

## Re-review Results

### Bunsei University of Art



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tochigi, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2020	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.1.2021 – March.31.2025)	

## **Re-review Results for Bunsei University of Art**

### **Overview**

With regard to Bunsei University of Art, as serious issues in the three areas of enrollment, administration and finance, and internal quality assurance were recognized in the 2017 University Accreditation (Certified Evaluation and Accreditation) Results by the Japan University Accreditation Association, we submitted Areas of Serious Concern, and the University was temporarily found to satisfy the University Standards in consideration of the likelihood of improvements. Moreover, besides the aforementioned, one item under Areas of Serious Concern and seven items under Suggestions for Improvement were added.

In response to these recommendations, the Check and Review Committee and other relevant committees at Bunsei University of Art have been cooperating in endeavoring toward improvements. In this Re-review, from the fact that the likelihood of improvements in the near future was recognized (although some matters that were not sufficiently improved could also be seen) as a result of conducting an assessment in accordance with the University Standards at the time of the previous University Accreditation, we comprehensively evaluated the situation around improvements in the three areas that were serious issues and find that the University satisfies the University Standards.

First, regarding enrollment with respect to the Areas of Serious Concern that we deemed serious issues, the fact that the average ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap for the past five years in the university-wide School of Fine Arts is low has been indicated. Although we cannot go so far as to say that both ratios as of 2020 have risen above their still low levels, from the fact that both ratios in 2019 and 2020 are on the rise as a result of such endeavors as placing an emphasis on open campuses, guest lectures at high schools, entrance examination consultations at affiliated high schools, sketching workshops, and the Sketching Grand Prix, we would like to see the University continue its endeavors toward improvements and correct its course. Note that, besides diversifying entrance examinations at Bunsei University of Art and enrolling students who possess various talents, we can confirm the fact that the University is putting effort into community liaison projects and collaborative activities with other universities, endeavoring to improve its educational programs, and is making considerable endeavors toward improvements. Hereafter, we hope that the University endeavors toward improvements while verifying

those results and social needs.

Second, with regard to administration and finance, although the situations of the proportion of excess expenditures carried over to the next academic year (excess consumption expenditures carried over to the next academic year) to revenue from operational activities (imputed revenue) trending downward and the ratio of the financial assets to the required reserve fund remaining flat have persisted since 2015, slight improvements can be seen in both ratios since the time of the previous University Accreditation.

However, it cannot be said that improvements are sufficient, as funds are still repeatedly raised every year by short-term borrowing, only cash and deposits are recorded as financial assets, the ratio of the financial assets to the required reserve fund is markedly low, and the proportion of excess expenditures carried over to the next academic year (excess consumption expenditures carried over to the next academic year) to revenue from operational activities (imputed revenue) is high.

The University formulated the Incorporated School of Utsunomiya Gakuen (5-Year) Mid-term Plan in 2020, and set a goal to move the balance between revenue and expenditures into the black in 2022 by reducing costs while maintaining the quality of its education, and at the same time, reinforcing student recruitment and securing tuition and other student fees. Moreover, from the fact that it has reduced the negative balance between revenue and expenditures for operational activities in 2018 by changing the assignment of some staff to attached schools and checking personnel expenses in addition to increasing the enrollment number based on said plan, we hope that the university implements verification and assessment of its financial situation every year and establishes a sure financial footing along with continuing to firmly implement measures to realize its goal.

Third, with regard to internal quality assurance, it was required of the University to make its internal quality assurance function by implementing regular checks and reviews based on proper regulations and establishing a framework that leads to the improvement of those results. In response, besides revising its Check and Review Regulations and reformulating its Policy for Internal Quality Assurance, the University established the I.R. Promotional Center in order to conduct investigation and analysis of teaching and learning as well as promote quality assurance for education. However, although they have clarified that it is to conduct constant check and review activities based on the assessment criteria of the Association and to widely publish its self-study reports for the public, the University has not clarified the frequency it implements checks and reviews, nor has it with regard to role sharing between the organizations involved in internal quality assurance. In fact, as of October 2020, a self-study report has neither been prepared nor published, and we cannot

find that internal quality assurance is functioning as per the regulations. We would like to see the University correct its course so that it makes its internal quality assurance system fully functional by implementing regular checks and reviews as well as endeavoring toward improvements and progress based on those results.

Regarding Educational Programs, Methods, and Outcomes with respect to the remaining Areas of Serious Concern, the absence of a research guidance plan in the graduate school master's course was indicated. In response to this, the University prepared the Roadmap for Earning a Degree in the Master's Course in the Graduate School Committee, and besides explaining it to students fully beforehand, the University also built a framework for conducting research guidance in which individual students formulate Master's Course Research Plans and faculty members formulate Master's Course Research Guidance Plans, and improvements are recognized.

