

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

Wako University

Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2012	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2020)	
Related Links	
Wako University: http://www.wako.ac.jp/english/english.htm	
Full Text of the Accreditation Results (in Japanese): http://www.juaa.or.jp/accreditation/university/result_2012.html	
Accreditation Standards, Process and other related information (in English): http://www.juaa.or.jp/en/accreditation/university.html	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Wako University

Notable Strengths

Educational content, methods, and outcome

- It is commendable that Wako University has made efforts to make the most of networks with the local communities and organizations for its education. The Bioregional Studies Program has an interdisciplinary curriculum comprised of lectures in theory and practice. Students learn knowledge and skills in preserving nature in an urban environment through hands-on experience in the local natural environment. The omnibus-style lectures invite local citizens, environmental NPO directors, and officers of the river and forest preservation administration to participate as lecturers. Students can engage in on-site environmental preservation activities in cooperation with environmental preservation organizations in the area.

Student support

- It is commendable that the university has taken several measures to support physically-challenged students. For example, the university has developed an effective system of learning opportunity assurance measures, including note-taking support, transcription services to Braille, sign-language interpretation, and subtitled audiovisual materials. In addition, the Handicapped Students Handbook for Faculty provides a list of services the university offers to physically-challenged students. Moreover, there is a biannual meeting for Handicapped Students, where students meet faculty to talk about inconveniences they experience. Such meetings lead to improvement that helps students experience a more fulfilling life on campus. Further, every year student volunteers gather to form the Information and Communication Support Group to simultaneously text entrance ceremony speeches and orientation lectures to physically-challenged students. This assures that hearing-impaired students have access to information on par with their classmates.

Social cooperation and contribution

- It is commendable that the university has made efforts to promote its outreach activities and social contributions to the local community. For example, the Center for Environmental Networking in the Tsurumi River Basin has offered various activities and workshops, including: “Tsurumi River Clean Up Operation,” held with the participation of NPOs, local residents, and students; “A New Horizon for Environmental and Citizenship Education,” an international symposium jointly organized by the Education Boards of Machida City and Kawasaki City; “Dream Discussion,” a presentation session for local elementary school students jointly organized with NPOs; and workshops for instructors of “Project WET—International Environmental Education Program Concerning Water.”

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational content, methods, and outcome

- Undergraduate Faculties and the Graduate School have not clearly stipulated the policies for awarding degrees or for designing and implementing the curriculum. This should be improved.

- The maximum number of credits that seniors can register for in a year is set high at 60 in all undergraduate Faculties. This should be modified in accordance with the purpose of the credit system.
- In all undergraduate Faculties and the Graduate School, the contents of syllabi vary in their specificities, which should be improved.
- In the Department of Social and Cultural Studies in the School of Graduate Studies, research and thesis instruction is not based on a research instruction plan. This should be improved.
- In the Department of Social and Cultural Studies in the School of Graduate Studies, organizational efforts are lacking to improve educational content and methods. This should be improved.
- In the Department of Social and Cultural Studies in the School of Graduate Studies, criteria for examining degree-seeking theses have not been clarified. This should be indicated in the Student Handbook (and other handbooks).

Enrollment

- In the last five years, the average of the ratios of enrolled freshmen to the freshman admission cap is high at 1.21 in the Department of Psychology and Education in the Faculty of Human Sciences, and 1.25 in the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Economics and Business. The ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is high at 1.20 in the Department of Psychology and Education in the Faculty of Human Sciences. These numbers should be improved.
- The ratio of transfer students to the transfer student admission cap is low at 0.13 in the Department of Transcultural Studies in the Faculty of Representational Studies, and 0.35 in the Department of Arts in the same Faculty. These numbers should be improved.

Student support

- The number of students dropping out of the university is increasing, as is the number of seniors who fail to graduate in four years. Effective measures are not sufficient to prevent students from withdrawing or not earning enough credits to qualify for graduation. This should be improved.

Administration and Finance

- The university has attempted to balance expenditures and revenues and increase the funds for education and research, while reserving money for the no. 2 Basic Fund. This, however, would have the effect of excessive expenditures resulting in an imbalance in the budget. It is an urgent task to conduct a radical revision of the mid- and long-term financial plan. The proportion of personnel expenditure (e.g., salaries) is higher than the average at other private universities with similar systems of education and research. This is inappropriate, so concrete measures should be taken to reduce personnel expenditure to improve the financial situation.