

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

Kanazawa University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: National	Location: Ishikawa, 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 Kanazawa University

Overview

Based on the ideology of “a research university dedicated to education, while opening up its doors to both local and global society,” Kanazawa University has taken as its objective “to contribute to the development of science and culture through education and research activities as a multidisciplinary university in order to meet the public’s needs for education, research, and community service,” and has set out its basic goals in the Charter of KU. In addition, the University has been working to enhance the University’s educational and research activities by drawing up a medium-term plan to achieve the medium-term goals of the national university corporation and the YAMAZAKI Plan which serves a set of guidelines for university reform.

With respect to internal quality assurance, a university-wide self-check and evaluation is conducted by the “Planning and Evaluation Committee,” the organization responsible for internal quality assurance, and departmental self-check and evaluation is conducted by the review committees of each department, etc. These results of these assessments are used as a basis for appropriate measures to improve and enhance the quality of the University. However, it would be preferable if the division of roles between the Planning and Review Council and other organizations involved in internal quality assurance, and the relationship with departmental self-study and researcher information were presented more clearly.

In terms of education, the University has introduced a system of colleges and schools in the undergraduate program, as well as drawing up a curriculum map and curriculum tree for all academic classes, which clearly indicate the relationships between class subjects and years of study to achieve learning outcomes, allowing students to take courses in a systematic and sequential manner. In addition, the University has designed a curriculum that allows gradual specialization through a “Late Specialization” that assigns students to courses within their college from their second year onward. In addition, the University has established its own educational policy, the “Kanazawa University Global Standard” (hereinafter “KUGS”), which is based on “GS Subjects.” This policy is commendable as a distinctive initiative that fosters basic knowledge of the specific abilities indicated in the educational policy from the stage of core education, and effectively links them to specialized courses through the provision of “GS Courses for Undergraduates” and “GS Courses for

Postgraduates.”

Regarding the admission of students, the University has been able to reform its entrance examination system by taking advantage of its unique characteristics, such as the introduction of unified General Admission to Liberal Arts Education Division and Science Education Division, which allow students to decide after admission which college or school they wish to enter, and a special entrance examination that evaluates the abilities of students from a diverse range of backgrounds. These efforts are to be commended. The environment for education and research is highly commendable in that the University has recruited a diverse faculty to deliver results in education and research, and that the “Research Professor System,” which provides an environment dedicated to research, and the “Internal COE Program,” which supports the creation of research centers and cutting-edge research, have led to outstanding results, including the formation of international research centers and the creation of new research fields. Furthermore, the views expressed at the Conference for Kanazawa University Stakeholders, which is the University’s own initiative for social cooperation activities, are continuously reflected in university policies, leading to tangible results such as improved soundproofing at the international student dormitory, the “Hokuriku Future Co-creation Forum” held in collaboration with local governments, and the establishment of the Noto Center for Fisheries Science and Technology in Noto Town, making it a distinctive and outstanding initiative.

However, there are several issues that should be improved. First, in several graduate schools, either the method or schedule of research supervision, or both, are not defined as part of the research supervision plan, the specific criteria for evaluating achievements in specific subjects are not defined, and the degree award policies (diploma policies) are not written with different learning outcomes appropriate for the relevant degree programs. Furthermore, several educational programs and graduate schools do not indicate their basic approach to their respective content and curriculum design and implementation policies. This should be improved.

Going forward, the JUAA hopes that the University will resolve these issues through internal quality assurance initiatives and make further strides forward by developing its many distinctive initiatives.

Notable Strengths

Mission and Purpose

- The YAMAZAKI Plan was drawn up as a set of guidelines for university reform with a vision of what the University will look like in 10 to 20 years. Under the

President's leadership, the University has implemented university-wide reforms that have produced positive results, including efforts to strengthen education and research capabilities, globalization, and the governance that will serve as the foundation for such efforts. It is also commendable that, taking into account the results of self-study by the internal quality assurance promotion organization, etc., and the transformation of social systems as we move toward the 4th Industrial Revolution and Society 5.0, the University has developed a next-generation plan for its fourth medium-term goal period, and has established an administrative structure to strengthen the University's functions.

Education and Research Organizations

- In order to implement the University's philosophy and objectives, the University is using such policies as the YAMAZAKI Plan and the "Next Challenge Educational Organization Reform Plan: Roadmap to 2020" as a basis for strategically promoting the development of education and research organizations that respond to social changes with a sense of urgency, while making the most of the University's strengths and characteristics. The research centers affiliated with each research area are established for a time-limited period of 10 years, after which their performance is periodically evaluated, and a system is in place to restructure them into university-wide organizations and provide them with support, resulting in the establishment of the Nano Life Science Institute aimed at creating a world-class research center. In particular, it is commendable that the achievements of organizations launched to promote outstanding research have led to the creation unique and pioneering education and research organizations, such as the newly established the Division of Transdisciplinary Sciences at the Graduate School of Frontier Science Initiative, which is the only institution in Japan to award the degree of "Doctor of Science (Transdisciplinary Science)."

