality of education and student services in response to changes in society” and “creating new social value in such fields as medical care, healthcare, and health promotion through joint research and other projects with educational institutions and businesses to return its educational and research outcomes to society.” The University has mapped out five key strategies with key performance indicators to achieve the targets by 2025.

Regarding the University’s internal quality assurance, the Management Meeting has been positioned as an organization responsible for promoting internal quality assurance since 2022 under the Internal Quality Assurance/Teaching and Learning Management Promotion Structure. With the establishment of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee, the University has put in place an organizational structure for promoting the work necessary for inspections and assessments in cooperation with the departments, graduate schools, faculty council, and research committee (hereafter “Educational Implementation Organization”). In AY2022, the University began developing a mechanism for operating the university-level PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle by inspecting and assessing the faculty, departments, and graduate schools, checking and evaluating each committee’s activity reports, and reflecting the results in the next academic year’s activity plan. In the coming years, the University is expected to

operate the internal quality assurance system with a more specific process reflecting these results in its activity plan, and to make improvement and enhancement efforts in line with the internal quality assurance policy and the internal quality assurance committee regulations.

As for education, the University established a diploma policy consisting of “knowledge,” “skills,” “attitude,” and “co-creation” in 2019 based on its educational philosophy and goals. Under this policy, each department adopts its diploma policy linked to the faculty’s policy. The Graduate School of Nursing formulated a diploma policy with these four items in AY2020, in line with the educational and research objectives stipulated in the graduate school regulations.

The University has eagerly introduced active learning to encourage students to actively participate in class. The Sym-Medical subjects, established jointly as a course requirement by four departments, adopts problem-based learning (PBL) and team-based learning (TBL). The Sym-Medical Theory subject, previously offered only to third-year students, was made available in 2020 to students of all years. In addition, the University has introduced its own rubric evaluations to visualize students’ four years of learning. These initiatives are commendable.

There are several areas of improvement the University should address, however. First, the graduate schools monitor and evaluate student learning outcomes based on the screening of dissertations, but the connection to the diploma policy is vague. This issue should be addressed. Second, in terms of the University’s finances, the ratio of financial assets to the required reserve fund is low due to the closure and establishment of the university corporation’s affiliated schools. This situation indicates that the University is far from establishing a solid financial base to carry out its educational and research activities. To address this issue, the University should clarify the measures to achieve its financial targets.

In the years ahead, the University is expected to upgrade its graduate school education by further clarifying the assessment plan for the graduate schools under the president’s leadership. To address the financial issue, efforts should be made to establish a solid financial base with clear, specific measures to achieve the target values stated in the medium-term plan. The University is also expected to effectively operate its internal quality assurance system, thereby enhancing the student learning outcomes.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- To embody the new “sym-medical” approach, the Sym-Medical Theory subject, previously offered to students of a certain year, was upgraded to Sym-Medical I to IV as required subjects jointly studied by students of all years in the four departments of nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and medical engineering. A unique rubric evaluation chart is adopted to visualize the subject takers’ learning by measuring the degree to which they have acquired the communication and other skills necessary for interprofessional collaboration. Moreover, the University has introduced a new “sym-medical” entrance examination to accept students with collaboration and communication skills by requiring them to participate in group discussions from the time of enrollment. It is commendable that the University has enhanced its educational and other programs to produce highly competent professionals who can meet various healthcare needs.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The Graduate School of Nursing monitors and evaluates student learning outcomes based on the screening of dissertations, but the connection between the diploma policy and the measurement methods is unclear. This issue should be addressed to measure the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy.

University Management

- The balance sheet ratio for operating the University’s activities is above average for a private university with multiple faculties in science, engineering, and other fields, but the ratio of financial assets to the required reserve fund is low due in part to the closure of the Shiga School of Medical Technology and the opening of the Biwako Professional University of Rehabilitation. This situation indicates that the University is far from establishing the financial base necessary to sustainably conduct its educational and research activities. Efforts should be made in the years ahead to clarify specific measures to achieve the target values stated in the medium-term plan with the aim of establishing a solid financial base.