

## **Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST)** (沖縄科学技術大学院大学)

Evaluation summary

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

The mission and goals and the educational purpose are briefly summarized in the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology School Corporation Act (the OIST Act) and the University Rules. For responding to changes, the Graduate University takes corrective and improvement measures to properly meet domestic and foreign needs based on the domestic and foreign trend of science and technology. The mission and goals and the educational purpose are understood and supported by both internal and external people and fully reflected in a mid- and long-term plan.

Article 1 of the University Rules that stipulates “The University shall conduct internationally outstanding education and research in science and technology, and thus contribute to the sustainable development of Okinawa, and promote and sustain the advancement of science and technology in Japan and throughout the world” is reflected in three policies (Diploma policy, Curriculum Policy and Admission Policy). These three policies are the basic concept of the Graduate University that can realize the five central concepts: Best in the world; International; Flexible; Global Networking; and Collaboration with Industry.

The educational purpose and the structure of the education and research organization are consistent. The organization consisting of Provost, Executive Vice President and three Deans (Dean of the Graduate School, Dean of Faculty Affairs, and Dean of Research) is established and properly operated.

### **Standard 2. Students**

The admission policy based on the educational purpose is properly established and disseminated. In the evaluation of the policy, the meaning of “outstanding student” is clearly defined, describing that the Graduate University wants to have students who have the capacity for independent research and original thinking. The Graduate University has succeeded to accept its expected students. The Graduate University provides a proper student learning support system such as collaboration between faculty and staff members, and uses Teaching Assistant (TA) for its student assistance.

The Graduate University has established a support system to facilitate social and vocational independence both within and outside of the curriculum and provided a carrier development assistance as a researcher and opportunities to experience educational instruction. It also provides economic assistance for a stable student life, and provides a travel expense subsidy for learning and participating in an academic meeting properly. The Graduate University has a medical clinic where bilingual doctors and nurses always stay to provide sufficient health support. A clinical psychologist

is also available in the clinic for mental support. The learning environment is properly established.

Opinions and requests from students are properly reflected through the Board of Students that represents all the students.

- Before entering the Graduate University, students are allowed to experience a lab as well as participate in an intensive language course, which can help students prepare for the research activities in the Ph.D. course. We highly evaluate such system.
- An academic mentor for the first year, and an instructor faculty for the second year and later, and three thesis instructors are assigned to each student. We highly evaluate such systematic instruction system.
- We highly evaluate that the Graduate University has the “Child Development Center (CDC)” for students, faculty, and staff members who need child care.
- We highly evaluate systems the Graduate University prepares for better and focused research activities such as “Family Rooms” and “Mothers’ Rooms” for breast-feeding and other child care services.

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

The Graduate University rigidly applies the criteria of credit recognition, promotion and completion. In the educational curriculum and a teaching method, it is clearly indicated and publicly announced on its web site that the Graduate University puts emphasis on higher education based on the basic science, and takes into account preferences and capacity of individual students by providing customized educational curriculum. For accepting students from all over the world, the Graduate University adopts the September entrance system and also figures out various ways in the educational method such as the “Lab Rotation” for better understanding of various areas, technologies, and thoughts.

Based on three policies, the Graduate University conducts checking and evaluation for improving the educational programs, methods, and educational instructions for students. The Graduate University has made efforts to maintain a consistent review standard for the research plan review that is conducted by external and internal reviewers. The Graduate University hear students’ voices via a questionnaire conducted by the Students Association that checks the satisfaction among students. The result is shared with the Dean of the Graduate School.

- We highly evaluate a rigid review system for thesis review conducted by the Graduate University, where it has a panel of review that includes two domestic and foreign professionals as reviewers.
- We highly evaluate the “Lab Rotation” system that enables students to have a wide range of research experience beyond their own areas.

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

Under proper leadership by the President for a decision-making of the Graduate University and education management, the “Executive Committee Meeting,” is held for information sharing and organizational decision-making. Titles, roles, and responsibilities are clearly defined and the educational management is established that considers proper division of powers and clear responsibilities. For effective business operation, the Graduate University establishes a systematic administration system that ensures well-functioned educational management such as allocation of staff members and clarification of roles and responsibilities.

