University Accreditation Results

(Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for university)

Kansai University

Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Osaka, 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 Kansai University**

Overview

Kansai University (hereafter, the University) promotes educational and research activities based on the educational philosophy of "*Gaku no Jitsuge* (harmonization of academia and practice)." It presently consists of thirteen faculties, thirteen graduate schools, and three professional graduate schools, and undertakes activities in line with the basic strategies to (1) realize the vision of an "open university," (2) promote internationalization, and (3) respond to a growing information society. The University, marking the 130th anniversary of its foundation, formulated the long-term vision "Kandai Vision 150" in fiscal 2017, following the long-term plan, "KU Vision 2008-2017," drawn up in fiscal 2008 with a view to further fulfillment and development of the institution over the next twenty years. This new vision was drafted through the participation of many organization members, and in addition to its five-year medium-term action plans based on this vision, the University also formulated "Kansai University Internationalization TRIPLE-I" as an undertaking to promote internationalization over ten years from fiscal 2014, with these visions and plans linked together to steadily advance various programs.

The long-term "Kandai Vision 150" is designed to explore the leadership of the University entering the era of diversity in terms of education, research, social contribution, and organizational management. To assure education quality, the medium-term action plans feature the development, management, and assessment of the University's internal quality assurance system. After setting up the "Internal Quality Assurance Promotion Project" in 2016, the University reorganized the Internal Quality Assurance Policy to share with internal project members, and the project was initiated under the president's responsibility in cooperation with the University Executives, Division for Promotion of Educational Development, Division of Research Development, Division of Community & Business Partnerships, and Division of International Affairs divisions, the Deans' Council, the Self-Study Committee, the Project: Assessment and Analytics for Teaching and Learning and other organizations. Since fiscal 2016, the University has implemented various initiatives related to university-wide educational quality assurance, such as reviewing its degree award, curriculum design and implementation, and admission policies (hereafter, the "three policies") and creating course numbering systems, curriculum maps, and curriculum trees. To ensure these initiatives take root throughout the university and are connected to self-study verified by each faculty and graduate school,

the Project: Assessment and Analytics for Teaching and Learning was launched in fiscal 2014. To conduct surveys, the Project created a unified design for a series of student surveys consisting of surveys at the time of freshman enrollment, panel surveys, surveys at the time of graduation, and post-graduation surveys (for graduates). It also analyzes the data of each survey in cooperation with faculties and provides the outcomes to the faculties. It is highly commendable that the Project is helping to improve the faculties' education. In the coming years, the University is expected to promote these initiatives to enhance the internal quality assurance system and advance its functions.

The University is also accelerating its drive to internationalize based on "Kansai University Internationalization TRIPLE-I," with efforts including the promotion of "COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning)," designed to offer online interactive learning with overseas universities, the implementation of "Global FD (faculty development)," and the establishment of overseas internships and international open courses shared by the graduate schools. These educational approaches utilizing ICT (information and communication technology) are innovative and distinctive. Furthermore, the University actively cooperates with industries and the local community. The Faculty of Societal Safety Sciences links its education to the local community to fulfill its role as a regional disaster prevention base. In response to various requests, the University has developed a system to initiate projects across faculties and encourage student participation. These initiatives are distinctive in that the University aims to embody its educational philosophy and establish its presence by returning its problem-solving resources to society. Moreover, to develop the human resources necessary to undertake these activities, the University is actively promoting collaboration among not only faculty and administrative staff members but also students to conduct the "SD (staff development) Training Program." This type of trilateral collaboration is commendable as an effective future-oriented approach.

Apart from these distinctive initiatives, the University needs to address issues in credit validation of the faculties and quota management of multiple graduate schools. In the coming years, the University is expected to effectively operate its internal quality assurance system and management, including support from a university-wide perspective, in order to address the issues facing each faculty and graduate school and engage in education quality enhancement and quality assurance throughout the university for further development.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Outcome

● The University is improving its English education environment to develop globally competent human resources with "Kansai University Internationalization TRIPLE-I" featuring initiatives such as "Immersion." The "Global Subject Group," established as common liberal arts subjects, introduces "COIL," which provides online international exchange classes where students interact in class with overseas universities through project-based learning (PBL). These classes are attracting an increasing number of participants. In addition, credit-approved overseas internships and global business experience programs promote career development education aimed at training people capable of meeting the needs of a global society by, for example, adopting PBL in cooperation with companies. These initiatives are commendable as approaches to realize the University's mission and internationalization strategy.

● Student staff members are assigned throughout the university to provide educational support as student assistants (SA), teaching assistants (TA), and learning assistants (LA). LAs in particular, comprised of undergraduate students with course experience, serve as facilitators who teach discussion methods and other approaches in the first-year seminar course, including the common liberal arts subject "Study Skills Seminar." With the support of upper-year students in the same program, participants can expect to acquire firsthand learning methods and mindsets as university students, while LAs learn to look at their own study objectively, deepen their learning, and build up confidence by providing study support based on their own course experiences, with these supporting experiences contributing to the growth of "Think and Act" competency. Systematic efforts are also made in training student staff and publishing a list of case examples used in classes. It is commendable that the University utilizes the educational abilities of its students to enhance the quality of the education provided.

