

# University Standards and Explanation

Japan University Accreditation Association

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## Foreword

Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) was established in 1947 and has contributed to the improvement of the quality of Japanese universities through its evaluation activities.

The first edition of the University Standards was formulated in 1947 when JUAA was established. Initially, these standards were used to approve the establishment of new universities in Japan. After some revisions, JUAA started to accredit universities with a set of revised standards in 1951. Since then, the University Standards have been used as basic evaluation standards by JUAA.

In 1996, JUAA began the present accreditation system that evaluates universities on the basis of a self-study report made in accordance with the University Standards, revised in 1994. Through this new system, JUAA enhanced its role in assuring educational quality as an accreditation agency.

However, it has become necessary for JUAA to revise its standards again due to rapid changes in the circumstances of Japanese universities. In particular, the revision of the Education Law in 2002 has had a major influence on universities. The new law makes it mandatory for all universities to be evaluated by “certified evaluation agencies”<sup>\*1</sup> every seven years. Also, because of the decline in the population of 18-year-olds, the competition among universities is predicted to rise, and all universities are facing a common challenge to review their educational responsibility and value as an institution of higher learning.

The University Standards have thus been revised to meet the needs of the age. The revised standards consist of 15 main items and their descriptions.

JUAA will strive constantly to improve its accreditation system using the revised Standards and hopes to contribute to the further development of Japanese universities as a whole.

\*1 “certified evaluation agencies” are evaluation agencies certified by the MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports Science and Technology). JUAA became a certified evaluation agency in August of 2004.

# University Standards

## **Purpose**

1. Universities have the mission as central institutions for higher education and academic research to contribute to academic progress and social advancement through the cultivation of capable human resources, creativity, and the utilization of new knowledge and technologies, and the succession and development of academic culture, giving full respect to academic freedom. Therefore, bearing this mission in mind, universities must continuously strive to maintain the proper level of quality as institutions of higher education and attain further qualitative improvement by reviewing their organizations and activities in order to achieve their own mission and goals.
2. The University Standards are the criteria for JUAA to accredit universities, and at the same time the guidelines for universities to maintain the proper level of their quality and attain further qualitative improvement.

## **Standards**

### [Mission and Goals]

1. Universities must define appropriate goals based on their own mission.

### [Educational and Research Structure]

2. Universities must establish necessary structures to carry out educational and research activities based on their own mission and goals.

### [Educational Program and Instruction]

3. Universities must provide appropriate educational programs and other forms of instruction to accomplish satisfactory educational achievement.

### [Student Admissions]

4. Universities must stipulate proper admission policies in order to admit students in a fair and correct manner in accordance with each university's own mission and goals.

### [Student Services]

5. Universities must provide satisfactory student support services and establish proper learning environments for students to concentrate on their studies.

[Research Conditions]

6. Universities must provide satisfactory research conditions for faculty members to concentrate on their research activities.

[Social Contribution]

7. Universities must promote cooperative activities and exchanges with society to contribute more broadly to the advancement of society.

[Faculty]

8. Universities must secure a sufficient number of faculty members to conduct their educational and research activities.

[Administration Staff]

9. Universities must secure sufficient number of administration staff to support their educational and research activities.

[Facilities and Equipment]

10. University must provide adequate facilities and equipment and manage and operate them appropriately.

[Library and Electronic Media]

11. Universities must provide books, academic materials, and electronic media systematically, and make them available for effective utilization.

[Administration]

12. Universities must manage and operate their organizations appropriately to fulfill their functions smoothly and effectively, in accordance with the written regulations and rules established by each university.

[Financial Affairs]

13. Universities must establish a solid financial base and conduct their financial management appropriately.

[Self-study]

14. Universities must consistently review their organizations, systems and various activities to maintain the proper level of education and research and attain further development.

[Accountability]

15. Universities must fulfill their accountability to the society by disclosing information on the status of their organizations, systems and various activities and self-study reports.

## **Explanation of University Standards**

### **Purpose**

This section describes the responsibilities of universities and the significance of the University Standards.