For allocation and professional development of faculty, the Graduate University has adopted faculty who has international experience and deep insights. The Graduate University also takes measures for improving and developing the curriculum and educational methods such as the Faculty Development (FD) and the Staff Development (SD).

For supporting research activities, the Graduate University has provided superior common research facilities and research support services. The Research Support Division has conducted the “International Peer Review” on a continuous basis. Individual faculty member is supposed to be reviewed by external reviewers for allocation of budget. We highly evaluate the budget allocation system based on an objective assessment as well as proper development and operation of research environment.

- As 59 faculty comes from 17 countries, we highly evaluate the diversification of teaching staff structures.
- We also highly evaluate that the Graduate University uses an external assessment for employment, promotion, and contract renewal of faculty.

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

The Graduate University prepared the “Framework Document II” in July 2014 that indicated a mid- and long-term prospect and plan, under which the Graduate University is operated under the values of integrity, honesty, fairness, thoughtfulness to others, and contribution to the mission of the Graduate University. An annual Business Plan is prepared pursuant to the Cabinet Order and the evaluation is made as of the end of each fiscal year by reporting the business performance to the Board of Governors. The Business Plan and the Performance Report are publicly announced on its web site by the end of May in the following fiscal year, which ensures transparency of operation as well as the discipline and honesty of the management of the Graduate University. The Graduate University has conducted safety education and training related to research activities and specific business and also promoted safety and sanitation through a health promotion program.

The Board of Governors adopts an European-style management, thus the responsibilities and powers delegated to the Board of Governors are stronger than those of Japanese universities, which enables to establish a control and management system for more strategic decision-making. The

“Executive Committee Meeting” is held for preparing agenda of the Board of Governors meeting about the entire university operation issues, and sharing information. Such system contributes to smooth decision-making for the management and operation of the school corporation as well as the Graduate University. The auditors’ audit provides a system for ensuring proper and effective business management and proper accounting as well as helps maintain a mutual checking function as the school corporation as well as the Graduate University.

The Graduate University is financed by the operation subsidy and facility development subsidy provided by the national government. A stable financial basis is established and proper financial balance is maintained by the budget within the amount of subsidies permitted by the government. A summary of financial statements are audited by the auditors who submit an auditors’ report to the Board of Governors for review and approval at the Board of Governors meeting. Within three months from the end of each fiscal year, the financial statements including supplementary statements are submitted together with a report by an independent audit office to the Prime Minister, ensuring a proper accounting and audit system and rigid implementation.

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

For establishing an organization that ensures internal quality, the Graduate University has developed and established an organization and a responsible system for internal quality assurance. In a self-evaluation and assessment for internal quality assurance, the Graduate University conducted a peer review that is a self-evaluation and assessment system in 2015 in the third year from its establishment. The result was shared and sufficient examination, data collection and analysis were conducted using the Institutional Research (IR) function. For ensuring the functionality of internal quality assurance, the Graduate University has established a proper PDCA cycle for ensuring internal quality and functionality of the Graduate School and the entire Graduate University. The evaluation metrics are defined every fiscal year that are used for self-evaluation and assessment in addition to the performance report shared with the Cabinet Office and the accounting report to the Board of Audit. The Graduate University has a two-step evaluation system under which each responsible Division and Office provides a primary review of related data and the President re-reviews the result of self-evaluation submitted by each Division and Office.

In General, as it is a special private graduate university that was established as a national government project and under a national law, and receives the financial assistance from the national government that covers more than 95% of its operation costs, the Graduate University is a pioneer tackling various challenges and leading the future of graduate universities in Japan. We highly evaluate not only its cutting-edge scientific and technological researches but also its pioneering cross-disciplinary efforts seeking creative research result. It should also be noted that the Graduate University is part of the experimental project based on a new concept under which its efforts can contribute to the self-sustainable development in Okinawa.

For “Standard A: Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Okinawa” that is defined as the “Standards Unique to Each Institution for Its Mission and Goals,” please see the General View of the Evaluation.

The following is a list of “Special Notes” set forth by the Graduate University:

1. Obtain the LEED Silver;
2. Support of internationalization of administrative tasks in other universities;
3. Adopt superior young researchers and support international communities.