

Tsukuba Standards for Undergraduate Schools and Colleges

Discover Your Human Potential at TSUKUBA, a Hub of Knowledge

Based on our founding philosophy, we clarify our educational framework, including educational purpose and methods for achieving them in our bachelor programs and measures for improvement of educational content, and widely publicize it to society as the educational declaration of the University, which aims to guarantee and continuously improve the quality of degrees.

Concept

The University of Tsukuba aims to establish free exchange and close relationships in both basic and applied sciences with educational and research organizations and academic communities in Japan and overseas. While developing these relationships, we intend to pursue education and research to cultivate men and women with creative intelligence and rich human qualities.

The University of Tsukuba endeavors to contribute to the progress of science and culture. Formerly, Japanese universities tended to remain cloistered in their own narrow, specialized fields, creating polarization, stagnation in education and research and alienation from their communities.

The University of Tsukuba has decided to function as a university which is open to all within and outside of Japan. Toward this end, the university has made it its goal to develop an organization better suiting the functions and administration with a new concept of education and research highly international in character, rich in diversity and flexibility and capable of dealing sensitively with the changes occurring in contemporary society.

To realize this, it has vested in its staff and administrative authorities the powers necessary to carry out these responsibilities.

IMAGINE THE FUTURE.

The University of Tsukuba was established as a “university with a new vision” and functions as an open university.

The identity of the university is based on these tenets as well as the initial intent behind the reforms aiming towards interdisciplinary studies and internationalization. Looking at the current trends, we can say with confidence that the foresight of such thinking was ahead of its time. As is well known, interdisciplinary studies, liberal arts education, industry-university cooperation, international exchange and acceptance of international students are all trends that are in step with the times. We take pride in our forward-looking foresight.

The university therefore chose to be an “advanced university” rather than “traditional university” or “prestigious university.” Although we are proud of our history as the Tokyo Higher School of Teachers and Tokyo University of Education, we became committed to the ideals of “reform” and “new challenges” when the university relocated to Tsukuba. “Tsukuba”, for us is not a mere geographical location, but a symbol for the ideals we uphold. We will continue to reinvent and break new ground, for this is the essence of an “open university.” For us, being “number one” means that we must be open, continue reinventing ourselves, and be a future-oriented university and a hub of Tsukuba City that looks toward the world and our future. As a true university that includes departments from medicine through physical education and arts, we aim to facilitate comprehensive human understanding as well as nurture human talent.

Reaffirming our role as a leading university, we wish to continuously pass on the mantle of new traditions from one generation to the next.

What are Tsukuba Standards?

The Tsukuba Standards are the educational declarations of the University. There are two types of standards, one for Undergraduate Schools and Colleges (announced in March 2008) and the other for graduate Schools and Programs (announced in June 2011). These standards clarify the aims of the University of Tsukuba in each course and how to achieve those aims, and announce to the general public the quality of education guaranteed by the University. As a tool to not only maintain quality, but also to constantly improve and continuously elevate it, the Tsukuba Standards play an important role within the university.

Definition of “degree program”

The degree program is an educational program that specifies the abilities to be achieved according to the level of the degree (bachelor, master, doctoral, etc.) and the academic field, and is systematically designed to enable students to acquire these abilities. In the traditional system where faculty members were fixed in educational organizations such as departments, and because programs were organized as the sum of classes offered by individual faculty members, the circumstances of the faculty members tended to take precedence over the demands of society and the needs of students. In contrast to this, a degree program is designed to provide educational content from the student's perspective, with faculty members gathered across the boundaries of internal and external organizations to create a program that is appropriate for a degree, with the degree positioned as proof of the student's internationally compatible abilities. By having an education system centered on degree programs, it becomes easier for students and society to see the educational objectives, content, and outcomes of the university.

Tsukuba Standards and degree programs

Since its inception, the University has implemented bachelor program education under a system that separates the education of students from the research of faculty members by establishing “Schools and Colleges” that differ from traditional departments. With this educational system, it is possible to deploy teachers from throughout the university according to educational needs without being closed within a single organization. It can be said that this is an educational system that embodies the idea of a degree program. In the 2011 academic year, we carried out organizational reforms to establish a new faculty member organization (Faculty), and in the 2020 academic year, we reorganized and restructured the graduate school and established a university-wide educational management system and framework, making a full transition to an educational system centered on degree programs. In the Tsukuba Standards, it clearly states the “Diploma Policy” and “Curriculum Policy” for each degree, as well as the measures to guarantee the quality of these policies for all educational organizations. These are consistent measures based on the founding philosophy of the University. Our entire faculty and staff are determined to push forward with educational reforms in order to establish our degree program system as an education system with international compatibility and collaborative capabilities and to pursue further improvements in the quality of education.