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- In accordance with KUGS, the University's independently established educational policy, the Institute of Liberal Arts and Science has been established to promote core education in the undergraduate and graduate programs, with "GS Subjects" to develop fundamental skills to be active in global society, and "common education subjects" consisting of six subject categories for first-year education. Another commendable distinctive initiative is that the University is working to foster basic knowledge of the specific abilities indicated in the

educational policy from the stage of core education, and effectively link them to specialized courses through the provision of “GS Courses for Undergraduates” and “GS Courses for Postgraduates.”

Student Enrollment

- Under KUGS, the University’s independently established educational policy, the University has expanded its distinctive “Late Specialization” by adopting unified General Admission to Liberal Arts Education Division and Science Education Division from AY2018. Furthermore, starting from the AY2021 entrance examination, the University has introduced the KUGS Special Entrance Examination, which evaluates applicants’ independence, diversity, and cooperative spirit, and the “Special Talent Admission (CHOZEN Selection),” which aims to identify unique talents. It is commendable that the University welcomes students with qualities, abilities, and ambitions that are in line with the University’s philosophy by establishing systems to evaluate the abilities of students from diverse backgrounds.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The systematic and strategic allocation of faculty members to strengthen education and research capabilities, active recruitment and training of young researchers through the use of the Outstanding Researcher Program, and the securing and training of women researchers through recruitment for female and the Research Partner Program have resulted in increases in the proportions of young faculty members, women faculty members, and non-Japanese faculty members. In addition, the Research Professor System, which provides environments dedicated to research, has resulted in the appointment of researchers with outstanding world-class research capabilities, including a Nobel Prize winner, and has ensured a diverse faculty for producing results in education and research.
- In order to invigorate faculty members’ education and research activities, a new performance evaluation system has been introduced to reflect evaluation results in salaries and other benefits. In particular, the introduction of a system of peer review conducted by multiple faculty members for performance evaluations of faculty members who are paid on a monthly basis has enhanced the objectivity and fairness of the evaluations and reduced the burden on the evaluators. The

JUAA also commends the University for being one of the first in Japan to introduce a performance-based salary system, which has attracted attention from outside the University and is creating a ripple effect throughout the country.

Student Support

- The KUGS Support Network has been established as a system enabling cooperation among various organizations, departments, and consultation services related to student support, providing comprehensive support in various areas including academic and career development support, centering on the Support Network Headquarters supervisory body. In particular, it is noteworthy that, despite being a large university with a large number of students, the University continues to provide fine-tuned support by assigning advising faculty members to all students and connecting them to the various sections of the KUGS Support Network for inquiries received through interviews and other means. In order to make these efforts related to student support more substantive, all faculty members are provided with a Faculty and Staff Essential Students Support Guidebook, and support is also provided through training and other programs. In addition, the chatbot system introduced in AY2019 to improve convenience for students is highly commendable as a pioneering effort to meet their needs.

Education and Research Environment

- Under the President's strong leadership, a "Strategic Research Promotion Program Policy" has been set out, and internal COE Program, including the "CHOZEN Project," "SAKIGAKE Project," and "JIKO-CHOKOKU Project," has been implemented as unique measures to support the development of research centers and cutting-edge research. By reducing the burden on faculty members participating in these projects in terms of teaching and other duties, and by giving them priority opportunities to devote themselves to research, the projects are helping to create international research centers and new research fields. It is commendable that the CHOZEN Project has led to outstanding achievements, such as the plan for the Nano Life Science Institute, which was selected as a AY2017 WPI project, combining the three projects: "Bio AFM," "Cancer" and "Supramolecular." In terms of facilities, a system is in place to ensure that thorough use is made of the University's educational and research resources, such as by conducting annual usage surveys under the Facility Management Committee and rearranging laboratories to effectively utilize

existing space for new educational and research organizations. These efforts to implement sophisticated environmental improvements for education and research can be evaluated as outstanding initiatives.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The Noto Satoyama and Satoumi SDGs Meister Program, based in the depopulated and aging Noto region, which lacks higher education institutions, offers a one-year lecture and practical training course on the current situation and potential of the Noto region, and has certified many graduates as Meisters. Graduates of the program have been working to solve regional issues by applying the skills they have developed. As such, this is an excellent initiative that will lead to the concentration of people, revitalization, and regeneration in the region.