● The Project: Assessment and Analytics for Teaching and Learning collects and analyzes data upon faculty request to improve educational content and methods in collaboration with the faculties. For example, the Faculty of Economics conducted surveys on students' study problems based on data provided by the Project:

Assessment and Analytics for Teaching and Learning and offered peer support for certain first-year course subjects and introduced PBL lessons. In addition to the Project's data analysis and data sharing with the faculties for implementing further improvements, three science and technology faculties analyzed differences in academic ability based on student GPAs (grade point average) and divided classes into groups according to the students' proficiency levels in basic subjects. It is commendable that the Project: Assessment and Analytics for Teaching and Learning and faculties collaborate to make evidence-based improvements to educational content and methods.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- To utilize "Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)," aimed at the internationalization of education, and improve courses taught in English, the International Education Support Office was set up to conduct "Global FD" with a focus on providing technical support necessary for these initiatives. The office has introduced office hours by its specially appointed faculty members who provide consultations in English on teaching methods and classroom management, as well as one-on-one English language lessons with foreign instructors holding a master's or doctoral degree, and small-group sessions with the aim of improving the faculty members' English language abilities. The office also collaborates with overseas universities to adopt "Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)," a program for learning teaching methods using English, for on-campus courses and overseas training, with these approaches leading to improvements in faculty members' educational and teaching methods, and some participants teaching undergraduate courses in English. It is commendable that these activities are expected to contribute to faculty development that supports further growth of the University's global education in the future.

Student Support

- The University works to reorganize its scholarship system based on campus life surveys into "'*Gaku no Jitsuge*' Scholarship Selected in Advance and Reserved before Enrollment)," with the focus shifting from study support to economic support in order to help applicants eliminate financial uncertainties while attending the University. In addition, "ASHINOHA-CLUB" was established as a place for

scholarship students to interact and holds exchange meetings joined by graduates. The club functions as a community that provides students with an opportunity to discover new career inspirations and actions while offering mutual support from multiple perspectives through interactions beyond campuses, faculties, and academic years. These support programs are commendable as unique initiatives that contribute to further development of the University's scholarship project stated in "Kandai Vision 150."

Social Cooperation and Contribution

● The University has signed numerous partnership agreements with municipalities, companies, and organizations, and appointed industry-academia-government coordinators to engage in social cooperation activities aimed at solving industrial and regional issues. Specifically, it is working on product development utilizing the technology seeds produced by the University, while coordinating activities as a collaborative project with the partner city of Sakai, where students propose solutions to challenges facing companies in the city. Through these activities, the University takes advantage of its characteristics as a multidisciplinary university to return its education and research outcomes to society. Moreover, the University established an encouragement award for "Kansai University Center for Community Collaboration Prize for Young Persons Displaying Activity for Community Collaboration" to encourage student participation in regional cooperation activities, and introduced the "Community Collaboration Activity Self-Evaluation Sheet" using a rubric for students to reflect on their growth, with the future outcomes expected to be useful as a unique survey resource. These activities are commendable as the University's efforts to realize its educational philosophy of "*Gaku no Jitsuge* (harmonization of academia and practice)."

● As part of its disaster prevention efforts, the University contributes to raising the awareness of regional disaster preparedness by preparing disaster prevention manuals, holding the annual disaster prevention event "Kandai Disaster Prevention Day," joined by its organization members and local residents, and visualizing storehouses on campus. In addition, since its establishment, the Faculty of Societal Safety Sciences has taken advantage of its characteristics to have students provide disaster preparedness and safety education at neighboring schools. The University became the first university to obtain the "Certification of Organizations Contributing to National

Resilience (Resilience Certification)," issued to companies and organizations recognized for their continuous self-help activities and business continuity plans in the event of disasters. It is commendable that academic/administrative staff members and students play active and varied roles in regional disaster prevention.

University Management and Finance

- The "Project: Professional Development in Academia" was established in the Center for Teaching and Learning to discuss better educational and learning support through trilateral collaboration among academic/administrative staff members and students, and conducts staff development (SD) training programs to enhance the motivation of academic/administrative staff members. In fiscal 2017, the Project created the five themes of educational processes, educational methods, educational evaluations, ICT, and learning support and environment. The participants suggested measures to improve educational and learning support through group work, eventually leading to the realization of the study support workshop, "Learning Café," hosted by administrative staff members. This program is expected to continue, and is commendable for cultivating competent human resources with the aim of developing a "flexible and robust organization" stated in the policy goals of "Kandai Vision 150."

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- All faculties cap the number of credits students can register for in a year to ensure credit validity, but they accept credits that exceed the maximum for a range of subjects related to teaching qualifications, internships, and other courses. In addition, "Writing Labo" and other support organizations are making efforts to encourage students to study outside of class hours, but this measure is not sufficient to ensure credit validity. This issue should be improved in light of the purpose of the credit system.

Student Enrollment

- In the undergraduate course, the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is high at 1.27 in Global and Asian Legal Policy Studies, Faculty of Policy Studies. In the master's degree program, the ratios of student enrollment to the student

enrollment cap are low at 0.45 in the Graduate School of Law, 0.42 in the Graduate School of Economics, 0.36 in the Graduate School of Informatics, and 0.43 in the Graduate School of Governance, but high at 2.38 in the Graduate School of East Asian Cultures. In the doctoral degree program, the ratios are low at 0.2 in the Graduate School of Economics and 0.28 in the Graduate School of Business and Commerce and the Graduate School of Science and Engineering, respectively, but high at 2.78 in the Graduate School of Foreign Language Education and Research. These ratios should be improved with the faculties and graduate schools' student quotas thoroughly managed.