

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

Kyoto Women's University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Kyoto, 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 Kyoto Women's University

Overview

Kyoto Women's University (hereafter, the University) was established to provide higher education for women based on the founding philosophy of "fostering human spirituality set forth in the Buddhist principles espoused by Shinran Shonin," and today the University conducts educational and research activities in line with this philosophy. In 2009 the University, in preparation to mark the 100th anniversary of the foundation of Kyoto Joshi Gakuen (Kyoto Women's Educational Institution) in 2010, formulated its visions for the future (grand visions) comprised of eight items, including "cultivation of women who can play a responsible role in 21st century society," "a university that links Higashiyama, Kyoto, with the world," and "a university that grows with society and communities," with a view to pursuing further development. In 2016 the University launched the "Project to Verbalize the University's Mission," formed by students and academic/administrative staff members to define its mission in the straightforward phrase "Turning Uniqueness into Strength to Build a Future." It is commendable that the University is adopting creative approaches to share and disseminate its founding philosophy on and outside the campus.

As part of its educational initiatives, the University established the Faculty of Law in 2011 to develop an educational and research organization intended to meet the social needs for women's education. The University presently consists of five faculties (Faculty of Letters, Faculty of Human Development and Education, Faculty of Home Economics, Faculty of Contemporary Society, and Faculty of Law) as well as graduate schools based on these faculties. It also promotes the enhancement of education in its grand visions, with the curricula organized according to the specialized fields of the faculties and graduate schools. To conduct social cooperation activities, the University established the Research Center of Community Partnerships and introduced the "University-community Partnerships Course" to the regular curriculum. It is notable that the University is actively promoting regional contribution through students' involvement in the local community.

However, the University needs to address serious issues involving its internal quality assurance efforts. The Japan University Accreditation Association's (JUAA) FY2011 University Accreditation pointed out the University's ineffective self-study and suggested the development of a systematic internal quality assurance system. In response,

the University established two committees under the University-wide Self-Study Committee: the Self-Study Implementation Committee, responsible for organizing the self-study of the faculties and their programs, and the Internal Evaluation Committee, in charge of evaluating the results from a university-wide perspective. In October 2018 the University Directors' Committee was positioned as an organization responsible for promoting internal quality assurance, and the related regulations were revised to develop the University's internal quality assurance system. But with self-study positioned by the University as a foundation for internal quality assurance in the internal quality assurance policy, the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee merely comment individually on the accuracy of descriptions as their assigned tasks after the results are entered into the online self-study system by the committee and administrative staff members of each faculty. This system fails to function in the way the Internal Evaluation Committee performs its evaluations from a university-wide perspective. The University should take a comprehensive approach to reconsider the importance of self-study and conduct more effective internal quality assurance based on systematic self-study.

Other issues include the failure to formulate research guidance plans in all graduate schools and problems with the establishment of diploma and curriculum policies and quota management in some graduate school academic units. In addition, the methods of monitoring and evaluating the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy are not sufficiently established in the faculties and graduate schools.

In the coming years, the University is expected to implement appropriate self-study activities, effectively operate internal quality assurance to advance its improvement efforts, and utilize the self-study results to formulate the next grand visions, with the current visions marking their final year in fiscal 2019.

Notable Strengths

Mission and Purpose

- To disseminate the University's educational mission and other objectives, students and academic/administrative staff members collaborated to launch the "Project to Verbalize the University's Mission," in which the straightforward phrase "Turning Uniqueness into Strength to Build a Future" was created to express the University's mission, and the project is being promoted through various publications and events, including ceremonies. In addition, students are taking the initiative in supporting extracurricular activities by establishing the president-selected project, "*Rashi-Tsuyo*

(Uniqueness and Strength) Challenge,” aimed at embodying the University’s mission through their own projects. It is commendable that the University engages in activities to further disseminate its mission.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- To realize “a university that grows with society and communities,” one of the University’s grand visions, the Research Center of Community Partnerships was established in 2015 and the Partnership Promotion Division was set up as an administrative unit in the following year to establish the “University-community Partnerships Course” designed to integrate regional cooperation activities into the curriculum. In the president-selected “*Rashi-Tsuyo* (Uniqueness and Strength) Challenge” project, various social cooperation and contribution initiatives have been adopted and implemented. It is commendable that the University actively supports students’ efforts to work with communities, with university-wide social cooperation and contribution activities helping to cultivate women who can contribute to the local community. Information on these cooperation activities is shared in the “Kyojo (Kyoto Women’s University) Network Council (Kyojo Roundtable),” whose objective assessments are reflected in the next fiscal year’s project plans to make further improvements. This approach is also commendable.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- The degree award and curriculum design and implementation policies are not established for each degree conferred in Apparel and Space Design (Master’s Course) and Living Environment (Doctoral Course) of the Graduate School of Home Economics. This issue should be improved.
- To measure the learning outcomes stated in the degree award policy, the faculties have introduced learning portfolios and integrated GPAs (grade point average) into a radar chart, but these measurements are not effective in monitoring and evaluating the learning outcomes stated in the degree award policy. The graduate schools are in the process of examining the learning outcomes monitored and evaluated by the faculties. This issue should be improved with the faculties and graduate schools employing

multifaceted ways to systematically measure the learning outcomes stated in their degree award policies and reflecting the results in their educational improvement efforts, including reviewing their curricula and educational methods.

Student Enrollment

- The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.47 in the Master's Course of the Graduate School of Letters, 0.36 in the Master's Course of the Graduate School of Human Development and Education, 0.00 in the Doctoral Course of the Graduate School of Human Development and Education, 0.21 in the Master's Course of the Graduate School of Contemporary Society, and 0.22 in the Doctoral Course of the Graduate School of Contemporary Society. These ratios should be improved with the graduate schools' student quotas thoroughly managed.

Recommendation

Internal Quality Assurance

- Self-study is positioned as a foundation for internal quality assurance, but it is not functioning adequately, with the Internal Evaluation Committee failing to play its role in conducting evaluations from a university-wide perspective. Since the University Directors' Committee is positioned as a body responsible for internal quality assurance to further improve the new internal quality assurance system, the University must correct this issue by conducting appropriate self-study, effectively operating the new system to make improvements based on the results, and supporting PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycles for the faculties and graduate schools.

Educational Program and Outcome

- None of the graduate schools define the research guidance methods and schedules as research guidance plans. This situation must be corrected with these items defined and clarified to students beforehand.