

## Akita University of Nursing and Welfare (秋田看護福祉大学)

### Evaluation summary

#### **Standard 1. Mission and Objectives, etc.**

In line with the laws and regulation relating to education and under the founding principles of “truth, harmony and practical science” stipulated in the University Regulations, the mission and goals of the University are the fostering of human resources, and specifically and concisely clarified in writing. The University’s educational principles and targets are low student-teacher ratios, a practical curriculum, support for learning and class instruction, as well as career guidance and local community contribution, in addition to which individuality and distinctive quality are clearly stated. The educational objectives are stipulated as being human resources development related to health, medical care and welfare, and these are reviewed as appropriate according to the demands of society. After the approval of the mission and goals by the Board of Directors, the Chair of the Board of Directors, President and so on explain to the executives, faculty and staff the educational principles and policies, which are understood and supported. The mission and goals are contained on the University’s website etc., and publicized both internally and externally. Under the University’s medium-term plan issues are identified through the annual self-inspection and evaluation, and a new five-year plan called the Incorporated Educational Institution North Asia University Five-year Prioritized Plan has been established and will be conducted over the academic years 2018 to 2022. Its educational objectives based on the University’s mission and goals are incorporated in the three policies of diploma policy, curriculum policy and admission policy. Efforts to achieve this are conducted in a collaborative manner with an appropriate educational and research organization, and practical operation is underway

- The way that with the cooperation of stakeholders in local community health, medical care and welfare, the University conducts a variety of lectures, seminars and practical training closely connected to the local community is worthy of evaluation.

#### **Standard 2. Students**

An admission policy is clearly stipulated and appropriately disseminated through consultative meetings on further education etc. The University diversifies the methods for selecting entrants, and the total capacity of the University as a whole is being met. Towards the attainment of educational objectives, the University produces “student instruction records” in which the content of interviews is recorded, and by the sharing of information and operation through collaboration between faculty and staff attempts are made to improve educational quality. Although there is not a Teaching Assistant (TA) system, staff members provide support for learning and practical training in collaboration with faculty members. A system for student services is in place in which class teachers, teaching staff in charge of seminars, the Student Affairs Section of the Academic Affairs Division, infirmary and all faculty and staff seek to collaborate and enable support. The campus, buildings, equipment and

facilities etc. that constitute the learning environment have been properly developed and improved according to laws and regulations, and consideration is paid to barrier-free needs. The Odate Campus and Akita Campus use a distance lecture system that creates an environment enabling interactive tuition between the campuses. Student opinion and requests are taken up well as a result of questionnaires completed by current students and graduates, leading to the systematic improvement of Faculty Development (FD) and facilities.

- Attempts to prevent students dropping out of university or having to repeat a year of their courses have proved to be successful, and the fact that the number of drop-outs is declining is worthy of evaluation.
- The fact that as a result of the employment hopes and trends among students being ascertained at an early stage, and meticulous responses by faculty and staff, the University's maintenance since its opening of a 100% placement record among students seeking employment in the Department of Nursing and Department of Welfare deserves a high evaluation.

### **Standard 3. Educational curriculum**

According to the educational targets diploma policies are stipulated for the faculty and two departments, and are disseminated through entrance exam guidelines, student handbooks, the University website, etc. The acquisition of abilities in line with the diploma policy are evaluated according to graduation examinations in line with the policy on graduation authorization and conferral of degrees and for which standards for awarding credits, promotion to the next school year, and certifying graduation are stringently stipulated. Consistency between the curriculum policy and the diploma policy is secured and stipulated, and disseminated on the University website. The educational curriculum is systematically organized, with liberal arts subjects, general subjects, basic specialized subjects and specialized subjects. The Dean, Department Chairs, and Chair of Academic Administration Committee inspect the balance of the syllabus, and an organizational system has been developed to ensure consistency between the syllabus and the curriculum policy and improve it. The inspection and evaluation of learning achievement is based on the three policies, and carried out through analyses by committees of the state of acquisition of various qualifications, ascertaining grade point averages (GPA), and student life satisfaction questionnaires put to students upon graduation. With regard to educational content/methods and learning guidance feedback from the Tuition Improvement Plan is provided to teaching staff in order to seek improvements.

- The fact that in recent years the percentage of students passing state examinations is higher than the national average is worthy of evaluation.

