

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

Aoyama Gakuin University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, 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 Aoyama Gakuin University

Overview

Aoyama Gakuin University's mission is based on the Educational Policy of Aoyama Gakuin, and stipulates that the institution will “nurture persons who, with a sound understanding based on global perspectives, possess the wisdom and strength with which to discover and solve issues personally.” In addition, in order to fulfill the founding spirit and its mission, Aoyama Gakuin has issued the “AOYAMA VISION” and the “AOYAMA VISION: Committing to Higher Expectations” as well as drawing up the “Aoyama Gakuin School Corporation: Medium- to Long-term Plan <2020–2024>” as its medium- to long-term plan. As such, it is recognized as working toward the enhancement of its educational and research activities.

The university-wide internal quality assurance system consists of the All-University Self-Study Committee (hereinafter the “All-University Committee”, which is responsible for verification, and the Education Management Promotion Council, which is responsible for making improvements. However, the fact that this is not consistent with the current relevant regulations poses a problem. Internal quality assurance activities are conducted in accordance with the following procedure: check and review activities are conducted by departmental self-study committees (hereinafter the “Departmental Committees”, etc., the results of which are reported to the All-University Committee, which issues the necessary instructions for improvements and takes measures accordingly. However, the All-University Committee is not equipped to verify the self-study results by the Departmental Committees, nor to encourage improvements, so this requires remedial action.

Regarding education, both the undergraduate and graduate divisions have organized their curriculums appropriately in accordance with the degree award policy (diploma policy) and curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy). For example, the undergraduate program is based on the “Aoyama Standard” for liberal arts education, and the curriculum is organized in terms of the specialized education provided by each faculty and department. In addition, the faculties and graduate schools provide education corresponding to the respective attributes of lectures, seminars, and experimental/practical training, as well as incorporating classes taught exclusively in English, classes that provide opportunities to learn through game simulations, and classes based on Project Based Learning (PBL).

The National Children's Home Recommendation System, newly established in AY2018, is a system for admission by recommendation for residents of children's homes that are members of the National Council of Social Welfare's National Council of Children's Homes, and is an excellent initiative that is highly distinctive, contributes to the realization of Aoyama Gakuin University's educational philosophy, and is expected to develop in the future.

In addition, the establishment of the AGU Integrated Research Organization has developed and strengthened various research support systems within the University, and the enhancement of research support, centering on the Liaison Center, is highly commendable as an initiative to foster young researchers.

Furthermore, in AY2016 the Volunteer Center was established based on the activities of the Aoyama Gakuin University Volunteer Station, which was primarily staffed by students. Also worthy of note is the fact that the center coordinates the regular "Service Learning" courses, in which students can enhance their learning by participating in activities at NPOs and other organizations, thereby energizing the practice of civic cooperative education.

However, there are several issues that should be improved. Problems relating to degree award policies and curriculum design and implementation policies were found in a considerable number of graduate schools. There are also graduate schools where the details of the student admission policy is the same for both the master's and doctoral programs, and this should be corrected.

In addition, the University does not have a system in place to identify and assess learning outcomes as stipulated in the degree award policy, and has not been able to do so in a multifaceted and appropriate manner. This should be improved. Other issues include graduate student quota management.

In the future, the JUAA hopes to see further development achieved by restructuring the internal quality assurance system, resolving problems through these efforts, and further developing the University's distinctive initiatives.

Notable Strengths

Student Enrollment

- The National Children's Home Recommendation System, newly established in AY2018, is a system for admission by recommendation for residents of children's homes that are members of the National Council of Social Welfare's National Council of Children's Homes. Under this program, successful students are exempted from the entrance fee and tuition for four years, as well as receiving

a monthly scholarship of a certain amount. This system is highly commendable as a distinctive initiative that contributes to the realization of Aoyama Gakuin University's educational philosophy.

Education and Research Environment

- The establishment of the AGU Integrated Research Organization has led to the development and strengthening of various research support systems within the University, and research support centered on the Liaison Center has also been enhanced. This is commendable because it has resulted in the revitalization of research activities, increased acquisition of external funding, and the development of young researchers.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- Based on the student staff-led activities at the Aoyama Gakuin University Volunteer Station, which was established after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the Volunteer Center established by the University in AY2016, clearly demonstrating its commitment to volunteering activities under the Policy on Social Cooperation and Contribution. The Volunteer Center coordinates the regular Service Learning courses, which allow students to participate in activities at NPOs and other organizations, as well as undertaking initiatives to energize the practice of civic cooperative education. It is commendable that, through these and similar initiatives, the University provides support for activities where students collaborate with citizens.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The same criteria for evaluating dissertations and research achievements in specific subjects are used for the Graduate School of International Politics, Economics and Communication's three Master's Programs in Departments of International Politics, International Economics, and International Communication. This should be improved.
- Although the University conducts grade assessments for each class subject and student surveys for class improvement, it does not have a system in place to properly identify and assess student learning outcomes as specified in the degree

award policies of each faculty and graduate school. Improvements are required to implement this in a multifaceted and appropriate manner.

Student Enrollment

- The ratios of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.43 for the Master's Program at the Graduate School of Literature, 0.17 for the Doctor's Program in Graduate School of Law, 0.13 for the Five-year Doctor's Program in Graduate School of Cultural and Creative Studies, 0.24 for the Doctor's Program in Graduate School of Science and Engineering, and high at 2.11 for the Doctor's Program in Graduate School of Social Informatics. Improvements are required in order to ensure proper graduate student quota management, including the implementation of measures currently under consideration.

Recommendation

Internal Quality Assurance

- A system has been established in which the All-University Committee performs verification and the Academic Management Promotion Council takes charge of improvement initiatives for priority issues identified by the committee. However, regulations have not been established governing the status of internal quality assurance initiatives to be undertaken by the Academic Management Promotion Council. In addition, although the Departmental Committees conduct self-study and assessments based on the self-study checklist, there is no functioning mechanism for the All-University Committee to verify each department's inspection and assessment and to encourage improvements and enhancements. Taking this into account, remedial measures should be taken to ensure that going forward, university-wide internal quality assurance promotion bodies are promptly and appropriately involved in the management of each department's PDCA cycle, and that steady improvements and enhancements are made.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- In the Graduate School of Economics' Department of Economics and Department of Public and Regional Economics, the details of the curriculum design and implementation policy are the same for the Master's and Doctoral programs. No specifics are provided on the basic approach to the design of curricula for the Graduate School of Law's Doctor's Programs in Department of Private Law and Department of Public Law, Graduate School of International

Politics, Economics and Communication's Doctor's Program in Department of International Communication. No specifics are provided on the basic approach to implementation of curricula for the College of Economic's Department of Economics and Graduate School of International Management's Master's program in Department of International Management as well as Five-year Doctor's Programs in Department of International Management Science at Aoyama Business School. No specifics are provided on the basic approach to either curriculum design or implementation for the Graduate School of Literature's Doctor's program in Department of Japanese Literature and Language and Graduate School of Science and Engineering's Combined Frontier Program. Furthermore, the PhD Program and the D.B.A. Program at Aoyama Business School's Department of International Management Science share the same degree award policy and curriculum design and implementation policy, even though the degrees awarded are different. This should be corrected.

Student Enrollment

- At the Graduate School of Education, Psychology and Human Studies' Department of Education and Department of Psychology, the details of the admission policy are the same for the Master's and Doctor's programs, a situation that should be remedied to establish appropriate policies for each degree program.