

Joint Degree Doctoral Program in Medical Sciences between Tokyo
Medical and Dental University and Mahidol University

External assessment report

Term of the assessment
From April, 2020 to March, 2021

Contents

Purpose and Background	1
External Assessment Method	2
1. Mechanism for implementation of the JD Program	3
1-1. Joint implementation structure.....	3
1-2. Policies.....	4
1-3. Quality assurance system	6
2. Operation of the JD Program	7
2-1. Progress of the JD Program operation	7
2-2. Fulfillment of student capacity	8
2-3. Syllabuses	10
2-4. Evaluation method and criteria	11
3. Student Support	12
3-1. Student support system.....	12
Conclusion	13

Purpose and Background

In 2019, Tokyo Medical and Dental University (hereinafter referred to as the “TMDU”) and Mahidol University (hereinafter referred to as the “MU”) received authorization from the Ministry of Education to establish a joint degree program (hereinafter referred to as “JDP”).

In 2020, the JDP started, and it has been operated jointly by TMDU and MU. Both universities, through this JDP, enhance the universities’ international profiles, presences and competitiveness.

The JDP focus on fostering advanced medical personnel involved in the treatment of diseases in a super-aging society, especially multidisciplinary treatment such as cancer treatment.

In the Program, which is different from the usual doctoral program, we offer a curriculum that will enable students to develop the high-quality research capabilities needed to qualify for an academic degree and the clinical skills necessary to become effective clinical specialists.

The Program will provide students high-quality supervision for research training, thesis development and writing. Students will be awarded one degree under the joint names of TMDU and MU after successful completion.

As a Quality assurance system of the program, we set three steps;

1. Self-assessment, 2. External assessment, 3. Faculty Development. Concerning the external assessment, we must undergo assessment by external experts to evaluate the status of program implementation and achievement and make improvements. To this end, we have set guidelines as below.

- University’s Quality Assurance System (hereinafter referred to as “System”) shall be established for the purpose of carrying out assessments of the JDP.
- The system shall assess the status of program implementation and achievement and suggest improvements.
- The system shall consist of external academic experts including foreign countries, professors and others who belong to institutions except for TMDU and MU which have doctoral programs in the academic field of this program or the adjacent/related fields and track records of conferring doctoral degrees..

Dr. Supakorn Rojananin, Emeritus Professor, Dean of School of Medicine, Mae Fah Luang University, Thailand, Dr. Tetsuro Nishikage, Director of Surgery, Kudanzaka Hospital, Japan undertake the external assessors. The external assessment was conducted from December 1st to 21st, 2021, and this is a report of the assessment results.

External Assessment Method

Three external assessors assessed the status of project implementation/achievement and made comments on project achievements that are organized into eight assessment categories.

Assessment criteria is the same as the self-assessment report for the four categories, as shown below.

IV	Achievement greater than plan.
III	Plan was achieved.
II	Plan was not achieved sufficiently.
I	Plan was not achieved.

1. Mechanism for implementation of the JD Program

Assessment Category

1-1. Joint implementation structure

(Self-assessment report page 1)

The above assessment category is divided into two categories; 1-1-1. Joint committees and 1-1-2. Communication method. Please make a comprehensive evaluation of the Joint implementation structure based on these two categories.

Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Appropriate committees for discussing important matters of educational activities and examining curricula and educational methods are organized and active. (1-1-1) ➤ Appropriate communication method is established. (1-1-2) 	
Self-assessment	Rating	III
	<p>(MU) Communication between MU and TMDU via online conferencing is proceeding satisfactorily, considering the COVID-19 pandemic situation. We constantly share information regarding the program and have responded swiftly to problems that emerged after the program was initiated.</p> <p>(TMDU) The Joint Implementation Structure and Communication methods are working effectively using teleconference systems (ZOOM). A regular committee meeting is held every month for curriculum management. Information and views are exchanged frequently via e-mail, as necessary. In addition, on several occasions, we interviewed students to track progress of their research projects and credit acquisition status. We conducted a Dean meeting in the last month of the academic year to confirm progress on this program, admission process for new students, and credit acquisition status.</p>	
External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · III · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn) None</p> <p>(Dr. Nishikage) Appropriate committees are organized in both Universities and the online communication methods are established.</p>

Assessment Category

1-2. Policies

(Self-assessment report page 3)

The above assessment category is divided into three categories; 1-2-1. Diploma Policy, 1-2-2. Curriculum Policy and 1-2-3. Admission Policy. Please make a comprehensive evaluation of the Policies based on these three categories.