University Management and Finance

- As a multidisciplinary university rooted in the local community, the “Conference for Kanazawa University Stakeholders” has been held annually since AY2015 to elicit a diverse range of opinions from current students, alumni, local residents, and local government officials, and to apply them to the administration of the University. The opinions expressed at the council are reflected in the management of the University, and it is commendable that the council has led to concrete improvements and reforms, with a number of university policies reflecting the opinions of stakeholders, such as improved soundproofing at the international student dormitory, the “Hokuriku Future Co-creation Forum” held in collaboration with local governments, and the establishment of the Noto Center for Fisheries Science and Technology in Noto Town.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- With respect to degree award policies, in the Graduate School of Human and Socio-Environmental Studies’ Division of Humanities (Master’s Course), Division of Economics (Master’s Course), Division of Regional Development Studies (Master’s Course), Division of International Studies (Master’s Course), and Division of Human and Socio-Environmental Studies (Doctoral Course); Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology’s Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (Master’s and Doctoral Courses), Division of Material Chemistry (Master’s and Doctoral Courses), Division of Mechanical Science and

Engineering (Master's and Doctoral Courses), Division of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (Master's and Doctoral Courses), Division of Environmental Design (Master's and Doctoral Courses), and Division of Natural System (Master's and Doctoral Courses); Graduate School of Medical Sciences' Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences (Doctoral Course), Division of Pharmacy (Doctoral Course); and Graduate School of Law's Division of Law and Politics (Master's Course), although there are multiple degrees to be awarded, there are no appropriate learning outcomes such as knowledge, skills, and abilities to be acquired given for the different programs. This should be improved.

- With respect to curriculum design and implementation policy, no basic approach to curriculum implementation is given for the College of Human and Social Sciences' School of Teacher Education; College of Medical Pharmaceutical and Health Sciences' School of Health Sciences (Department of Nursing); Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology's Division of Material Chemistry (Master's Course), Mechanical Systems Engineering Course, Division of Mechanical Science and Engineering (Master's Course), and Division of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (Doctoral Course); and Graduate School of Law's Division of Legal Affairs (Professional Course). Similarly, no basic approach to curriculum design and implementation is given for the Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology's Division of Natural System (Master's Course), Division of Material Chemistry (Doctoral Course), Division of Mechanical Science and Engineering (Doctoral Course), Division of Natural System (Doctoral Course); and Graduate School of Medical Sciences' Division of Health Sciences (Master's and Doctoral Courses). As such, this should be improved. Moreover, with respect to curriculum design and implementation policy, in the Graduate School of Human and Socio-Environmental Studies' Division of Humanities (Master's Course), Division of Economics (Master's Course), Division of Regional Development Studies (Master's Course), Division of International Studies (Master's Course), and Division of Human and Socio-Environmental Studies (Doctoral Course); Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology's Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (Master's and Doctoral Courses), Division of Material Chemistry (Master's and Doctoral Courses), Division of Mechanical Science and Engineering (Master's and Doctoral Courses), Division of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (Master's and Doctoral Courses), Division of

Environmental Design (Master's and Doctoral Courses), and Division of Natural System (Master's and Doctoral Courses); Graduate School of Medical Sciences' Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences (Doctoral Course) and Division of Pharmacy (Doctoral Course); Graduate School of Frontier Science Initiative's Division of Transdisciplinary Sciences (Doctoral Course); and Graduate School of Law's Division of Law and Politics (Master's Course), the approach to design and implementation of the curriculum for obtaining each degree is not given separately. This should be improved.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is high at 1.02 for the College of Medical Pharmaceutical and Health Sciences' School of Medicine and educational curriculum reform and strengthening of student support have already been implemented. However, this should be further improved to ensure proper college student quota management.

Recommendation

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- In the Master's and Doctoral Programs of all Divisions of the Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology, and in the Graduate School of Medical Sciences' Division of Medicine (Doctoral Course), the method and schedule of research supervision are not defined as part of the research supervision plan. In addition, a schedule for research supervision is not defined for the Graduate School of Medical Sciences' Division of Medical Science (Master's Course), Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences (Master's and Doctoral Courses), Division of Health Sciences (Master's and Doctoral Courses), and Division of Pharmacy (Doctoral Course); Graduate School of Advanced Preventive Medical Sciences' Division of Advanced Preventive Medical Sciences (Doctoral Course); and Graduate School of Law's Division of Law and Politics (Master's Course). This should be corrected so that such schedule is defined and made clear to students in advance.
- Although the graduate school regulations stipulate that examination may be conducted based on research achievements in a specific subject, the Graduate School of Medical Sciences' Division of Medical Science (Master's Course), Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences (Master's Course), and Division of Health

Sciences (Master's Course); Graduate School of Frontier Science Initiative's Division of Nano Life Science (Master's Course) and Division of Transdisciplinary Sciences (Master's Course) do not define the specific criteria for evaluating these achievements are not defined. This should be corrected.