#### **1. Responsibility of Universities**

Universities, as central institutions for higher education and academic research, are responsible for making consistent efforts to: (1) pursue truth and cultivate human resources, (2) evaluate activities of society and higher education as a whole, (3) maintain and improve the quality of education and academic research, and (4) contribute to improving the welfare of humankind.

In response to various factors in today's dynamic society, such as the developments in academic research, changes in social and economic structures, and advancement of globalization, universities must adapt and promote further development, diversification and individualization on campus. On the other hand, universities, which are viewed by society as groups of intellectuals with highly-developed expertise, are expected to apply this expertise and to assess social trends critically from a constructive viewpoint, in order to provide suggestions and knowledge that can help to realize a better society. Therefore, universities must continuously strive to improve qualitatively, and must continuously assess whether they are responding to such social requirements in a proper manner.

#### **2. Significance of the University Standards**

JUAA has established this set of University Standards for the purposes of our accreditation. JUAA hopes that these University Standards will serve as guidelines to help universities toward achieving their own mission and goals.

Each item of the University Standards was drawn up with careful consideration in order to clarify the points to be noted in fulfilling the responsibilities of universities, based on

their own mission and goals. Thus, the Standards aim to facilitate the improvement of quality while respecting the individual character of each university and its current development status.

JUAA also hopes that other universities, which are not directly involved in our “accreditation” and “re-accreditation” procedures, may also utilize the University Standards as a guideline to facilitate their efforts to achieve their own mission and goals.

## **Standards**

This section describes the standards to which universities must conform as higher education institutions. The standards are established to help universities to fulfill their responsibilities while also respecting their own mission and goals.

### **1. Mission and Goals**

Universities must establish their organizational structures, systems and various related conditions required to carry out educational activities and academic research, and make continuous efforts to fulfill such functions in order to realize their own mission and goals.

The mission and goals defined by educational institutions shall be the fundamental basis of their educational and research activities. Thus, universities are required to exert all their efforts to accomplish their own goals by translating them into concrete concepts to facilitate their adoption toward the characteristics and individuality of each academic faculty and graduate course. Also they must take into account the substantial idea of the university. In addition, it is essential for institutions to examine and assess their activities regularly, in light of their defined mission and goals, in order to attain further qualitative improvement.

### **2. Educational and Research Structure**

Based on their mission and goals, universities must establish necessary organizations to carry out educational and research activities, and they must manage and operate such systems and structures appropriately. In this regard, they must take necessary measures to create academic faculties and graduate courses to secure sufficient number of teachers and administrative staff, and to deploy proper facilities and equipment to support these organizations and structures.

### 3. Educational Program and Instruction

To achieve their own mission and goals, it is essential for universities to organize their curricula in an adequate and systematic fashion, and to educate students in a proper method based on such curricula.

#### (1) Curriculum

In organizing curricula for each academic field, it is essential to allocate subjects appropriately to achieve educational goals in each academic course, taking into account advances in information and globalization. It is also important to organize curricula systematically and effectively by combining subjects adequately as a part of a comprehensive higher education, while considering the educational goals and academic systematization of each faculty and graduate course.

#### (2) Educational Instruction

To attain satisfactory educational results, universities must make efforts to improve their education methods at many levels. For example, it is critical for them to develop the skills of teachers by implementing FD (Faculty Development) programs for the improvement of teaching techniques and enlightenment of teachers.

Universities must also provide proper counseling services for students and give guidance in planning and organization of study and research to help to maintain students' desire to study and guide their progress toward success. Furthermore, universities should encourage teachers to ensure student involvement in class activities by employing various motivational teaching forms and methods.

Upon granting credits to students, universities must make evaluations carefully and fairly, in accordance with the original intent of the credit earning system. Academic subject characteristics, content and forms of learning applied in each subject should also be considered in judging the expected educational results. Application of an appropriate evaluation system for academic achievement is also necessary to guarantee the quality of education.

In addition to undertaking the various efforts stated above to enhance the quality of education, universities must endeavor to develop their own method to measure educational results and employ diversified means toward the further improvement of teaching skills and educational content.

#### (3) Degree Awarding

Universities must award respective degrees in each academic course to qualified students who have achieved the designated requirements in a proper manner.

