

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

Shukutoku University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Chiba, 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 Shukutoku University

Overview

Shukutoku University (hereafter, the University) was established based on the Mahayana Buddhism teachings of “benefit of others and peaceful coexistence” as its founding philosophy. The University sets forth the purpose of “cultivating human resources that can contribute to human and social development through social welfare enhancement and education,” and provides educational programs with social welfare as its mission. The University, in preparation to mark the 50th anniversary of its establishment in 2015, formulated the Shukutoku University Vision to present its future direction with the three key pillars of “educational direction,” including the promotion of practical learning, “connection with society” as a university contributing to the local community, and “university administration,” such as educational reforms initiated through the collaboration of academic and administrative staff members. In response, the School Grand Design was created for the school corporation. In addition, the University drafted five-year medium-term plans starting in fiscal 2018, and has dedicated itself to advancing education and research in social welfare and practical applications to realize coexistence with the local community, with these initiatives undertaken since its establishment.

In terms of “university administration” in the Shukutoku University Vision, the University promotes various reforms based on its internal quality assurance system. In fiscal 2017, it established the Internal Quality Assurance Promotion Committee under the University Association to develop a system that strengthens its quality assurance while maintaining the existing self-study activities. However, with its internal quality assurance system currently in a transitional phase, the University is expected to clarify the roles of the organizations responsible for internal quality assurance and provide continuous support for each faculty and graduate school to effectively operate the internal quality assurance system.

The University actively fosters its educational philosophy, enhances the learning outcomes for undergraduate programs, and promotes practical learning stated in the “educational direction” agenda of the vision. It is highly commendable that the University presents performance indicators for its educational programs and conducts the university-wide monitoring and evaluations of student learning outcomes using rubrics for undergraduate programs and other approaches based on the assessment plans. In addition, the University is committed to regional cooperation on each campus through “connection

with society.” It participates in volunteer activities to support recovery from the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, offering study support to local elementary and junior high schools and taking advantage of its social welfare expertise to support young children in cooperation with students. These are outstanding efforts that respond to social needs.

As for faculty organization, however, some faculties and departments in fiscal 2017 and 2018 lacked the number of professors required, in principle, by the Standards for Establishment of Universities. This issue was later addressed by promoting faculty members within the university, but in the years ahead, the faculty organization should be managed to comply with the standards. Meanwhile, the graduate schools do not sufficiently monitor and evaluate the learning outcomes of their education programs, and there are problems with student quota management. These issues are expected to be addressed.

It is important for the University to focus on its steady self-study efforts in order to constantly operate the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycles in the faculties and graduate schools, while taking advantage of its successful bottom-up approaches to adopt the opinions and suggestions of faculty members on university-wide initiatives. The University is also expected to help the organizations responsible for internal quality assurance to support more advanced PDCA cycles for each faculty and graduate school, thereby effectively operating the internal quality assurance system developed in fiscal 2017.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Outcome

- The University has formulated an assessment plan to monitor and evaluate student learning outcomes, with the Research and Development Institute for Higher Education employing multiple rubrics throughout the university and continuously conducting research and development to improve the rubric accuracy. In addition, the Educational Progress Committee of Faculty takes the initiative in monitoring and evaluating university-wide learning outcomes with bottom-up approaches to the faculties and graduate schools, including adopting a rubric of each faculty’s own design. These efforts are commendable for enhancing the University’s educational content and methods, and helping to assure the educational quality.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The Volunteer Center provides students with volunteer opportunities to experience regional contribution by continuously participating in reconstruction activities to help recover from the Great East Japan Earthquake, including study support for elementary and junior high schools. The Center for Clinical Research of Child Development of the Social Welfare Research Institute accepts regular visits of young children requiring developmental assistance to provide undergraduate and graduate students with clinical training. These initiatives allow the University to meet social needs by returning its educational and research outcomes to society, and are closely and organically connected to the University's educational and research activities in an effort to cultivate people who can contribute to the local community. It is commendable that the University, with an awareness of university-wide issues based on its educational philosophy, is actively involved in social contribution and cooperation activities, and demonstrates its capabilities in responding to society's expectations for universities with specific visions.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- The two graduate schools primarily use thesis and dissertation evaluations to measure student learning outcomes, but do not sufficiently monitor and evaluate the learning outcomes stated in their degree award policies. This issue should be improved with the learning outcomes effectively measured and the results reflected in improvements to educational content and methods.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.27 in the Social Welfare Studies Major Doctoral Course of the Graduate School of Integrated Human and Social Welfare Studies. This ratio should be improved with the graduate school's student quota thoroughly managed.