

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

Hokkaido Bunkyo University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Hokkaido, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2024	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2032)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Hokkaido Bunkyo University

Overview

Hokkaido Bunkyo University (hereafter “University”) upholds “Seisei Shinjitsu” (Be pure, be righteous, be courageous, and advance) as its founding spirit, and stipulates its educational and research purpose as follows: “In accordance with its founding spirit and the Basic Act on Education, the University aims to cultivate individuals who can contribute to world peace and the progress of humankind as members of the international community by imparting a broad range of knowledge to foster rich humanity and conducting comprehensive academic education and research encompassing both theory and practice.” To realize its founding spirit and purpose, the University has formulated the long-term plan 100-Year Vision of Education and Tsuruoka Gakuen School Corporation Mid-Term Plan 2024, and is working to enhance its educational and research activities.

With regard to education, the University sets forth three basic academic policies: degree award policy (diploma policy), curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy), and admission policy. Based on these policies, each faculty and graduate school has established its own corresponding policies and develops structured curricula accordingly. Furthermore, measures are taken to enable students to study in a systematic and sequential manner by clarifying the relationship between the goals outlined in the degree award policies and individual courses through course numbering and curriculum maps, and by specifying in the syllabi the number of study hours required for preparatory work and post-class reviews.

As a distinctive initiative, the University located in Eniwa City actively engages in social cooperation activities to address the city’s issues, and centered on the Regional Collaboration Promotion Center, the University has developed diverse partnerships with various organizations, including local governments, medical institutions, schools, and private companies, thereby contributing to the local community by leveraging the expertise of each faculty in areas such as child-rearing support, welfare, healthcare, and education. To further develop this initiative, the University established the Regional Creation Research Center in AY2023, which is expected to serve as a regional knowledge hub by building new models of cooperation with local governments and other regional stakeholders, including efforts to connect industry, government, and academia to address

regional issues. In this way, the University's efforts to build upon its existing initiatives to address regional challenges are highly commendable.

The University demonstrates vigorous efforts in the areas of education and social cooperation, but faces significant issues over internal quality assurance (IQA). The University has established an IQA system with the University Management Committee responsible for promoting IQA, and conducts multiple types of self-studies, such as self-studies based on its mid-term plan and action plans, the University Standards, and its assessment policy. However, these self-studies are an insufficient mechanism for identifying issues based on an accurate understanding of the current situation. In particular, no feedback is provided by the University Management Committee on the self-studies conducted based on the University Standards, making it necessary to review and clarify the positioning and interrelationship of the multiple self-studies, examine how feedback for improvement should be provided by the body responsible for promoting IQA, and ensure that the IQA system functions effectively so that self-study results can lead to improvement and enhancement.

Among other issues, the relationship between the learning outcomes stated in the degree award policies and the methods for measuring them is unclear in both faculties and graduate schools, thus requiring improvements in how student learning outcomes are monitored and evaluated. Furthermore, in the Department of Health and Nutrition and the Department of Child Development, which are part of the Faculty of Human Sciences, the ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap and student enrollment to the student enrollment cap remain low, requiring measures to ensure thorough management of the faculty's student quotas. The graduate schools' student quota management also needs improvement as some graduate schools and programs have low ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap. In relation to student enrollment, the university division of the school corporation needs to improve its financial balance and build a sufficient financial foundation to steadily carry out its educational and research activities. Going forward, the University should specify numerical financial targets and the measures to achieve them in the new mid-term plan starting in AY2025, and implement initiatives in line with these targets and measures.

Aiming to return the knowledge gained through its educational and research activities to the local community, and create new knowledge, the University is striving to enhance its brand strength by outlining initiatives in its long-term plan necessary to achieve organizational sustainability. Moving forward, the University is expected to examine the goals and action plans set forth in its mid-term plan with a view to utilizing them in self-studies, establish an appropriate management framework for the

organizations responsible for promoting IQA, and ensure that the IQA system functions effectively. In doing so, the University will be able to resolve the issues identified, further advance its distinctive initiatives, and deepen education grounded in its founding spirit.

Notable Strengths

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- Centered on the Regional Collaboration Promotion Center, the University implements a wide range of cooperative initiatives in Eniwa City, where it is located, drawing on the expertise of each faculty in areas including education, food, welfare, healthcare, and international studies. These initiatives involve students, faculty, and staff in activities such as promoting dietary education, supporting child-rearing, conducting developmental support projects for individuals with disabilities, and co-developing products with local businesses. To further develop these initiatives, the University established the Regional Creation Research Center in AY2023, which is expected to serve as a regional knowledge hub by building new models of cooperation between the University and the local community, as a central driver in the formation of a collaborative platform that includes cooperation with researchers from industry, government, and academia to address regional issues. Accordingly, these initiatives are commendable efforts based on the University's policy of social cooperation and contribution.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The University monitors and evaluates student learning outcomes in line with its assessment policy, but the relationship between the learning outcomes stated in the degree award policies and the methods for measuring them is unclear in both faculties and graduate schools. This issue should be addressed. Going forward, the University should not only monitor and evaluate the attainment of the various competencies set forth in the degree award policy, but should also organically link the evaluation results with internal quality assurance to utilize them in decision-making and improvements at both the institutional and curriculum levels.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.10 in the Graduate School of Global Communication (master's program), and measures should be taken to ensure thorough management of the graduate school's student quotas.

University Management

- Due to the decline in the balance between operational revenue and expenditure of the school corporation's university division and the continued excess of expenditures over revenues at the affiliated schools, the ratio of financial assets to the required reserve fund has markedly fallen, and the corporation-wide balance between operational revenue and expenditure has been negative since FY2019, with the deficit continuing to grow. As such, the University cannot be considered to have established a sufficient financial base to carry out its educational and research activities. The University should formulate a medium- to long-term financial plan that sets out numerical targets and measures to achieve them in its new mid-term plan starting in FY2025, and take concrete steps to establish a stable financial base.

Recommendation

Internal Quality Assurance

- In addition to self-studies based on the University Standards, the University conducts multiple types of self-studies that include progress checks on mid-term plans and action plans, and self-studies based on the assessment policy. However, the latter efforts merely monitor any progress made and fall short as self-studies that identify issues and lead to meaningful improvements. With regard to the self-study results based on the University Standards, the University simply publishes the reports on its website, and no feedback is provided by the University Management Committee, the body responsible for promoting IQA, regarding institution-wide improvement and enhancement. The University is required to clarify the positioning and interrelationship of the multiple self-studies it conducts, examine how feedback should be provided, and ensure that the internal quality assurance system functions effectively.

Student Enrollment

- The average ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap in the past five years are low at 0.72 in the Department of Health and Nutrition and 0.82 in the Department of Child Development, both in the Faculty of Human Sciences. The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are also low at 0.71 and 0.81 in the respective departments, and 0.88 in the undergraduate division as a whole. Measures should be taken to ensure thorough management of the undergraduate division's student quotas.