NAGATA Kyosuke President of the University of Tsukuba

Educational purpose of Bachelor Programs

The following are the educational purpose for nurturing global human resources with world-class intelligence, humanity, and resilience

■ To cultivate creativity backed by solid fundamental skills and a flexible mindset to understand the essence

■ To foster a rich education and communication skills that will become the cornerstone of international activities

■ To cultivate the ability to appreciate art and sports, and to be moved by outstanding cultural activities

■ To develop an attitude of compassion for nature and humanity, and to actively contribute to society

■ To cultivate the ability to continuously learn and develop oneself independently throughout one's life

Guaranteeing the quality of degrees through a student-centered education system

We guarantee the quality of degrees through degree programs, appropriate academic work processes, and responsible educational implementation

■ Degree program development

The University of Tsukuba has established five educational purpose aimed at fostering human resources who can play an active role in the global society, as well as six Generic Competences as specific knowledge and abilities that all undergraduate students in Bachelor Programs should acquire in order to achieve the educational purpose. (Table 1)

The University of Tsukuba's Bachelor Programs have established an educational system that organically links common education and specialized education in each School and College as a university-wide educational framework to facilitate the acquisition of such knowledge and abilities by students.

In addition, each School and College has three policies, based on a concrete vision of where and how students will be active following graduation: what specialized knowledge and abilities will be cultivated in addition to Generic Competences (Diploma Policy), how the curriculum will be organized and implemented to achieve these goals (Curriculum Policy), and what qualities and aspirations will be desired in students who are suitable for such education (Admission Policy). In addition to the three policies, we clarify the mechanism for constant educational improvement and implement systematic education.

This approach of clarifying the three policies as a path to the awarding of degrees is extremely important in guaranteeing the quality of degrees, and degree programs are an educational system that further promotes this. The University of Tsukuba establishes degree programs that guarantee student academic achievement from a student-centric perspective.

■ Appropriate academic work processes

In order to guarantee the quality of degrees, it is necessary to guide students to undergo appropriate academic work processes through the practical application of the credit system and rigorous grading, as well as the development of systematic programs.

Each School and College and organization offering Common Foundation Subjects will clearly indicate to students the knowledge and abilities to be acquired in each class, as well as the process of acquisition (including academic work before and after the class), and will develop classes in a planned manner. In judging the attainment level of students in each class, strict

grading will be conducted based on clear grading standards.

By enriching the syllabus (course schedule), utilizing a grade point average (GPA), and effectively allocating graduate student teaching assistants, we will bring the student academic work process in line with international standards.

■ Educational implementation system with responsibility

With regard to the formulation of basic education policies and basic plans for educational reform, liberal arts education, student life support, disabled student support, career support, etc., we have established a university-wide organization that oversees planning and implementation.

Each School and College has also established a system for systematically carrying out various tasks related to education and student support, and is responsible for their implementation.

In addition, thanks to the university-wide student organization and the small class size of approximately 20 students, we ensure that students' opinions are reflected and that they receive detailed guidance regarding their overall academic studies.

Generic Competences (Undergraduate Schools and Colleges)	
Communication ability	Communication ability to use the mother tongue and foreign languages properly and make presentations, etc. using various media
Ability for critical and creative thinking	Ability to think critically and creatively based on systematic understanding of general and specialized knowledge
Data and information literacy	Ability to properly analyze and process various events and information using quantitative methods, computers, etc.
Broad perspective and international character	Ability to broadly understand culture, society, nature, and materials and understand and respect different cultures and be not only involved in one's own expertise
Mental and physical health, humanity, and ethics	Ability to maintain mental and physical health through the understanding, practice, etc. of arts and sports and be conscious of one's responsibility and put it into practice as a citizen with humanity and ethics
Cooperative, independent, and autonomous attitudes	Ability to keep learning and act autonomously while dealing with a situation through team work and leadership and practicing self-management

Table1. Generic Competences (Undergraduate Schools and Colleges)

Developing global human resources through the TSUKUBA method

We nurture world-class intelligence, humanity, and resilience from a “student-centric perspective,” an “international perspective,” and a “future perspective.”

