

## **Supplementary Review Results**

### **Kitasato University**



#### **Basic Information of the Institution**

Ownership: Private                          Location: Tokyo, Japan

#### **Accreditation Status**

Year of the Review: 2020

Accreditation Status: accredited      (Accreditation Period: April.1.2021 – March.31.2024)

## **Supplementary Review for Kitasato University**

### **Overview**

Regarding Kitasato University, as the “Summary of the Emergency Review to Ensure Fairness in Admissions to Medical Programs” published by MEXT on December 14, 2018 uncovered issues in student selection for medical programs, we established an investigative subcommittee inside the University Accreditation Committee in 2019 and examined the validity of results from the 2016 University Accreditation (certified evaluation and accreditation). That examination verified major issues in “enrollment”, “governance”, and “internal quality assurance” and as a result, the determination of the 2016 University Accreditation Results stating that the University conformed to University Standards was overturned and the University was deemed noncompliant. Also, assessment for accreditation in this Supplementary Review based on the state of improvement for the three standards of “Student Enrollment”, “Management”, and “Internal Quality Assurance” that were the cause of the denial of accreditation was carried out alongside a review on the state of improvement for the five suggestions from the previous University Accreditation Results, including “Internal Quality Assurance”.

To address these issues in student selection, Kitasato University, under the leadership of the President, established an Admissions Review Committee comprised of members from the University Admissions Committee with the Vice President of Admissions as Chair and a Third-Party Committee comprised of outside experts, both based around the Deans’ Committee that discusses and decides key items involving educational and research activity throughout the University. Interdivisional Committees such as the Kitasato University Self-Study Committee (hereafter referred to as “University Committee”) and Faculty Councils, Related Committees, Deans within each school and all entities related to donations (including auditors) are all working together toward improvements. As a result, broad improvements were made to major issues and the University was determined to satisfy University Standards.

First, for “Student Enrollment”, determinations for successful applicants and waitlisted applicants to the School of Medicine were conducted fairly, but the Dean and the Admissions Committee Chair decided which applicants were accepted from the waitlist even though acceptance criteria were not clearly established. Grades were not always the primary determinant for acceptance and priority was given to some applicants who could be viewed as more suitable to becoming physicians and those who had strong

reasons to apply based on school records and applicant interview forms. This was found to be inappropriate because it left room for arbitrary decisions to intervene in student selection. As a result, the University created a Third-Party Committee to explore how to prevent this situation from recurring and investigate its cause, formulated the “Medical Admissions Committee Regulations” and the “Medical Admissions Administration Committee Regulations,” reviewed the organization and roles of committee members involved in admissions, and clarified the management and operation of admissions. It also enacted improvements to ensure fairness and transparency in the admissions system by instituting the “Internal Regulations on the Determination and Advancement for Waitlisted Candidates” regarding how to implement advancement procedures and the processes for determining rules and ranking waitlisted applicants as well as established mechanisms for the President to scrutinize acceptance decisions based on these internal regulations.

The above improvements were enacted and the Third-Party Committee determined that 2019 admissions were conducted fairly. The University also established an Admissions Review Committee based primarily on the Kitasato University Admissions Examination Committee, examined the development status of the admissions administration system and regulations, and conducted investigations and inspections of acceptance decisions across all schools. A review of the Admissions Review Committee was conducted for 2020 admissions. In order to steadily improve fairness and impartiality in enrollment, the Kitasato University Admissions Examination Committee will examine the structure of the review system - including graduate school admissions - moving forward and the University is expected to faithfully implement initiatives for improvement.

The University is working to reform awareness by demanding appropriate student selection and having the President and the Vice President of Admissions explain to University faculty and staff the circumstances behind admissions of waitlisted applicants in 2018 School of Medicine admissions in the Dean’s Committee and the Faculty Council. It is also considering engaging in Faculty Development (FD) and Staff Development (SD) throughout the University in the future to ensure fair admissions. While the University is enacting the above initiatives to prevent recurrence throughout the University, they are still in their initial stages and the University should persist with reviews and improvements, including reviews of graduate school admissions and University-wide FD and SD involving student selection.

