

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

**The Graduate School of Social Design**



<b>Basic Information of the Institution</b>	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
<b>Accreditation Status</b>	
Year of the Review: 2023	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2031)	

## **Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for the Graduate School of Social Design**

### **Overview**

The Graduate School of Social Design defines its purpose as “imparting profound academic knowledge from a broad perspective, while researching and teaching to cultivate highly specialized professionals with problem-solving and value-creation skills in an advanced information society,” based on the school corporation’s principle of “playing an important role in society through intellectual practical research and education.” Under its principle and purpose, the School has established the School of Communication Design and the School of Professional Education, and the two professional graduate schools strive respectively to train communication professionals who can connect society, organizations, and people, and to develop human resources who can create totally new learning together. The School also undertakes educational and research activities under the present medium-term plan with objectives that include reviewing the organizational structures of its graduate schools, affiliated research institutes, and other bodies, improving its educational and research activities, and strengthening its management structure and governance.

Regarding the School’s internal quality assurance, the School-Wide Self-Assessment Committee is positioned as a responsible promotion organization under the Internal Quality Assurance Policy and the Self-Assessment Committee Regulations. In the inspection and assessment process, the Divisional Self-Assessment Committee formed in each graduate school carries out inspections and assessments and reports the results to the Collaboration Council for Educational Program. Based on the council’s comments, the committee prepares and submits the Self-Assessment Report to the School-Wide Self-Assessment Committee, which examines and evaluates the validity of the report before presenting proposals and advice to each division. In response, the Divisional Self-Assessment Committee formulates and implements improvement plans, and the School-Wide Self-Assessment Committee provides assistance in the implementation to carry out a school-wide self-assessment. However, this internal quality assurance promotion system is not yet fully operational as it was recently developed at the end of AY2022, and whether the system is effectively operated as of AY2023 is uncertain. New policies and regulations have been clarified, but the Graduate School Working Level Meeting and the Graduate School Liaison Meeting, which are neither

positioned in the internal quality assurance structure nor stipulated in regulations or other rules, play an important role in internal quality assurance as they are involved in planning strategies and making decisions. Moreover, the Divisional Self-Assessment Committee is formed only in the graduate schools, and an affiliated research institute and administrative organizations are not subject to inspections and assessments. The School should clarify this situation and establish a school-wide internal quality assurance structure with inspections and assessments covering all educational, research, and other activities conducted on campus.

As for education, the two graduate schools have established diploma and curriculum policies, and designed their curricula with a focus on interactive, small-group lessons. A variety of class formats, including discussions, case studies, and workshops, are adopted to optimize the learning effects and maximize the learning outcomes, thereby enhancing students' practical skills. However, with the curricula dealing with practical domains rather than being based on existing academic fields, the graduate schools are expected to remain focused on ensuring their curricula are appropriate and systematic. The awarding of degrees requires a prescribed number of credits and academic work equivalent to a master's thesis. The Research Review Committee makes evaluations based on a review rubric, but the connection with the student learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy is inadequate. This issue should be addressed to monitor and measure the learning outcomes. As mentioned above, the School's internal quality assurance system should clarify the roles of each meeting body based on actual conditions to assure the quality of its education. The Graduate School Working Level Meeting is not stipulated in the regulations, but plays an important role in planning strategies and making decisions as to the School's future. Regulations should be established and the School's decision-making process clarified. Moreover, the School actively conducts public relations activities to attract applicants based on the admission policy, but fails to fulfill the freshman student enrollment quotas. Regarding the School's faculty and faculty organization, the criteria for promotion are stipulated in the internal regulations, but they are not notified or announced to full-time faculty members. These issues should be addressed. Furthermore, the School is expected to improve its educational and research environment by upgrading its library, e-journals, and databases to provide better services for graduate students taking courses entirely online.

In the coming years, the School should lay out its long-term vision and conduct educational, research, and other activities in line with the medium-term plan under its vision, as preparations are underway to establish a new graduate school. The School-Wide Self-Assessment Committee, established following the School's decision to undergo

JUAA's evaluation and accreditation for the first time, is expected to play a central role in effectively operating the internal quality assurance system. Through these steps the School is expected to progress further by assuring the quality of its envisioned "intellectual practical research and education," enhancing its distinctive features, and resolving various issues.

## **Suggestions for Improvement**

### *Internal Quality Assurance*

- An internal quality assurance system has been developed with the School-Wide Self-Assessment Committee positioned as a promotion body, but the Graduate School Working Level Meeting and the Graduate School Liaison Meeting, bodies not stipulated in policies and regulations, play an important role in discussing and implementing effective improvement measures based on the inspection and assessment results. Moreover, the Divisional Self-Assessment Committee is formed only in the graduate schools, and the appropriateness of the activities of the affiliated research institute and administrative organizations is not subject to inspections and assessments. The School should address this situation by appropriately specifying the institutes and organizations subject to inspections and assessments, and by clarifying the actual conditions of its meeting bodies to streamline and operate the internal quality system effectively.

### *Educational Program and Learning Outcomes*

- The School of Communication Design and the School of Professional Education use a rubric to evaluate students' academic work equivalent to a master's thesis, but the connection between the rubric and the student learning outcomes stated in their diploma policies is vague. This issue should be addressed with these outcomes monitored and evaluated in an appropriate, multifaceted way.

### *University Management*

- The Graduate School Working Level Meeting, chaired by the general manager and comprised of the deans of the graduate schools, heads of programs, staff members and other officials, is positioned in the administrative system of the school

corporation. Its members and items for examination and review are not stipulated in the regulations, but the meeting body is involved in the strategic-planning and decision-making processes, and discusses and decides on initiatives to be implemented by the School. This situation should be addressed with rules and regulations established to clarify the School's decision-making process.