Universities must establish a proper system and method to provide support and guidance to help guide students to earn the respective degree within their term of study.

#### 4. Student Admissions

Universities must set up educational goals to achieve their own mission and goals and must define their admission policy and admission capacity.

Upon screening applicants, universities must adopt the proper entrance examination system and operate it effectively based on their fundamental admission policy. At the same time, universities must take into consideration the relevancy of fields of study between high school education and university education as well as recent requirements of society from the viewpoint of globalization, such as admission of adults and international students, admissions office examination, grade-skipping, and transferring between universities, academic faculties or departments, and other institutions of higher education.

In addition, universities must maintain the proper ratio of the admission capacity to the actual number of enrollment, and admit the optimal number of all the students from freshman to senior according to the size of university and must avoid an excessive increase in enrollment in order to maintain the effectiveness of academic work.

#### 5. Student Services

Universities must fulfill their responsibility to cultivate human resources with a broad and deep knowledge and professional expertise. In addition to establishing a proper learning environment, universities must provide counseling and guidance services in accordance with the personality and situation of each individual student in order to cultivate the richness of human values and develop the quality and capability of each student sufficiently through campus life.

To provide financial assistance for students in need, it is also required for universities to set up and operate an independent scholarship system, and provide services to introduce various outside scholarships and handle necessary application formalities.

In addition, universities must deploy learning facilities for students such as study rooms to enhance the learning environment as well as facilities for extra-curriculum activities and exercise and training facilities to enjoy a well-rounded and healthy campus life, and

must provide proper guidance and support to use such facilities.

Furthermore, universities must set up the guidance and counseling system to assist students properly in deciding their future career and to provide advice for mental and physical health care. It is also desirable to consider living conditions for students. In addition, universities must secure human rights of students with consideration and prevent the occurrence of any kind of harassment so that students can conduct their school life comfortably and safely. In this regard, due consideration must be paid to protect international students especially.

## 6. Research Conditions

For faculty members who are responsible to contribute to the advancement of academic research, universities must allocate a sufficient amount of research budget and provide laboratories with satisfactory space required to secure safety, facilities and equipment for research, and support system to help them conduct research activities effectively. In addition, universities must pay special consideration to time management for teachers to ensure that they have opportunities to pursue their research activities and enable training opportunities for them to improve their skills.

## 7. Social Contribution

Universities are expected to make contributions to society actively using their intellectual resources. For this, universities must construct a system to facilitate exchanges with society, send out useful information and actively return the results obtained from educational and research activities to society.

Universities must promote tie-ups and exchanges with outside educational and research institutions, enterprises and organizations, and local communities to conduct their educational and research activities effectively. Universities are also expected to build a technology transfer system to share knowledge and technologies produced by higher education institutions effectively with society.

As a further contribution to global society, universities are expected to rapidly disclose their research findings to international academic journals and magazines, and to exchange information and friendship with outside researchers and international students, as well as granting knowledge and technologies to developing countries.

## 8. Faculty

Universities must secure a sufficiently large faculty organization, in proportion to its curriculum and the admission capacity of academic faculties and academic graduate courses, to conduct necessary educational and research activities in each academic faculty and academic graduate course. In addition they must allocate a sufficient number of teachers within each academic organization to ensure satisfactory educational and research achievement.

Universities must conduct recruiting, appointment/discharge and promotion of the Faculty members appropriately and pay special consideration to guarantee their job status. Upon hiring teachers, universities must seek capable candidates both from home and abroad to facilitate revitalization of human resources on campus, and conduct fair and proper employment by following written criteria and procedures. In doing so, universities, as core institutions to provide higher education and conduct academic research, must select candidates who are qualified in terms of personality, leadership as an educator and researcher, achievements in education and research, accomplishment and contribution in each academic field and society. It is also essential to optimize the balance in number between males and females, in an effort to realize greater gender equality in society.

#### 9. Administration Staff

Universities must establish proper administrative organization to carry out educational and research activities smoothly and effectively. The administration organization must accommodate staff members with deep understanding of the purpose and goals in educational and research activities at universities, and must maintain cooperative relationships with the faculty, exert their planning ability actively and establish the environment to conduct the school management comprehensively. For this, it is indispensable to secure capable human resources and construct an effective staff organization, in addition to making consistent efforts toward establishing an appropriate self-study and improvement system.