Regarding “Management” even though the authority, etc. of the President, Vice President and Faculty Council was clearly defined in regulations, the Medical Admissions

Committee and the Medical Faculty Council that were supposed to determine the waitlisted applicants to admit into the School of Medicine left the decision to the Dean and the Admissions Committee Chair, resulting in a system that did not function with adequate governance. Internal audits also indicated that student selection did not guarantee fairness. In response, the University asked the President to explain the conditions for admitting applicants in 2018 School of Medicine admissions to the Dean of each school in the Dean's Committee, demanded that appropriate student selection be conducted, established the Admissions Review Committee mentioned above, investigated and inspected admissions in each school, and examined how well the administration system, related regulations, etc. for admissions were being maintained. University audits that include student selection have been conducted since 2020 with the Audit Office playing a central role. Audits are conducted based on a University audit plan comprised of three auditors, including one newly appointed auditor with experience in University Management in order to strengthen University audits. A system has been established under this plan where auditors work in connection with the Audit Office, both parties attend important meetings like the University Committee, etc., and auditors scrutinize documents while holding hearings with the President, etc. to verify whether academic duties are being carried out properly and effectively. Through these initiatives, the President, Deans, each school, etc. carry out their duties based on the responsibilities laid out for them in regulations. Administrative issues involving admissions are mostly being improved because additional checks and reviews are carried out by specialized organizations. Moving forward, the University should make sure to conduct audits based on the “2020 Audit Plan”.

For “Internal Quality Assurance” because the previous University Accreditation suggested revising the University’s review systems, regulations, etc., in 2017 the University Committee and the Self-Study Committee from the undergraduate and graduate schools began cooperating with each other and the three regulations “Internal Quality Assurance Check and Review Regulations” (formerly “Check and Review Regulations”), “Kitasato Self-Study Committee Regulations,” and “Regulations on the Establishment of the Check and Review Office” were revised and maintained in order to improve and reform the results of checks and reviews. However, since inappropriate actions were taken in School of Medicine admissions, the University should take no measures that would make checks and reviews simple bureaucratic acts and must examine the efficacy of the internal quality assurance system. Kitasato University checked and reviewed the cause of these issues and found that: 1) checks, reviews, and their reforms were left to each undergraduate and graduate school, 2) the University Committee only

met a handful of times each year, so the committee was unable to lead improvements and reforms on campus, 3) there were few opportunities to regularly share accreditation results between schools, so the Self-Study Committee from each school and the University Committee could not cooperate effectively. In order to resolve these issues, the “Kitasato Self-Study Committee Regulations” were revised again, Deans were made members of the University Committee as selected via each school’s “Committee Regulations,” committee meetings were held monthly and included full-time auditors and the Audit Office. From these reforms, the Vice Presidents and Deans were added to the University Committee with the President as the Chair, activities towards improvement and reform were strengthened, and plans put in place to share information throughout the University. Also, results from the Admissions Review Committee’s investigations are now confirmed by Deans and the University Committee. While still in the beginning phases, these initiatives have already shown improvements towards the suggestions for improvement in the 2016 University Accreditation and the issues indicated in the 2019 examination results. Additionally, in order to increase the objectivity and suitability of checks and reviews, ensure quality in University activities, and promote initiatives that contribute to further improvements and advancements, in the future, the University is expected to examine the effectiveness of functions in the internal quality assurance system and add additional improvements based on advancements to establish the Kitasato External Review Committee in 2020.

In addition, four of the suggestions for improvement included with the 2016 University Accreditation are already seeing improvement, with the exception of internal quality assurance. However, the School of Medicine’s 1.04 ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is high. The University has employed a special informal consultation system for students with poor grades in addition to establishing a consultation system based on head teacher and class representative and though it has worked to foster academic motivation by providing individual guidance and lifelong academic encouragement, the ratio was still relatively high as of May 1, 2020 and requires continued improvement.

The University has conducted swift and appropriate investigations since the denial of accreditation by this Association and MEXT’s findings, with improvements already being made for the issues in question from results that promoted specific improvements, etc. On the other hand, some initiatives are still being carried out and improvements to the system have only recently been made, so we hope that the University will continue to implement improvements for additional development.

## Suggestions for Improvement

### *Student Enrollment*

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap in the School of Medicine in 2020 is high at 1.04. Therefore, the University should continue to improve undergraduate and graduate quota management.