University Accreditation Results

(Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for University)

Kochi University of Technology

Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Kochi, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2019 Accreditation Status: Accredited（Accreditation Period: April 1.2020 – March 31.2027）	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Kochi University of Technology

Overview

With the goal of "Making KUT a world class university through the pursuit of unique excellence," Kochi University of Technology (hereinafter referred to as the "University") is founded on the basic principles of "Cultivation of human resources that can play active roles in our emerging society," "research achievements which contribute to the future of the world," and "coordination with and contribution to the local community." Its purpose is "to carry out broad education and research as a center of academic study and nurture individuals with profound expertise, an excellent personality, and extensive creativity, and thereby promote the development of science and technology and contribute to Japan and the world." In order to achieve the University's mission and purpose, Kochi Prefectural Public University Corporation has formulated a six-year mid-term plan including Kochi University of Technology and engaged in the enhancement of educational and research activities, in accordance with the mid-term plan established by Kochi Prefecture, the organization responsible for founding the University, taking into account the aforementioned mission and purpose.

The Education and Research Council is responsible for internal quality assurance, and the Self-Study Expert Committee and other bodies have been established under the council. Measures for improvement/enhancement have been implemented based on the results of checks and reviews of various activities carried out in the University, and thus the internal quality assurance system is actually functioning. However, the procedures indicating the internal quality assurance process are unclear. The University should conduct regular self-study with regard to the appropriateness of the internal quality assurance system and work on improving aspects where effort is still insufficient.

The University has implemented various measures for stimulating student learning and providing effective education, including the adoption of a no-compulsory-subject system which is designed to enhance learning, proactiveness, and creativity through short-term, intense subjects provided according to a quarter system, concentration of classes to the first to third periods, enhancement of global education, and promotion of six-year integrated education for engineering students. In particular, it is highly commendable that the concentration of classes to the first to third periods, which enables students to utilize the free fourth and fifth periods for independent study, extracurricular activities, and specialized subject seminars, among other purposes, and

the provision of teaching materials and other support necessary for students to conduct independent study have led to an increase in out-of-class study time.

Another remarkable feature is that the University has succeeded in significantly increasing the number of approvals for the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research by establishing various financial incentive programs for education and research, developing a consultation system for Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research application, and adopting a sabbatical quarter system, among other measures for improving the educational and research environment. The University's consistent implementation of measures to mitigate the Nankai Trough earthquake and the Research Institute for Future Design's advanced research and dissemination of research findings represent a high level of social cooperation and contribution.

On the other hand, however, the presence of a considerable number of issues to be addressed cannot be overlooked. Especially with regard to education, some parts of the degree award policy (diploma policy) and curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy) are inadequate, the examination criteria related to special assignment research results are unclear, learning outcomes are not adequately grasped or assessed, and the method and schedule for research supervision are not clearly presented to students in the form of a research supervision plan. These issues should be addressed immediately.

As shown above, it can be observed that the University, in response to the expectations for it as a public university, has leveraged its distinctive features and engaged in education, research, and social contribution in unique way. We hope the University actively engages in internal quality assurance to develop its program even further.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Outcome

- After extensive deliberation by the Education Center, the University decided to allocate subjects to the first to third periods in order to ensure time for students to engage in active study. This adjustment in class schedule has enabled students to utilize the fourth and fifth periods for carrying out independent study and extracurricular activities, and has also enabled the periods to be used for holding explanatory sessions, short tests, and review sessions for specialized subject seminars, for example. Furthermore, the University provides teaching materials and other support necessary for students to conduct independent study. It is commendable that

these initiatives have led to an increase in out-of-class study time.

Education and Research Environment

- The University has implemented a variety of initiatives for promoting research activity, including indicating to all faculty members that the weighting of research-related assessment, such as that of articles and the acquisition of external funding, will be raised in faculty evaluation system, the allocation of adequate individual research funds to faculty members, establishment of various financial incentive programs for education and research, development of a system which allows users to receive advice on Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research application and other matters from research advisors, and adoption of a sabbatical quarter system which allows faculty members to dedicate themselves to research during a particular quarter without any teaching responsibilities. It is commendable that the University has, through these efforts, succeeded in significantly increasing the number of approvals for the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research and made remarkable achievements.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- As part of its social cooperation and contribution policy, the University focuses on measures to mitigate the Nankai Trough earthquake. Since the University is located in an area that could be devastated in the event of such an earthquake, it has formed the Kochi University of Technology Earthquake and Tsunami Mitigation Study Group and, based on the knowledge it has accumulated, installed complex infra sound tsunami sensors at 15 sites in the prefecture. These initiatives represent a remarkable form of social contribution reflecting the local context. The Research Institute for Future Design, established in 2017, aims to build a social system that enables a sustainable society. Gathering researchers from diverse fields, the institute actively engages in solving domestic and international issues through cutting-edge research and disseminates its research findings throughout the local community through public workshops and other events. Thanks to these efforts, the institute's research findings have been cited in domestic and international studies, and research is expected to produce greater results going forward. This is a commendable achievement.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- The Master's Program and Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Engineering do not have a degree award policy corresponding to each degree. This should be improved.

- The School of Economics & Management and the Master's Program and Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Engineering have not established a curriculum design and implementation policy for each degree to be awarded. This should be improved.

- The Master's Program in the Graduate School of Engineering does not clearly indicate the examination criteria related to special assignment research results.

- In both the schools and graduate schools, the relationship between indicators for measuring learning outcomes and the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy is unclear, thus making the indicators inadequate for measuring learning outcomes. Therefore, the schools and graduate schools should measure learning outcomes using diversified methods and utilize the results to improve curricula, educational methods, and other aspects of education.

Recommendations

Educational Program and Outcome

- The Graduate School of Engineering has not set forth the method and schedule for research supervision in the form of a research supervision plan. These should be established and clearly presented to students in advance.

Student Enrollment

- The Master's Program and Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Engineering have the same admission policy, even though the programs provide different degrees. This should be corrected.