

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

Himeji University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Hyogo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2020	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.1.2021 – March.31.2028)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Himeji University

Overview

Himeji University conducts education and research in accordance with its founding principle of “developing ‘people who are loved, trusted, and respected’ and providing comprehensive education and research into the theory and application of specialized learning that aligns with the Fundamental Law of Education”. The University’s parent organization, Koutoku Gakuen, established a mid- and long-term plan (2020 - 2025) with the goal of working towards “developing students through practical education,” “high quality research that gives back to society,” “education resources that contribute to the region, businesses, and the world,” and “providing an environment that promotes education and research.”

In order to strengthen cooperation between divisions and promote initiatives throughout the organization, the University revised the previous internal quality assurance system and created the Education Reform and Internal Quality Assurance Committee as a new body to promote internal quality assurance. This committee created a system that spurs improvements by working with the Check and Review Committee and the University Committee to support the PDCA cycles in undergraduate and graduate divisions, etc. However, the position of various divisions inside internal quality assurance as well as regulations on their roles, rights, and responsibilities are not clearly defined and items indicated in the previous University Accreditation have still not been sufficiently addressed. The processes to review, improve, and refine the appropriateness of education and other activities have not been sufficiently defined and management of learning and teaching does not function sufficiently. Both of these must be improved.

Undergraduate divisions promote independent learning among students and deliberately incorporate active learning using small-group practice, clinical practice, and simulation materials. Graduate divisions maintain an environment conducive to student learning and utilize a multiple advisory system of faculty advisors and secondary advisors in both master’s and doctoral programs. The University also actively gives backs to the region and society by way of education and research activities, such as initiatives that support regional health through the newly established The Center for Practice and Research on Health and Education, taking part in collaborative government-academia urban planning, and a variety of lecture series based on its Comprehensive Partnership Agreement with Himeji City. All of these initiatives are focal points of the University’s

social contribution activities and additional initiatives are expected to be implemented in the future.

Multiple subjects, however, require improvements to their curricula and learning outcomes and issues exist in implementing faculty development (hereafter “FD”) for faculty, student quota management, and financial affairs.

Moving forward, the University should create a system for clarifying the roles and relationships of organizations in internal quality assurance and resolve these issues by making PDCA processes function appropriately to ensure quality in education and research activities.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The Check and Review Committee made improvements to the issues indicated in the previous University Accreditation, but some items were not addressed sufficiently and initiatives under the 2019 internal quality assurance system centered on the Education Reform and Internal Quality Assurance Committee have not led to improvements. As the organizational system for improvements is not functioning as intended, improvements are required to make the internal quality assurance system function under the Committee.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The School of Nursing, the Faculty of Education Schooling Course, the Faculty of Education Correspondence Course, and the Graduate school of Nursing Science Master's Program do not definitively indicate the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other learning outcome students need to attain in order to receive the relevant degree in their degree award policies.
- The School of Nursing, the Faculty of Education Schooling Course, the Faculty of Education Correspondence Course, and the Graduate school of Nursing Science Master's Program and Doctoral Program do not present the basic ideas on curriculum implementation in their curriculum design and implementation policies and this should be improved.

- The Faculty of Education allows students to register for 56 credits in one year, which is high. Credits for practical training, however, are not included in this credit cap, so students are allowed to register for substantially more credits than listed in regulations. For this reason, many students actually register for credits well beyond the limit and although students have access to course registration models for each year that correspond with the qualifications and licenses they wish to obtain, measures to assess the value of credits are insufficient and improvements should be made to clarify the credit system.
- The Graduate School of Nursing has established standards for reviewing theses in both Master's Program and Doctoral Program, but the details of each are roughly identical and this should be improved.
- While the undergraduate and graduate divisions (including distance learning) work to understand learning outcomes, measurement processes and benchmarks for student learning outcomes have not been established in degree award policies. Moving forward, the University must clarify the knowledge, skills, attitudes, etc. students need to attain in each degree award policy, construct measurement processes and benchmarks, and then multilaterally and appropriately apply them.

Student Enrollment

- With regard to the prescribed number (10) students in the Faculty of Education Schooling Course, the number of transfer students in the last 5 years has fluctuated between zero and three and the transfer student ratio over the past 5 years is low at 0.12. Even though this issue was indicated in the previous University Accreditation, specific countermeasures toward improvement have not been taken and improvements must be made for rigorous quota management.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- For FD implementation, the School of Nursing invites outside lecturers and the Faculty of Education has each faculty member present on the details and achievements of education and research and also holds discussions based on those presentations in the Education & Research Committee. While both divisions are significantly involved in developing faculty research skills, improvements are needed

to appropriately implement FD that leads to enhancing the educational abilities of faculty and developing and improving curricula and pedagogy.

Recommendations

Student Enrollment

- In the last five years, the average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap in the School of Nursing Department of Growth and Care have been low at 0.61 and 0.60, respectively, and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap for undergraduate programs has been low at 0.84. The University should significantly improve faculty quota management.

University Management and Finance

- Since 2015, the ratio of the financial assets to the required reserve fund has fallen drastically while the rate of carried over expenditures for next year to imputed income has gradually grown, putting the continuity of education and research at risk. The University must immediately formulate an appropriate mid- and long-term fiscal plan based on the Management Improvement Committee's Grand Design and take consistent actions towards establishing a secure financial base.