

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

Hiroshima Jogakuin University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Hiroshima, 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 Hiroshima Jogakuin University**

### **Overview**

Hiroshima Jogakuin University (hereafter, the University) was founded on the mission to provide women's character education rooted in Christianity. Following a study on the educational challenges and present state of the institution conducted based on the five-year First Medium-Term Plan developed in FY2013, the University reorganized its undergraduate school in FY2018 into the Faculty of Humanities with two departments and the Faculty of Human Life Studies with three departments. Under this new structure, the institution formulated also in FY2018 the Second Medium-Term Plan that upholds "unwavering individuality," "diversity," and "tolerance and collaboration" as the ideal concepts to realize the University's mission, and pledged to implement education reform based on this plan.

The University's reforms consist of various efforts to improve student learning outcomes, including designing a structured and sequential curriculum for both faculties, providing a curriculum map showing the progression of learning, and incorporating teaching methods that encourage active student participation. In particular, the "life career" courses offered to students of both faculties not only link the basic subjects and specialized subjects but also provide education that can benefit the students their whole life. The courses are a remarkable effort expected to develop the foundational abilities for students to build their own lives and careers, and are consistent with the educational goals established in the Second Medium-Term Plan.

To deliver on the Second Medium-Term Plan commitment to strengthen collaboration with companies, local governments, and the local community, the departments work with the local community to actively implement student organized and led local community collaboration projects and volunteer activities. These are commendable efforts that contribute to revitalizing the local community and improving social welfare. Furthermore, the curriculum revised in 2018 offers seminars related to local community collaboration across all departments in both faculties, with classes incorporating local community collaboration and problem-solving components. These seminars promise to return the benefits of education and research outcomes to society in an appropriate manner.

To determine the achievement of the educational activities mentioned above, the Second Medium-Term Plan pledges to establish evaluation criteria to measure learning

outcomes and develop an internal quality assurance (IQA) system. Prior to implementing the plan, the undergraduate programs in 2016 began using a rubric. As for the development of an IQA system, the University created a system where the Self-Study Committee implements university-wide self-study, and the Internal Quality Assurance Committee discusses and makes decisions on improvement measures with the approval, when necessary, of the Board of Councilors and assists the undergraduate and graduate schools in implementing the PDCA cycle. In addition to establishing the IQA system, the IQA Committee has begun work on teaching and learning management, which is expected to increase the effectiveness of the University's IQA system.

For all its strengths the University is not without issues, with its below-capacity enrollment adding to the problem of its weak financial foundation. In response to this situation, as mentioned earlier, the University reorganized its undergraduate schools and departments and introduced a new curriculum in FY2018. As a result, there are already signs of improvements, with student enrollment in many departments filling to capacity. Going forward the University is expected to establish a secure financial foundation by continuing to work on consistently securing incoming students and initiating various improvement efforts.

Apart from working on the issues mentioned above, the University also needs to implement effective measures to ensure that course workloads align with the credit hour definition at the undergraduate level, and to improve graduate school education by creating research supervision plans and implementing an effective student learning outcomes assessment.

Moving ahead it is important that the University ensures effective operation of its IQA system, conducts self-study based on activity reports, creates plans for the following year using the self-study results to improve its education and research activities, and works on quality assurance for further development of the institution.

## **Notable Strengths**

### *Educational Program and Outcome*

- Since FY2018 the University has implemented a curriculum consisting of basic courses, “life career” courses, and specialized courses offered by each department. The “life career” courses are based on the concept that a woman’s life events are a component of her career, and seek to develop the ability for students to chart their own career path. In this curriculum, the liberal arts courses that needed revamping

were revised and modified into the basic courses required by students of all departments, and the life career courses consisting of the required courses and electives. The life career courses include introductory and basic courses offered by each department and are classified into five groups such as “subjects relating to self,” “subjects relating to others,” and “subjects relating to society”. These courses integrate various types of teaching methods, for instance, an omnibus format and group work, and use a rubric to assess the teaching outcomes. The courses are commendable in that they can help students acquire a broad range of knowledge and culture.

### *Social Cooperation and Contribution*

- The Regional Collaboration Center keeps track of all local community collaboration activities conducted by the departments and faculty members, and also serves as the contact point for community collaboration activities that match local community needs to the appropriate departments or faculty members. Furthermore, the Center contributes to revitalizing the local community and social welfare improvements through active promotion of student designed and operated local community collaboration activities, including rejuvenating the area around the Hiroshima station shinkansen gate, “challenge activities,” a local community collaborative dietary education program, and volunteer activities such as a playschool, a picture book workshop, and an elderly women’s childcare support program. Moreover, the curriculum revised in 2018 offers seminar courses on local community collaboration across all departments in both faculties. It is commendable that these seminar courses incorporating local community collaboration and problem-solving components effectively link education and “giving back to society.”

### **Suggestions for Improvement**

#### *Educational Program and Outcome*

- The degree award policies of the Master’s Course of the Graduate School of Language and Culture and the Master’s Course of the Graduate School of Human Life Science should state the expected student learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, and competencies appropriate for the degree conferred. The curriculum design and implementation policy of the Master’s Course of the Graduate

School of Language and Culture needs to state the basic principles of curriculum design and implementation.

- To ensure that course workloads align with the credit hour definition, the University sets a cap on the number of credits for which a student can register in a year. However, fourth-year students are exempt from this restriction, as are “high achieving” students who earned a GPA of 2.3 or higher in the previous semester, and given the many students who fulfill this requirement, the credit cap policy is not effectual. Although students are advised on the content and hours of the required before- and after-class study in the syllabus, this is not sufficient to ensure that students complete the hours of study required to earn credits. This issue should be addressed in light of the purpose of the credit system.
- The graduate schools determine student learning outcomes merely by assessing student attainment against the thesis evaluation criteria. This method needs to be reviewed and improved as it does not effectively assess the learning outcomes established in the degree award policy.

#### *Student Enrollment*

- The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.21 and 0.08, respectively, in the Master’s Course of the Graduate School of Language and Culture and the Master’s Course of the Graduate School of Human Life Science. Graduate school enrollment should be managed more effectively.

#### *Faculty and Faculty Organizations*

- The graduate schools need to implement their own FD program in an appropriate manner.

#### *University Administration and Finances*

- The cost cutting measures in place have attained a certain level of success, but the ratio of financial assets to the required reserve fund is extremely low due mainly to the declining income from tuition and other student fees. This low ratio and the fact that the carried over expenditures for next year are on the rise suggest the University’s

financial foundation is not sufficiently secure. The University is advised to establish a solid financial foundation by consistently implementing its Second Medium-Term Plan, securing income from tuition and other student fees in a sustainable and stable manner, and striving to achieve its stated goals.

## **Recommendations**

### *Educational Program and Outcome*

- The Master's Course of the Graduate School of Language and Culture and the Master's Course of the Graduate School of Human Life Science do not provide a research supervision plan that clearly outlines the research supervision methods. This information should be made available to students in advance.

### *Student Enrollment*

- The average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years is low at 0.73 for the whole university. The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are also low at 0.70 and 0.89, respectively, for the whole university and the Faculty of Human Life Studies. Undergraduate enrollment should be managed more effectively.