Concerning the seven items as Suggestions for Improvement for which we requested improvement reports, we can confirm the fact that improvements have been made for most items. However, further improvement is desired for the areas below, as satisfactory results have not necessarily been achieved.

First, concerning Educational Programs, Methods, and Outcomes, in response to the indication that faculty development (referred to hereafter as FD) activities focusing on the unique education the graduate school provides are not being conducted, the University established a framework to include the graduate school in the University-wide FD activities, and also devised a method to implement class assessment questionnaires in the graduate school. However, besides organized endeavors in improving classes based on class assessment questionnaires in the graduate school having not been implemented, opportunities for FD training contributing to improvements in the educational programs and methods of the graduate school have not been arranged, and further improvements are necessary.

Concerning enrollment, the fact that the ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap in both the Master's and Doctor's Course of the Graduate School of Arts were low was deemed an issue. Although some rise could be seen in the ratios for both the Master's and Doctor's Course in 2019, they once again turned toward decline in 2020, and are even lower than the time of the University Accreditation. Hereafter, we hope that the University makes further improvements, such as taking concrete measures to increase the numbers of students advancing to the graduate school.

Concerning the educational and research environments, the fact that the University did not enact regulations to prevent misconduct with regard to research ethics other than for public research funds, framework improvements, or training was deemed an

issue; however, thereafter, the University established a University-wide framework for responsibility, improving regulations such as Regulations for Preventing Misconduct in Research Activities, Internal Audit Regulations for Public Research Funds, Research Ethics Regulations, and On the Handling of Compliance Education at Bunsei University of Art. However, in On the Handling of Compliance Education at Bunsei University of Art, the faculty members and staff who are eligible for compliance and ethics education are limited to those who were involved at the time of application for, or are otherwise involved in, the operations of competitive funds, and there was only one participant who took Research Ethics Education in 2019. The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science will introduce an e-learning course during 2020, and while all students of the graduate school and faculty members involved in guidance at the graduate school will have to take the course, we hope that the University makes improvements so that continual endeavors can be made.

As previously mentioned, although some endeavors toward improvements can be seen, there are still several matters requiring attention. Hereafter, we expect the University to endeavor so that its new framework for quality assurance is further improved and reinforced so that it can fully display its function, assure and raise the quality of its education, and make a further leap forward toward achieving its mission and purpose.

## **Suggestions for Improvement**

### *Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome*

- As FD activities to improve educational programs and methods in the graduate school are not conducted sufficiently, we hope that the University makes improvements.

### *Enrollment*

- Since the ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap in 2020 are low at 0.28 in the Graduate School of Arts Master's Course and at 0.07 in the Graduate School of Arts Doctor's Course, we hope that the University makes improvements.

### *Education and Research Environment*

- In On the Handling of Compliance Education at Bunsei University of Art, as the faculty members and staff who are eligible for taking research ethics education are

limited to those who were involved at the time of application for, or are otherwise involved in, the operations of competitive funds, we hope that the University makes improvements so that it can conduct continual Research Ethics Education for those who are broadly involved in research.

#### *Administration and Finance*

- Although improvements can be seen since the time of the previous assessment, the ratio of the financial assets to the required reserve fund is markedly low and the proportion of excess expenditures carried over to the next academic year (excess consumption expenditures carried over to the next academic year) to revenue from operational activities (imputed income) is high. From the fact that it sets a goal to move the balance between revenue and expenditures into the black in 2022 in the Incorporated School of Utsunomiya Gakuen (5-Year) Mid-term Plan that it formulated in 2020, we hope that the University makes improvements so that it implements verification and assessment of its financial situation every year and establishes a sure financial footing along with firmly implementing measures to realize that goal.

### **Recommendations**

#### *Enrollment*

- In 2020, as the average ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap and the ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap for the past five years in the (university-wide) School of Fine Arts were both low at 0.75, we would like to see the University correct its course so that it thoroughly ensures enrollment and implements student quotas.

#### *Internal Quality Assurance*

- While the University has stipulated that it is to revise its regulations on internal quality assurance, constantly conduct checks and reviews activities, and widely publish those results for the public, the University has not clarified the frequency it implements checks and reviews, and a self-study report following the regulations has yet to be prepared or published. Moreover, the University has not clarified matters with regard to role sharing between the organizations involved in internal quality assurance, and

internal quality assurance cannot be seen as functioning. We would like to see the University correct its course so that it makes its internal quality assurance system functional by implementing regular checks and reviews as well as improvements and progress based on those results.