■ Student-centric Perspective

The University of Tsukuba Bachelor Program curriculum cultivates solid expertise and a rich culture to support it throughout the entire academic period. To achieve this, we do not divide liberal arts education and professional education into two, but organize and implement a curriculum which combines the two from the perspective of student achievement. We have established a degree program system as an educational system that guarantees student academic achievement in line with their degrees.

As for the implementation of education, we emphasize active learning, in which faculty members, students, and fellow students interact with each other, and encourage students to actively and independently do academic work. In terms of extracurricular activities, in addition to supporting various extracurricular activity groups, we support students' voluntary activities through our proprietary “T-ACT” system. In addition, through the university-wide student organization, students and faculty members collaborate and work to enrich and improve education and student life.

■ International Perspective

We vigorously promote the development of schemes and environments for students to become globally-minded and acquire the qualities to play an active role in global society in all aspects.

In addition to implementing rich internationally-oriented, high-quality education in each specialized field, we have established “global courses” to cultivate the fundamentals needed to become global human resources, and have enriched and strengthened measures to support overseas study, thereby creating an academic work environment in which “the world is a

place of learning.”

We are also creating a campus environment that embodies the University's motto, “Internationalization in everyday life,” by arranging academic work spaces where international students from various countries around the world and Japanese students can interact and collaborate on a daily basis without distinction of nationality, culture, or field of specialization, and also by providing cafes where students can interact in multiple languages.

Furthermore, in order to ensure the quality of education beyond national borders, we are taking the lead in building an education system that is internationally accepted and compatible.

■ Future Perspective

In order to foster the ability to carve out the future in a rapidly changing global society, we proactively implement education in cooperation with industry. Through lectures by leaders in various industries and practical subjects such as practical training and internships in diverse fields, students cultivate the ability to grasp the essence of social issues and gain insight into the future.

Student career development support begins from the time of admittance. We systematically support students' career development through career-specific Foundation Subjects and the University's proprietary “Tsukuba Career Portfolio” to help students consider the connection between their future and their academic work at the University.

In this manner, students develop the ability to proactively contribute to society with individuality and self-reliance as the cornerstone, by overlapping the future of society with their own future and pursuing their academic work with an awareness of the issues and high motivation.

Global human resources with world-class intelligence, humanity, and resilience

International Perspective

An academic work environment in which “the world is a place of learning”

A campus environment that embodies “Internationalization in everyday life”

An education system that is internationally compatible

Student-centric Perspective

Establishment of a degree program system that guarantees students' academic work achievement

Students' independent and active academic work

Collaboration between students and faculty members

Future Perspective

Collaboration with industry and other areas to cultivate the ability to carve out the future in a global society

Career development that overlaps the future of society and the student's own future

Developing global human resources through the TSUKUBA method

New Educational Philosophy for Bachelor Programs

Vertical development for learning in specialized fields and horizontal development in order to cultivate culture

Philosophy

Our university, since its founding, has fostered students with advanced problem-solving skills based on a broad academic perspective through a liberal arts education that integrates the expertise of other Schools and Colleges by offering “Specific Foundation Subjects” in which students can take Major Subjects offered by other Schools and Colleges in addition to “Common Foundation Subjects.”

