

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

Osaka University of Pharmaceutical Sciences



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Osaka, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2018	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2019 – March.31.2026)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Osaka University of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Overview

Osaka University of Pharmaceutical Sciences (hereafter, the University) has been committed since its establishment to the founding philosophy of “fostering the spirit of self-help and independence, and imparting in-depth pharmacy knowledge to cultivate humane and compassionate pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists, thereby contributing to improving people’s welfare and culture.” Based on its mission to “create knowledge through an enterprising spirit and contribute as a community-based university to building a fulfilled and healthy society through healthcare services,” the University undertakes educational and research activities related to pharmacy and trains pharmaceutical professionals. To realize this mission and the objectives of human resources development, it formulated a six-year medium-term plan starting in fiscal 2014, and has strived since to enhance its educational quality based on six priorities, including strengthening governance in education and research, and launching new initiatives as a university that contributes to the local community. In fiscal 2018, the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences stopped accepting applications for the Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences (four-year program) and focused exclusively on the Division of Pharmacy (six-year program).

The medium-term plan features close cooperation between pharmacy and medicine to promote advanced pharmaceutical education and research as a key item. In accordance with its new pharmaceutical education model and core curriculum, the University designs distinctive curriculums by actively encouraging inter-professional education (IPE) in collaboration with regional medical universities and institutions. It is highly commendable that through these educational approaches the University is able to facilitate the acquisition of advanced knowledge and skills required to handle pharmaceuticals, while nurturing high moral values and training pharmacists who can participate in clinical practice as medical team members. In addition to working together with regional universities and medical institutions, the University is returning its education and research outcomes to society and expanding its recurrent education programs (continuing education after graduation) in line with its medium-term plan. Among its notable efforts are planning and organizing diverse courses and training sessions to support pharmacists’ continuous self-improvement, and launching the Lifelong Learning Center in fiscal 2017. These distinctive initiatives are expected to spur

further development.

To undertake these initiatives, the University has strengthened its governance and internal control and developed an effective internal quality assurance system. Specifically, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee led by the president has served as an organization promoting the University's internal quality assurance since fiscal 2016. The committee has drawn up various policies to conduct annual verification and clarified the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle from educational planning and design to management, inspection, and improvement to develop a system that provides improvement support for the faculty council and other internal committees. It has also undertaken other improvement activities, including reviewing its degree award, curriculum design and implementation, and admission policies (hereafter, "the three policies") as well as reexamining the curriculum and introducing a system that inspects syllabuses for students enrolled in the Division of Pharmacy, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, in fiscal 2018 and beyond.

There are several issues the University needs to address, however. The syllabuses do not clearly state the grading methods, and the development of a benchmark for monitoring and evaluating the learning outcomes stated in the degree award policy is insufficient. In addition, the faculty grants credits for incomplete subjects taken in the lower years after advancing to the following academic year solely on the test results without attending lessons, and this inappropriate practice should be corrected in light of the purpose of the credit system. Meanwhile, the graduate school remains short of its student quota, and its enrollment should be appropriately managed.

To address these challenges in the coming years, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee needs to play a central role in operating an effective internal quality assurance system so that the University can advance its distinctive initiatives for further development.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Outcome

- The Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences has addressed the existing challenge of reviewing its "Humanism and Medical Ethics Education." To advance this educational initiative, it initially established joint multi-field subjects in collaboration with Osaka Medical College, an institution that is run by the same school corporation and has participated in the faculty's regular extracurricular activities. These subjects

are newly designed as regular courses for the curriculum applicable to students enrolled in fiscal 2018 and beyond, with basic to practical subjects assigned progressively from the first to sixth years while reorganizing related existing subjects allocated to each academic year. More specifically, the faculty's courses include "Medical Professional Minds," aimed at learning the mindsets befitting medical professionals; "Interprofessional Collaboration of Medical Care," designed to acquire the basic skills essential for cooperating as medical teams; "Biomedical Ethics," focusing on ethical values required for medical professionals; and "Interprofessional Collaboration Seminar," offering practical guidance on team medical care through discussions on medical safety and ethical judgments. It is commendable that these courses adopt group discussions and presentation methods to deepen the understanding of the pharmacist's role on medical teams, with these approaches expected to enhance ethical values and communication skills.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The University has set the target of enhancing faculty members' performance to continuously improve education in its faculty organization policy, and accordingly conducts faculty development (FD) activities involving students. To date, the "Open Class Workshop" has been held for faculty members to discuss suggestions for improvement based on classes open to students and present the outcomes. In fiscal 2017, the Student FD Committee was organized to hold joint meetings with the FD Committee consisting of faculty members, with the two committees exchanging opinions on class evaluation and its effectiveness. These discussions with students led to the introduction of a smartphone questionnaire system and a question item review. It is commendable that the University's efforts to actively welcome students' opinions are proving effective in further improving lessons.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- For many years, the University has offered the "Course for the Public" for local residents and the "Open Educational Course" designed as a lifelong training support project for pharmacists. In recent years the pharmacist support project has introduced seminar courses, such as the "Satellite Seminar" and the "Physical Assessment Seminar for Pharmacists." It is commendable that these courses are helping to enhance the performance of pharmacists in a clinical setting by improving basic

pharmaceutical knowledge and teaching the knowledge and skills required for home medical care and other services. In addition, the Lifelong Learning Center was established in fiscal 2017 with the aim of providing the latest knowledge and skills required for pharmacists. These efforts are commendable as initiatives based on the University's mission and policy, with recurrent educational programs for pharmacists expected to further expand in the coming years.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- The syllabuses of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences show that the grading of some subjects counts attendance points and lists unclear criteria such as class performance and classroom attitudes. This situation should be improved with the syllabus inspection system strengthened to specify appropriate grading methods.
- To monitor and evaluate learning outcomes, the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences have drawn curriculum maps to analyze the assessment of academic achievements with subjects allocated in accordance with their degree award policies, but the benchmark for evaluating the monitored outcomes has not been developed. Since monitoring the learning outcomes stated in the degree award policies is insufficient, this issue should be improved.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.13 in the Pharmaceutical Sciences Major (first-term doctorate program) of the Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences. This ratio should be improved with the graduate school's student quota thoroughly managed.

Recommendations

Educational Program and Outcome

- The Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences grants credits for incomplete subjects taken

in the lower years after advancing to the following academic year, on condition that the students pass “reexaminations” or “special reexaminations” administered during the fourth year instead of retaking the courses. It is inappropriate to grant credits for incomplete subjects based solely on passing the examinations without attending classes in the following years. This issue must be corrected in light of the purpose of the credit system.