

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

Konan University



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| 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 Konan University

Overview

Konan University was founded under the missions of “valuing individual growth and improved health, nurturing students’ innate talents by respecting their individuality, and spearheading human-centric education that develops individuals capable of making important decisions” and creating “world-class men and women”. In 2016, the University created KONAN-U. Vision 2020 to describe the University’s goals for 2020 and established the Konan Premier Project, which contains action plans for achieving this vision alongside 9 projects and 68 sub-projects geared toward fulfilling educational and research activities.

For internal quality assurance, based on the university-wide policy of the “Konan University Internal Quality Assurance Regulations,” the “Konan University Internal Quality Assurance Committee” chaired by the President (hereinafter referred to as the “University Internal Quality Assurance Committee”) shall play a central role in effectively managing the PDCA cycle during terms and by academic year through the “Activity Objectives and Policies (PDCA Cycle Sheet)” in cooperation with the “Individual Internal Quality Assurance Committee” of each department. However, when viewed in relation to the KONAN-U. Vision 2025 currently being developed, processes, etc. have not been established that reflect assessments of the current mid-term plan and their results in the next term. Improvements must be made to inadequate structures, etc. that connect the Internal Quality Assurance PDCA cycle to the University’s mid-term plan.

Educational activities are based on the degree award policy created in each unit (diploma policy) and curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy). Notably, the Learning Assistant System, where students inside the program provide tutoring and answer questions under the guidance of either the course’s teacher or the organization offering said course in order to support learning in the introductory courses offered by the University and each division, is extremely valuable as it not only improves the educational effects for both tutor and student, but also entails mechanisms that assess and identify the tutor’s work. The system within undergraduate programs that integrates the student affairs system and learning portfolios so that information is managed centrally on the curriculum map and in the syllabus as well as the “Degree of Learning” that shows the understanding of learning outcomes is valuable and highly efficient systems capable

of processing all necessary data in one location because students can check their learning outcomes to date on their own and use that information to select courses. Some graduate schools also employ rubrics and work to multilaterally ascertain learning outcomes and increase educational effects.

The KONAN Certificate System series with its “KONAN Learning Support Certificate,” “KONAN Library Certificate,” etc. conducted as one part of the student support network to assess capabilities that cannot be gauged by academic achievement and the “Kakogawa Knowledge Connection Project” and the “Kansai Bay Area SDGs Challenge Project” for social cooperation and community service where students learn to address issues facing local businesses and governments are all achieving some degree of results and those systems are regarded as superb mechanisms offered by the University toward the development of human resources.

On the other hand, additional improvements are required for the previously mentioned inadequate internal quality assurance mechanisms that connect the internal quality assurance PDCA cycle with the University's mid-term plan and the relatively low ratio of student enrollment to admission capacity since multiple undergraduate and graduate divisions have not admitted enough students.

Going forward, we hope the University will address the above issues by creating a functioning internal quality assurance system and further accelerating numerous distinctive initiatives.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The University has introduced a Learning Assistant System to create active learning style classes and is proactively maintaining its support system to improve educational effects for tutors and increase understanding and motivation in students using the system. In 2019, the University also added a Learning Support Certificate field to the KONAN Certificate System to assess and certify student activities and works to both improve quality and increase motivation for students working as Learning Assistants. These actions are valued for not only increasing educational effects through the Learning Assistant System, but also for recognizing the actions of Learning Assistants as a University and establishing mechanisms to enhance student quality.

- By integrating the student affairs system and learning portfolios, educational results and the achievement of “Goals” of each course corresponding with the “Graduation Certification and Laureation Policies” are displayed in radar charts as “Degree of Learning” so that learning outcomes can be verified by students themselves and curriculum maps, syllabus, and information on each student’s results can be centrally managed. The system is effective for students to improve their learning outcomes because when students select the learning outcomes (Goals) they want to achieve from their learning portfolio, they are shown available courses that correspond with their learning outcomes and can do everything up to course registration all in one place.

Student Support

- Introduced in 2015 and based on the founding mission of “spearheading human-centric education,” the KONAN Certificate System assess and verifies grades according to the results of activities in five fields: the “KONAN Library Certificate (an assessment of skills acquired through a wide range of publication-related activities),” the “KONAN Global Certificate (an assessment of global human resources skills developed through international exchange),” the “KONAN Volunteer Certificate (an assessment of self-motivated skills related to volunteering and activities in the local area),” the “KONAN Sports Certificate (an assessment of skills acquired through sports activities),” and the “KONAN Learning Support Certificate (an assessment of skills cultivated through leadership attitudes toward supporting learning in other students and other support activities).” This system is valued as numerous students engage in activities for the purpose of certification and they function as initiatives that stimulate students to expand on the skills they possess.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The “Kakogawa Knowledge Connection Project,” a cooperative project between Kakogawa City and news outlets, enables students to acquire debate skills and broaden their worldview by having them present research aimed at solving local issues. The “Kansai Bay Area SDGs Challenge Project,” another cooperative project with news outlets, helps students acquire the skills to uncover issues, conduct research, manage teams, and more by having them present research that addresses local concerns. These programs are valued for the way they link regional cooperation

with University education and research activities, prepare educational environments for students to study in the region, and promote local cooperation and volunteer education aimed at cultivating citizens that contribute to the local area.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- Due to inadequacies in the checks and reviews for policies, strategies, etc. based on the vision and the cycle flow that connects the internal quality assurance PDCA cycle to the University's mid-term plan, improvements must be made for reforms based on the mid-term plan that will function as internal quality assurance.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment in the admission capacity is low at 0.40 in the Master's Program in the Graduate School of Humanities and 0.28 in the Master's Program in the Graduate School of Social Science. Therefore, the University should significantly improve graduate school quota management.