

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

Nayoro City University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Hokkaido, 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 Nayoro City University**

### **Overview**

In 2012, Nayoro City University (hereafter, the University) reviewed its mission and purpose, along with its educational goals, structure, programs, and methods, and adopted the slogan “Open the future of care as a small yet vibrant university” based on the goals to “foster professionals with a high degree of specialized knowledge and skills, strong ethical values, and the ability to support the collaboration of healthcare, medicine, and social welfare” and “open the future by studying and addressing the various challenges faced by the local community.” The school offers four degree programs, one each in the departments of Nutritional Sciences, Nursing, Social Welfare, and Early Childhood Care and Education in the Faculty of Health and Welfare Science, and strives as well to improve its education and research activities, education and research environment, student admissions and support, and management, administration, and finances in accordance with Nayoro University Vision 2026 established in 2017.

Vision 2026 sets out the University’s commitment to improve its undergraduate programs by implementing a structured curriculum and integrating knowledge and practice through the incorporation of various educational approaches. In line with this vision, the University in 2016 introduced a revised curriculum with more structure for the four departments of the Faculty of Health and Welfare Science, and increased the number of small-sized classes. It also created an interdisciplinary teaching framework by establishing interprofessional education subjects and general subjects for students of all departments to provide the knowledge and skills required of all professionals regardless of specialization.

The Nayoro City University: Center for Research and Education in Community-based Care established concurrently with the reorganization of the undergraduate school in 2016, is positioned as an important base for achieving the University’s mission. As a one-stop base linking local community needs with the University’s resources, the Center returns the benefits of education and research to society through seminars for care practitioners and providing opportunities to conduct community activities as part of its interprofessional education. The Center’s effort to effectively combine local communities’ collaborative activities with education is highly commendable.

There are a number of issues the University needs to address, however. The University does not implement sufficient measures to ensure that course workloads align

with the credit hour definition and fails to measure the student learning outcomes set forth in the degree award policy. It is problematic that some departments do not hold entrance examinations for transfer students in some school years even though the university rules specify an enrollment capacity. Furthermore, Nayoro City University's Policy on Enhancing the Education and Research Environment promises to put in place a program to secure sufficient research hours for its faculty members, but this has not happened. The University should take steps to ensure its faculty members have sufficient time for their own research.

As for its internal quality assurance (IQA), which is imperative to address these educations and research issues and make improvements, the University created, based on the 2016 self-study results, a vision to establish an IQA system and formed the Naroyo City University Internal Quality Assurance Promotion Committee (hereafter, IQA Promotion Committee). However, the IQA Promotion Committee's authority and its role in relation to the Deans' Council and other university-wide organizations are not clearly defined, and the IQA Promotion Committee does not sufficiently support the efforts of the four departments to implement improvements based on the self-study results. The University needs to review and improve its IQA system and use the enhanced IQA system to address the education and research issues for further development.

## **Notable Strengths**

### *Educational Program and Outcome*

- The University created an interdisciplinary teaching framework by establishing interprofessional education subjects and general subjects for students of all departments to provide the knowledge and skills required of all professionals regardless of specialization. In "Working with the Community," an interprofessional education class offered to first- through third-year students, the students learn about the collaborative practices of different professionals in the actual work environment. Taught in small groups consisting of a mix of students from the four departments, the class also offers fieldwork opportunities. In the faculty's general subject courses the students learn knowledge essential for interprofessional practices, with topics ranging from public hygiene to infectious disease prevention. This interdisciplinary curriculum for multi-professional collaboration helps train healthcare, medicine, and welfare professionals capable of collaborative practices, and is a commendable effort in line with the stated purpose of the University.

### *Social Cooperation and Contribution*

- The Community Care Education and Research Center, founded through the integration of the Nayoro City University:Northern Hokkaido Regional Research Institute and Regional Exchange Center, is positioned as an important base for realizing the University's vision, "Open the future of care as a small yet vibrant university." A one-stop facility for connecting local needs with the University's resources, the Center gives back to society through sharing the fruits of education and research, for example, by publishing research finding in its annual newsletter, "Chiiki to Junin (The Region and its Residents)," and holding seminars for care practitioners; using the soup kitchen for children and other community service projects as opportunities to practice interprofessional education, thereby linking community collaboration activities to student learning; and serving as a volunteer work contact point, offering information on local volunteer needs to students and encouraging volunteer service. In these many ways, the Center is helping students build character. The Center's activities are commendable efforts that contribute to improving both the local community and university education.

### **Suggestions for Improvement**

#### *Internal Quality Assurance*

- The University's IQA system is not fully developed, failing to clearly define the authority of the IQA Promotion Committee established in 2017 and its role in relation to the Deans' Council and other university-wide organizations in terms of self-study and improvement activities to be implemented based on the self-study results. The University also lacks a clear process for the IQA Promotion Committee to lead and assist the four departments in carrying out improvement measures based on the self-study results to assure quality as well as a process to periodically evaluate the appropriateness of its own IQA system. These issues should be addressed.

#### *Educational Program and Outcome*

- 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, but this

cap is too high at 50 credits, and students aspiring to either the teaching or psychiatric social work profession in the Department of Social Welfare are exempt from this restriction. Also, there is no credit cap for third-year transfer students. Faculty members offer one-on-one academic guidance on course registration, but 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 University uses the success rates of national examinations and employment data as criteria to determine student learning outcomes, but it lacks an effective process to measure and assess the learning outcomes established in the degree award policy and needs to address this issue.

#### *Education and Research Environment*

- The Policy on Enhancing the Education and Research Environment, established with the aim of creating a period dedicated to education and research on care, outlines the University's commitment to establish "research days" to secure sufficient research hours for its faculty members, but this has not happened. The University needs to introduce programs to ensure its full-time faculty members have sufficient time to conduct their own research.

### **Recommendations**

#### *Student Enrollment*

- Despite the University's rules specifying an enrollment capacity for third-year transfer student admission, no entrance examinations were held for the Department of Nutritional Sciences in FY2013 and FY2015-FY2017 and for the Department of Social Welfare in FY2017 because there was no prospect of a vacancy arising. The University should hold entrance examinations and manage student enrollment in an appropriate manner.