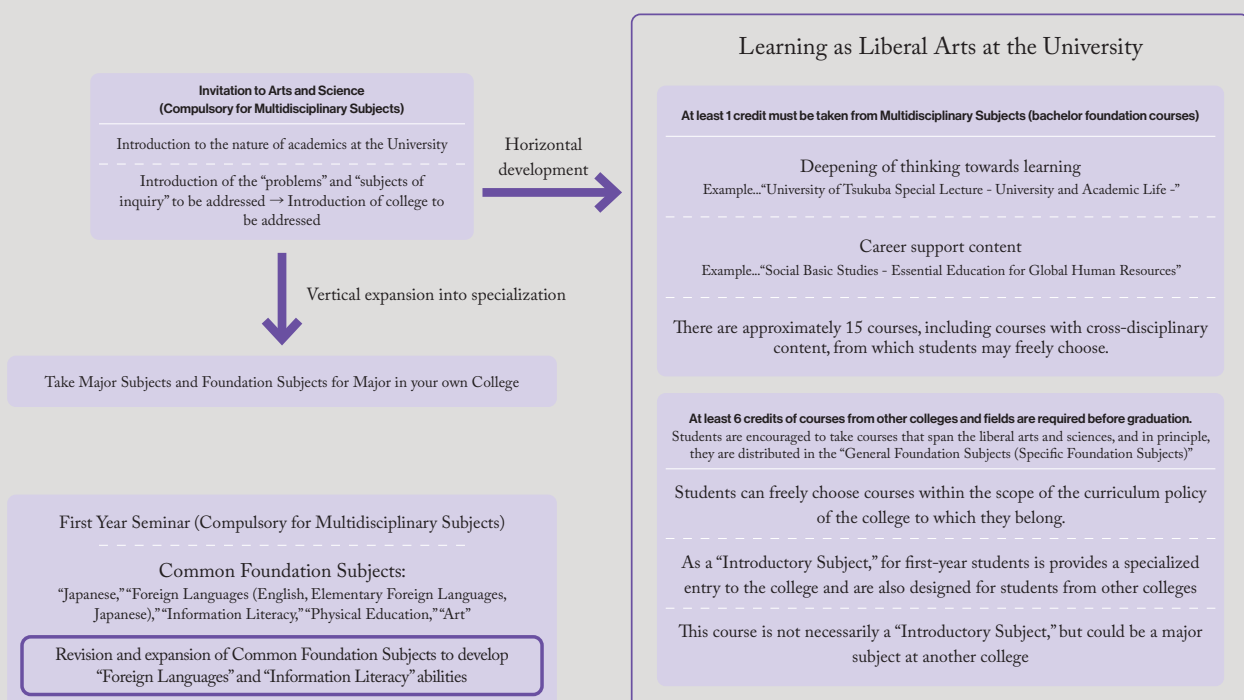
Based on this spirit, we have developed an educational system based on the principle that students can acquire creative wisdom by cultivating both specialized knowledge and skills and general knowledge and skills. As shown in the diagram, we consider learning to deepen one’s own expertise to be a vertical learning process, while learning as a liberal arts course at the University is considered to be a horizontal learning process. It is our philosophy that we can achieve an educational system that can put both of these into practice.

To realize our philosophy

At the heart of this horizontal and vertical structure, we have established “Invitation to Arts and Science” as Multidisciplinary Subjects (compulsory), through which our students first learn about the nature of learning at the university, the problems to be addressed, and the subjects of inquiry. On the other hand, students are able to understand the connection between a variety

of society’s subjects of inquiry and academic disciplines by freely selecting and taking Multidisciplinary Subjects (bachelor’s foundation courses), including cross-disciplinary content or courses essential for global human resources that deepen their thinking about academics. Also, the “Introductory Subjects” offered by each college and major school are structured in such a way that students belonging to the organization where the course is offered can learn the fundamentals of their specialization, while other students learn about fields different from their own area of specialization. By encouraging systematic studies, both horizontally and vertically, based on the curriculum policy of each educational organization, the Bachelor Programs will provide a well-rounded and consistent liberal arts education and advanced and in-depth specialized education. In this way, the programs cultivate the ability of each student to discover his or her own specialty from among multiple fields of study, and furthermore, to foster human resources with a broad perspective who can explain the position of his or her main field of specialty among various academic disciplines.

To further promote the implementation of this philosophy, we established the “School of Comprehensive Studies” in the 2021 academic year. In the School of Comprehensive Studies, following admittance, after one year of exposure to a variety of academic disciplines, students are able to select the undergraduate course to which they wish to belong.



Realization of university-wide quality management for teaching and learning

Promote continuous improvement in education by establishing internal quality assurance with monitoring and program review at its core.

■ Promotion of the PDCA cycle through university-wide academic management

The University establishes the Office of Quality Management for Teaching and Learning and realizes university-wide quality management for continuous assurance and improvement of remodeled degree program's quality.

The Office of Quality Management for Teaching and Learning will undertake monitoring (self-inspection conducted

every year) and program review (holistic review conducted every few years, scheduled for the seven-year cycle accreditation audit) of degree programs as well as quality review of degree program proposals, Promotion of systematic faculty development activities, research in higher education for advancement of internal quality assurance.

Image of quality assurance model comprised of monitoring and program review

