

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

Wako University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2019	
Accreditation Status: Accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1.2020 – March 31.2027)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Wako University

Overview

In line with the principle of “a community of free research and learning,” Wako University (hereinafter referred to as the “University”) states as its purpose “to nurture individuals who harmonize humanistic and social education with knowledge and skills of a new age” and “to contribute to social and cultural development.” In order to achieve this purpose, the Second Future Planning Meeting compiled a report in September 2014 that described the University’s goals for development to be achieved by 2025. Using the report and the president’s statement issued in December 2014 as guiding principles, the University has engaged in the achievement of its mission and purpose. However, since these guiding principles are currently not clearly defined in the form of a mid- to long-term plan, the University needs to formulate a concrete mid- to long-term plan for future development.

With regard to internal quality assurance, the University established the Wako University Internal Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures in 2018 and created an internal quality assurance system in which the President’s Office Meeting is given the responsibility of promoting internal quality assurance. Under this system, the Self-Study Committee gathers the results of self-study activities conducted in each division, the President’s Office Meeting formulates policies for improvement based on reports from the Self-Study Committee and provides measures for improvement developed in line with the policies of the respective divisions, and then each division implements the measures. However, to date, no improvements have been made based on management by or support from the President’s Office Meeting. The schedules for regular checks and reviews and evaluation criteria and methods for each division are not clearly defined, and thus the internal quality assurance system is not functioning effectively. Going forward, the President’s Office Meeting should implement management and provide support in order to achieve improvement based on the results of checks and reviews, and thereby ensure that the University’s internal quality assurance system functions effectively.

Regarding education, degree award policy (diploma policy) and curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy) have been set for the whole University as well as individual faculties, in line with the University’s mission and purpose. Under the concepts of “developing comprehensive intelligence and education,” “small-group education,” and “broad subject variety,” all faculties have designed

curricula appropriately with consideration given to orderliness and systematicity. The University has achieved the concept of “broad subject variety” by adopting a “lecture buffet” system, whereby students, regardless of faculty, are free to register for university-wide subjects (not including certification-related subjects, etc.). This is an effective system that encourages student learning.

The University opened the Local Cooperation Research Center in 2016 as an organization for connecting the local community and the University, and has strived to improve its educational program by establishing the Gender Studies Program, whose aim is to teach students the skills necessary to deal with gender issues, and common general education subjects linked to local cooperation activities. These are remarkable endeavors. It is commendable that the University actively engages in diverse, community-based social cooperation and contribution activities in line with its principles.

However, there are several issues that should be addressed. One major issue is that the financial base necessary to conduct educational and research activities in a stable manner has still not been established. The University should consistently implement effective measures, such as increasing revenue by gaining more students and cutting labor costs, and try to establish the financial base necessary to conduct educational and research activities. Other issues include the following: the graduate school does not present the basic ideas on curriculum implementation in the curriculum design and implementation policy; the examination criteria for master’s theses are insufficient; and both faculties and the graduate school have not established adequate methods for grasping and evaluating the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy. Faculty development (hereinafter referred to as “FD”) activities unique to the graduate school are lacking. Therefore, these issues should be addressed.

Thus, going forward, we hope the University implements measures for improvement by formulating a clear mid- to long-term plan, conducting appropriate self-study activities in line with the goals and policies presented in the plan, and, based on the results of such self-study activities, ensuring that the university-wide internal quality assurance system functions appropriately.

Notable Strengths

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- Under the concept of “an open university,” the University established the Local Cooperation Research Center in 2016. In addition to holding public lectures, such as

Open College Paideia, the University has strived to improve its educational program by establishing common general education subjects linked to local cooperation activities, for example, and engages in a variety of social cooperation and contribution activities. The University engages in other initiatives that are closely linked to educational and research activities, which has led to the development of individuals capable of contributing to the local community. It is commendable that the University actively engages in social cooperation and contribution activities under a systematic structure developed in line with the University's principles.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The University has established an internal quality assurance system centered around the President's Office Meeting, whereby the President's Office Meeting formulates policies for improvement based on the results of checks and reviews conducted in each division every year. The system is designed to lead to improvement, but, to date, no improvements have been made based on management by or support from the President's Office Meeting. The schedules for checks and reviews and evaluation criteria and methods for each division are not clearly defined, and thus the internal quality assurance system is not functioning effectively. Going forward, the President's Office Meeting should, upon considering how checks and reviews should be conducted, implement management and provide support in order to achieve improvement based on the results of checks and reviews conducted in an appropriate manner, and thereby ensure that the University's internal quality assurance system functions effectively.

Educational Program and Outcome

- The Graduate School of Society and Cultures does not present the basic ideas on curriculum implementation in the curriculum design and implementation policy. This should be improved.
- Pre-School Education Program in Child Education Course in the Department of Psychology and Education, Faculty of Human Sciences, sets a limit on the number of credits students can register for in a single year. However, the limit on the number of

credits first- and second-year students can register for in a single year is set high at 59 credits. Other measures have not been implemented to give substance to credits, and not enough is being done to give substance to credits. Therefore, the University should improve the situation in view of the purpose of the credit system.

- Although the Graduate School of Society and Cultures indicates the examination criteria for master's theses, the criteria only describe the relevant procedures and thus do not enable examination as to whether a thesis meets the standard required for a master's degree.
- The faculties and graduate school do not appropriately measure the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy. Therefore, the faculties and graduate school should clarify the relationship between measurement methods and learning outcomes and measure the learning outcomes appropriately from multiple angles.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- Although FD workshops and similar activities are held, faculty development activities unique to the graduate school for improving education by faculty members are insufficient. This should be improved.

Recommendation

University Management and Finance

- The net income from business activity (imputed net income) ratio has been negative for some time, and the ratio of the financial assets to the required reserve fund is low. Therefore, the University has not established the financial base necessary to conduct educational and research activities. The University formulated a mid- to long-term financial plan in AY2017, in which it stated the intention to reduce labor costs and achieve stable revenue by gaining more students. Therefore, in line with this plan, the University should consistently implement effective measures, and work on fundamentally restructuring its financial structure and establishing a financial base.