

**Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for  
Professional Graduate Public Policy School**

**Graduate School of Public Policy, Hokkaido University**



<b>Basic Information of the Institution</b>	
Ownership: National	Location: Hokkaido, Japan
<b>Accreditation Status</b>	
Year of the Review: 2024	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2030)	

## **Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for the Graduate School of Public Policy, Hokkaido University**

The Graduate School of Public Policy, Hokkaido University, also known as Hokkaido University Public Policy School, or HOPS (hereafter “HOPS”), sets forth the mission to “foster experts and professionals who can plan, formulate, implement, and evaluate public policies and services at national and local governments, international organizations, and other institutions through the systematic provision of theoretical and practical education designed to cultivate foundational competencies in public policy practice”. Its more specific educational purpose is to “cultivate individuals with professional expertise in public policy who can develop approaches to addressing various societal issues. To this end, HOPS carries out educational and research activities under a collaborative framework involving the Graduate School of Law, Faculty of Economics and Business, and Faculty of Engineering.

To implement its mission and educational purpose, HOPS has adopted the four core themes of “Integration of Arts and Sciences,” “Putting Theory into Practice,” “Global + Local = ‘Glocal’ Perspective,” and “Forefront of Public Policy in Hokkaido” and actively incorporated them into its educational activities. These core themes are not mere slogans as educational and administrative frameworks have been steadily put in place to realize them. Among them, “Integration of Arts and Sciences” is particularly worth noting as a distinctive feature of HOPS. The idea of integrating the arts and sciences has gained traction in society in recent years amid advances in AI and the growing importance of data science, but its practical implementation is expected to encounter various challenges. In response, HOPS has not only established the Technological Policy Program alongside the Public Management Program and the International Policy Program to foster talented individuals in the sciences, but also undertaken interdisciplinary initiatives that integrate the arts and sciences. For instance, HOPS offers courses collaboratively taught by faculty from both the social and natural sciences, and has developed its curricula requiring students in each of the three programs to take compulsory courses outside their primary field of interest; students with a humanities background are required to take science-related courses, while students with a science background take courses in the humanities. These distinctive educational practices are commendable.

Various initiatives also put into practice the remaining core themes—“Putting Theory into Practice,” “Global + Local = ‘Glocal’ Perspective,” and “Forefront of Public

Policy in Hokkaido.” In the Case Study Courses, for example, national and local government officials, journalists, business executives, researchers, and other practitioners directly involved in policy-making are invited to deliver practical lessons through case-method teaching, workshops, and fieldwork. In the Social Research Methods and Policy Discussion Seminar courses, which are primarily taught by practitioner faculty members, students investigate and analyze policy issues faced by local governments in Hokkaido using questionnaire surveys, field studies, and stakeholder interviews, and develop policy proposals to address these issues. These creatively designed courses demonstrate HOPS’s commitment to realizing the core themes mentioned above.

Furthermore, HOPS’s proactive conclusion of comprehensive partnership agreements with local assemblies and local governments in Hokkaido to ensure substantive implementation of practice-oriented learning is one of HOPS’s outstanding features. Also commendable is HOPS’s proactive engagement in social and regional cooperation as well as public communication through activities such as undertaking research projects commissioned by local governments in Hokkaido, concluding partnership agreements with private companies, organizing summer schools for local legislators and government officials, hosting symposia for local residents, and publishing the *Annals of Public Policy Studies*, an annual academic journal featuring the educational, research, and practical achievements of HOPS.

Also in the area of student guidance and support, HOPS has put in place a finely tuned system that includes scheduling classes to accommodate adult students, utilizing online instruction, providing course registration and career guidance each semester, engaging in exchanges of views with the autonomous Graduate Student Council, independently administering the HAT Scholarship for incoming students in the Technological Policy Program and the HOPS Scholarship for high-achieving students in years other than their first, and offering various scholarships intended to promote study abroad.

HOPS’s outstanding initiatives with distinctive strengths and characteristics are highly commendable, but whether these initiatives can be sustained and further developed on an ongoing, long-term basis may become a challenge in the future. Although cooperation with local governments is commendable in itself, many aspects of this cooperation rely on individual faculty members in charge. The organization as a whole will need to consider how such cooperation can be sustained over the long term and how it should be reviewed. Improving the educational and research framework, including ensuring stable and continuous faculty recruitment, will also be an important issue going forward.

Adapting to changes in the broader environment represents another challenge. In light of increasingly diverse student demographics and ever-evolving needs, some changes have become evident since the time of HOPS's establishment. Accordingly, how HOPS should respond to these changes is a matter that warrants careful organizational deliberation. To address these issues, HOPS has indicated that the Curriculum Development Review Committee is planning to undertake a comprehensive review of the curriculum and course offerings. It is expected that by building on its current strengths and features, HOPS will advance in a way that supports its sustainable, long-term development.