Universities must employ fair and righteous procedures to recruit, hire and fire, and promote staff members in light of the state of each university.

#### 10. Facilities and Equipment

Universities must deploy a sufficient area for their school site and buildings. They

must maintain proper facilities and equipment in proportion to the size of their educational and research organization, and must utilize such facilities and equipment effectively. In addition, universities must take necessary measures to renew and improve such facilities in order to respond to the advancement of academic research and changes of social requirements, while paying special consideration to the safety of users.

To enhance the effectiveness of educational activities such as experiments, practical training, foreign language learning and information processing education, universities must deploy sufficient facilities and equipment such as audio visual equipment and facilities for information processing education, and establish a proper support system to facilitate the effectiveness of such education by allocating necessary human resources.

#### 11. Library and Electronic Media

To promote their educational and research activities as institutions of higher education, universities must collect and furnish a sufficient volume of academic information in the form of library, academic publications, and electronic media.

Therefore, universities must systematically collect academic information and materials sufficiently both in quality and quantity by maintaining a library of proper size, and they must make constant efforts to maintain the satisfactory level and volume of such information and materials. In addition, universities must take necessary measures to facilitate the effective use of such information and materials. It is also necessary for universities to apply measures to facilitate the extensive utilization of academic information through the library network. Furthermore, it is desirable for universities to establish facilities to send out information on their academic research widely to society through facilities such as a university museum and exhibition rooms to display research findings.

#### 12. Administration

Administration of universities must be conducted properly and correctly according to the written regulations and rules to fulfill their expected functions and realize their own mission and goals.

Upon stipulating and operating administrative regulations and rules, universities must pay due consideration to realize their own mission and goals and establish a democratic

and effective decision-making structure and academic freedom.

University councils, faculty meetings and administration-related organizations must be operated appropriately by fully understanding their own functions and roles to contribute to facilitating the university's educational and research activities.

The university president and deans of each academic faculty must be appointed or discharged through fair and reasonable procedures according to the regulations, while taking into account the mission and goals of the university.

### 13. Financial Affairs

To carry out their educational and research activities appropriately, universities must secure solid financial resources to accommodate necessary expenses, and must allocate and manage them correctly and effectively according to a well-designed future plan. They are also required to build up the infrastructure to maintain a high level of education and research to play a leading role in the development of human resources and academic research on a global scale, not only cultivating capable human resources and contributing to the advancement of academic research at home. For this too, universities must pay special considerations to secure a stable financial basis.

It is also critical for institutions to seek sources of financial resources other than tuition so that there is not excessive dependence on income from tuition in order to attain a high level of education and research. Therefore, universities must establish a system and structure to obtain funds from outside the campus and must make active efforts to gather such funds.

### 14. Self-study

Universities must consistently review and assess their educational and research activities. In addition, they must review management and operation activities for their institutions to maintain proper levels of quality in order to realize their own mission and goals.

Prior to conducting self-study, universities must establish a proper system, procedures, and methods for self-study and define proper evaluation items.

Furthermore, to make good use of self-study results, universities must establish and

operate an effective system to realize further development and improvement based on the results.

Additionally, universities must implement periodic third-party evaluation with regard to such self-study results, in order to obtain more effective feedback on their efforts.

## 15. Accountability

Universities must comply with related laws and regulations and fulfill their accountability to society by actively disclosing the status of their organization, management and various activities. They also must establish proper regulations and a system to disclose such information upon request.

As a part of such efforts, universities must conduct school management transparently. Upon disclosing information, universities must pay special consideration to provide correct information in written statements describing their system, operation and activities as well as self-study results by item, so that society can grasp the state of the university correctly. The evaluation standards to be included are: (1) mission and goals, (2) educational and research structure, (3) educational program and instruction, (4) student admissions, (5) student services, (6) research conditions, (7) social contribution, (8) faculty, (9) administration staff, (10) facilities and equipment, (11) library and electronic media, (12) administration, (13) financial affairs, and (14) self-study.