

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

Kobe Shoin Women's University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Hyogo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2022	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2030)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Kobe Shoin Women's University

Overview

Kobe Shoin Women's University sets forth the educational principle of "Open Yourself, Open Your Future," and defines its purpose as "providing students with a high level of education to fully develop character based on Anglican tradition, nurturing students to be physically and mentally healthy members of society, and researching and teaching specialized arts and sciences in depth as an academic research university." To achieve this purpose, the University formulated the Medium-term Vision for the 130th Anniversary of the Foundation of Shoin Joshi Gakuin for the period through AY2022, and established the five educational policies of "starting by accepting and trusting others," "building a foundation for continued growth," "developing the ability to open up the future independently," "learning and growing together," and "contributing to society with compassion."

Regarding internal quality assurance, the University has formulated the University-wide Policy and Procedures for Internal Quality Assurance and established an internal quality assurance system with the Academic and Student Affairs Committee as a promotion organization. However, the Academic Management Meeting inspects and assesses the appropriateness of the diploma, curriculum, and admissions policies (hereafter, the "three policies") as well as reviews the curriculum design. This situation indicates that the coordination and roles of the committee and the meeting are unclear in operating the internal quality assurance system. Moreover, the University's annual self-study confirms the achievement of goals based on the medium-term plan and summarizes them in an activity report, but self-study is conducted primarily to manage the progress of the annual plan, and is inadequate for systematically inspecting and assessing the appropriateness of educational and research activities. These issues should be addressed by establishing a mechanism for effective self-study of the University's activities, and clarifying the coordination and roles of the meeting bodies involved in internal quality assurance to improve the system.

As for the University's education, the curricula are designed based on the diploma and curriculum policies established by each faculty and department and the University as a whole, and the connection between each subject and the diploma policy is clarified through curriculum maps and course charts. In addition, the

curricula are designed in a systematic and sequential way by adopting course numbering systems and making the mechanism known to students through course guides and the University website. Active learning is also encouraged with subject lessons describing its elements in syllabuses. The Academic Affairs Committee inspects and assesses each subject based on grade distributions, numbers of registered students, and other factors, and encourages faculty members to undertake improvements, while ensuring students take courses and subjects that include those designed for acquiring qualifications within the maximum number of registered credits allowed in a year.

To improve the teaching quality of the faculty, the University presents the Outstanding Teaching Award by class size on the basis of class evaluation surveys carried out for all subjects and supervisors' self-study based on the survey results. The Innovative Teaching Award has also been created to recognize the efforts to promote educational innovation using information and communications technology (ICT), active learning, and other means, with awardees' distinguished approaches shared in faculty development (FD) sessions attended by almost all faculty members. This distinctive initiative is expected to enhance teaching for students' self-directed learning. Moreover, the Meeting to Hear the Educational Improvement Committee Members' Opinions on Lessons is held with its members selected from students in each department, and the University's improvement measures in response to their opinions are publicized on campus.

The University strives to assure the quality of its education and other activities, but there are issues that need to be addressed. First, as mentioned earlier, the University should improve the internal quality assurance system and the mechanism for appropriately inspecting and assessing its activities, and review the committees with many overlapping members from the perspective of ensuring objectivity. Next, to monitor student learning outcomes, the University has established an assessment policy to visualize the quality of its education, with assessment tests conducted by private companies, information internally shared through briefing sessions, rubric evaluations introduced in some subjects, and student feedback surveys carried out at the time of graduation. However, the connection between the diploma and assessment policies is unclear, and the connection of the above-mentioned approaches to the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy is vague as well. This situation should be addressed, as these activities are unlikely to help visualize the quality of the University's education. Moreover, to manage student quotas the University has launched various projects under the president's

leadership. The Faculty of Letters reduced its freshman enrollment quotas when reorganized in AY2017, and has since shown improvement. However, quota fulfillment remains insufficient in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Faculty of Human Sciences, and the Master's Course of the Graduate School of Letters. This issue should be addressed.

In the years ahead, the University is expected to progress further by examining the appropriateness of its current internal quality assurance system as well as enhancing its distinctive initiatives and inherited culture.

Notable Strengths

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The University presents the Outstanding Teaching Award by class size on the basis of class evaluation surveys carried out for all subjects and supervisors' self-study based on the survey results. The University has also created the Innovative Teaching Award to recognize the efforts to promote educational innovation using ICT, active learning, and other means, with awardees' distinguished approaches shared in FD sessions attended by almost all faculty members. It is commendable that this initiative is expected to enhance teaching for students' self-directed learning.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The Academic and Student Affairs Committee, positioned as a body promoting internal quality assurance, reviews the reports of the Self-Evaluation Steering Committee and issues instructions for improvement to each department. However, the Academic Management Meeting inspects and assesses the appropriateness of the three policies and reviews the curriculum design. This situation indicates that the coordination and roles of the committee and the meeting are unclear in operating the internal quality assurance system. Moreover, the University's annual self-study confirms the achievement of its medium-term and annual plans based on the medium-term plan, but self-study is conducted primarily to manage the progress of the annual plan, and is inadequate for

assessing the appropriateness of the University's educational and research activities. These issues should be addressed by establishing a mechanism for appropriately inspecting and assessing the University's activities, and reviewing the coordination and roles of the meeting bodies involved in internal quality assurance to ensure the development of a more systematic internal quality assurance system.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- An assessment policy has been established to visualize the quality of the University's education, and student learning outcomes are monitored in line with the policy. However, the connection between the diploma and assessment policies is unclear, and the connection of the monitoring activities to the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy is vague. These issues should be addressed by both faculties and graduate schools.

Student Enrollment

- The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Faculty of Human Sciences, has a low ratio of 0.88 in student enrollment to the student enrollment cap. This ratio should be improved with the faculty's student quotas thoroughly managed.
- The Master's Course of the Graduate School of Letters has a low ratio of 0.45 in student enrollment to the student enrollment cap. This ratio should be improved with the graduate school's student quotas thoroughly managed.