### **Standard 4. Faculty and Staff**

With regard to the leadership of the University's President, a system has been established to assist the President in line with the University regulations. Furthermore, in order to achieve the University's mission and goals the Faculty Council etc. share information on issues in educational and research

activities, and the administration is functioning towards improvements. According to the University Regulations etc. the final authority for making decisions regarding school matters lies with the Chair of the Board of Directors, and while it cannot be said that President's authorities are assured, in practice operations are conducted more or less in line with the laws and regulations. Faculty and staff are properly assigned to each committee, and between faculty and staff their roles are clearly defined. The faculty is properly secured and assigned in accordance with the educational curriculum, and employment and promotion etc. is managed according to the regulations. In order to improve the ability of the faculty, feedback on the results of class evaluations is given to the faculty and organizational activities conducted to improve the design of teaching and the degree of satisfaction with lessons, centering on the FD Promotion Committee. With regard to Staff Development (SD), training in line with the regulations is conducted, in conjunction with which work manuals are annually checked and revised by those in charge in order to raise ability of staff. In the area of support for research, the Research Institute has been established, and is operated and managed to create a research environment for health, medical care and welfare. Ethical issues are stringently managed by the full-time faculty and external people of academic standing, in line with the regulations. With regard to the allocation of resources relating to research activities, an environment for delivering academic research subsidies has been prepared as par the regulations.

- Under the commission of the Kita Akita Development and Promotion Bureau of Akita Prefecture and the Health Promotion Section, the Health and Welfare Department of Akita Prefecture, adolescent peer counselling activities are implemented by faculty and students, and the initiatives to report research findings to the general public are worthy of high evaluation.

#### **Standard 5. Management, Administration and Finance**

According to the regulations regarding compliance that are stipulated by the University's incorporated entity, the University shall strive to continuously be thorough in its organizational ethics, aim for management with discipline and integrity, create an executive system for decision-making focusing on the Board of Directors, and fulfill its social obligations. The University has developed regulations regarding crisis management, and attempts to achieve improvements in environmental conservation, human rights and safety. Pursuant to the articles of endowment the Board of Directors decides, as the highest decision-making body, upon important matters such as a business plan, budgets and the appointment of executives, and functions appropriately. The Vice President, who assists the Chair of the Board of Directors, maintains communication between the University's incorporated entity and the University organization on behalf of the President, and a smooth administration system is in place. The auditors are appointed in line with the articles of endowment, and conduct their audit reporting based on exchanges of information with a certified public accountant. The mutual checking function between the University's incorporated entity and the University is appropriately maintained. Financial operations are conducted in line with the University's medium-term plan, and the University has established a stable financial base in which its fiscal balance is continuously in the black. Accounting procedures are fairly conducted, and the

auditors conduct their work in strict adherence to the auditing plan.

### **Standard 6. Internal Quality Assurance**

Aiming to achieve its mission and goals, a permanent organizational system to conduct annual self-inspection and evaluation has been developed, centering on the Self-Inspection and Self-Evaluation Committee. The issues raised by each committee and division are reflected in the next academic year's business plan, improvements and reforms are promoted, an organizational system aimed at internal quality assurance has been created, and roles are clearly defined. With the goal of the internal quality assurance of educational activities, autonomous self-inspection and evaluation in line with the University's mission and educational policy are implemented. The entire faculty and staff share the results of the self-inspection and evaluation, and the results are made public on the University's website. In order to obtain the basic data for the self-inspections the data investigated by the various committees and administrative affairs division is treated as evidence, and a system for the periodic collation and analysis of data is in place.

The state of progress in the results of investigations conducted for the sake of internal quality assurance are annually reviewed from the perspectives of reviews of the three policies, educational improvements, the boosting of student assistance and securing new entrants. A PDCA cycle has been created to implement initiatives aimed at reaching targets, however, since the President does not have decision-making rights concerning the administrative affairs of the university it is to be hoped that authority including governance is clearly decentralized and improvements are made so that internal quality assurance can function better.

In summary, attempts are being made to achieve an organic collaboration between the educational and research system and the management and administrative system, in line with the founding principles, and the University is operated in conformity to the relevant laws and regulations. In addition, a new five-year plan was formulated to start in academic year 2018, and with the aim of educational and research activities and human resources development in which the joint participation of students and faculty in local community contributions is a characteristic, ongoing improvements are being made in the educational support system and environment in order to improve educational quality.

Note that with regard to the University's unique standards, the general comments on "Standard A. Social contribution activities aimed at local community development" should be referred to.

It should be noted that the University has cited the following remarks.

1. Education that treats people with care and nurtures their hearts through low teacher-student ratios.
2. Collaboration with local government, and opening local community-oriented courses where the medical care and welfare of the local community can be studied on the spot.
3. Collaboration with universities under the same incorporated entity, and the distance lecture system.