<p>Criteria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Diploma Policy is set and published based on the educational objectives, and completion of the program is approved in a fair and strict manner. (1-2-1) ➤ Curriculum Policy is clearly indicated and published based on the educational objectives. (1-2-2) ➤ Academic curricula are organized and implemented based on Curriculum Policy. (1-2-2) ➤ Clear Admission Policy is established and entrance examination is conducted in accordance with it. (1-2-3) 		
<p>Self-assessment</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">Rating</td> <td style="text-align: center;">III</td> </tr> </table> <p>(MU)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All three students, who were enrolled last year, have successfully completed the first-year curriculum and they are now into the first semester of second year. The course is progressing per schedule and without any problems. 2. New students for 2021 are starting their course subjects under the supervision of both MU and TMDU faculty. <p>(TMDU)</p> <p>The Diploma Policy, Curriculum Policy, and Admission Policy are published in the admission guidelines and on the JDP website. Students have joined this course in agreement with these policies. The curriculum has been established based on the Curriculum Policy.</p>	Rating	III
Rating	III		

External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · III · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This joint program is pioneer for further collaboration, for project expansion to other specialties, TMDU office at Siriraj should appoint one secretary staff to communicate, PR and facilitate those Med students and physicians who might be interested in CME at TMDU. 2. Since the program is a high sub-specialized study among Thai postgraduate students in Japan, or vis versa, therefore during the meeting, communication barrier might be more or less a problem, each committee members should include ones who are influence in both Thai, Japanese languages, as well as English, interpreter might be needed in some meeting for deeper understanding especially in some sensitive issues. <p>(Dr. Nishikage)</p> <p>The Diploma Policy and the Curriculum Policy and Admission Policy are clearly published based on the educational objectives.</p>

Assessment Category

1-3. Quality assurance system

(Self-assessment report page 9)

The above assessment category is divided into four categories; 1-3-1. Self-assessment, 1-3-2. External assessment, 1-3-3. Feedback of assessment results and 1-3-4. Information publication. Please make a comprehensive evaluation of the Quality assurance system based on these four categories.

Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-assessment is implemented and the results are published and reflected in educational and research activities. (1-3-1) ➤ External assessment is implemented and the results are published and reflected in the educational and research activities. (1-3-2) ➤ Opinions of university members (students and faculty members) are heard and utilized properly in concrete, sustainable improvement of educational quality. (1-3-3) ➤ Opinions of external parties are utilized properly for concrete, sustainable improvement of educational quality. (1-3-3) ➤ Faculty Development is properly managed, and leads to improvement of educational quality and coursework. (1-3-3) ➤ Information such as that on educational activities (including the items defined by paragraph 2, Article 172 of the Enforcement Regulations of the School Education Law, MEXT) are publicized. (1-3-4) 	
Self-assessment	Rating	III
	<p>(MU) Students enrolled in the JDP program evaluated each course subject through a MU-designed evaluation form. We receive feedback and comments and the information is discussed in the program administrative committee to improve every aspect of the curriculum.</p> <p>(TMDU) This program has a quality assurance system comprising self-assessment and external assessment. We discussed the importance of faculty development in the program management meetings and agreed to aim at making further enhancements in the program. We held the faculty development program together with other JDP programs managed by TMDU. Given the pandemic situation, we conducted an on-demand FD program. We used a questionnaire to sample students' opinions about improving the program, and MU and TMDU shared the results.</p>	
External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · <u>III</u> · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn) None</p> <p>(Dr. Nishikage) Self-assessment and External assessment are implemented. Feedback system of these assessment seems to work well.</p>

2. Operation of the JD Program

Assessment Category

2-1. Progress of the JD Program operation (Self-assessment report page 12)

Criteria	➤ Program operation is properly conducted as planned.	
Self-assessment	Rating	III
	<p>(MU) 1. Candidates who applied for the Joint Degree Program in the 1st semester of 2nd year were interviewed twice by interviewers (MU-TMDU committees) and provided evaluation scores. 2. For JDP students who enrolled last year (2020), the Qualifying Examination and Dissertation proposal examination will be conducted after students pass all coursework.</p> <p>(TMDU) The JDP committees of both MU and TMDU have been operating the program satisfactorily. In addition, entrance examinations and student supervisions have been suitably performed.</p>	
External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · (III) · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn) None (Dr. Nishikage) Entrance examination, faculty member's guidance, assignments of supervisors and research supervisors to students seem to progress as scheduled.</p>

Assessment Category**2-2. Fulfillment of student capacity**

(Self-assessment report page 13)

Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Admission policy, Curriculum policy and Diploma policy are properly publicized and disseminated. ➤ Number of admissions versus admissions quota is appropriate. 	
Self-assessment	Rating	III
	<p><u>(MU)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Currently, first generation students are pursuing their 2nd year program. 2. Some applicants were not be enrolled in the field of surgery, suggesting the need to expand the fields of study under the JDP. 3. The course curriculum is in the field of research and surgery. Students can register in all the subjects they are interested in, whether MU or TMDU, if these subjects conform to the curriculum structure. 4. Currently, a student requires more information regarding support available when they visit Japan. <p><u>(TMDU)</u></p> <p>The total number of candidates reaches capacity every year and, three applicants are enrolled successfully each time. Stable number of applicants are expected in the future.</p> <p>Recruitment into this program is promoting attractiveness and future potential of this program in both countries.</p>	

External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · III · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full capacity of enrollment at the beginning is a good indicator of program attraction. Plan should be made to expand both number of capacity and more choices covering all specialties of surgery and beyond. I am convinced that this program will be a good start for good collaboration of it kind and will initiate more projects to help all doctors in ASEAN nations in the near future. 2. Since the program is quite highly specialized, prerequisite language improvement for good communication of students should be compulsory for preparation of all applicants before taking courses. <p>(Dr. Nishikage)</p> <p>Numbers of applicants and enrollments fulfills quota in both 2020 and 2021. The committees may consider MU's suggestion about the expansion of the fields of study under the JDP.</p>

Assessment Category

2-3. Syllabuses

(Self-assessment report page 15)

Criteria	➤ Appropriate syllabuses are prepared and operated.	
Self-assessment	Rating	III
	<p>(MU) 1. The syllabus of each subject in the JD Program has been revised and updated for the new semesters. 2. The syllabus will appear on the webpage of the Graduate School and on the website of the Faculty of Department of Surgery.</p> <p>(TMDU) In the syllabus, important points, such as assessment standards, are articulated appropriately and are comprehensible. Moreover, the syllabus is easily accessible on the website, so that JDP students can access the information.</p>	
External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · III · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn) None</p> <p>(Dr. Nishikage) JDP students can access the syllabus easily on the websites of each university.</p>

Assessment Category

2-4. Evaluation method and criteria

(Self-assessment report page 16)

Criteria	➤ Evaluation methods and criteria (grading, recognition of credits, and completion of course) of each subject are established, applied properly in a fair manner, and disclosed to students.	
Self-assessment	Rating	III
	<p>(MU) 1. Each subject will be evaluated based on student punctuality and in class activities during every class. 2. Examination system (multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and Oral examination). (TMDU) Evaluation methods have been agreed upon and established according to the requirements of both universities. Joint Qualification examinations may require frequent discussions between both Program Administrative Committees.</p>	
External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · III · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn) I have been told that the student in this program, after finishing the course, one will get both PhD degree as well as sub-board of each sub-specialty! Then, as a consequence, assessment with Entrustable professional activity assessment tool for clinical procedures might be necessary apart from MCQ and oral exam. (MU part) (Dr. Nishikage) The grading methods are established and clearly indicated in the syllabus. A grade conversion table is useful so that we can understand grading standard visually.</p>

3. Student Support

Assessment Category

3-1. Student support system

(Self-assessment report page 18)

The above assessment category is divided into three categories; 3-1-1. Accommodation, 3-1-2. Research environment and 3-1-3. Financial support. Please make a comprehensive evaluation of the Student support system based on these three categories.

Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Appropriate housing support for students is ensured. (3-1-1) ➤ Educational environment that will provide education according to instruction goals is in place. (3-1-2) ➤ Ensure adequate financial support for students. (3-1-3) 	
Self-assessment	Rating	III
	<p>(MU)</p> <p>1. Second year JDP students (2 students) received the Faculty of Medicine Scholarship for 4-year. This amount will cover both tuition fee and travel expenditure to Japan for one and half years during their stay in Japan.</p> <p>2. First year JDP students are currently in the process of applying for scholarship support.</p> <p>(TMDU)</p> <p>Students are provided proper support for <i>finding</i> accommodation during their stay. They can live on-campus in either Surugadai or Konodai. If necessary, they can apply for the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) scholarship. Students can work in the TMDU office during their stay in Japan.</p>	
External assessment	Rating (Please circle)	IV · III · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn) None</p> <p>(Dr. Nishikage) Students can seem to receive enough supports from the point of view of accommodation and finance.</p>

Conclusion

Conclusion	Rating (Please circle)	IV · III · II · I
	Comments	<p>(Dr. Supakorn) Congratulations for both Faculties of both Universities for your dedication and tiredness effort to make this first joint degree program viable!!! It had been a long vision and having support for years to succeed. It's truly of your new generation, new commitment and new friendship among Asian nations. Please accept my sincere respect and my best regards, both MU and TMDU staff</p> <p>(Dr. Nishikage) As a whole this program seems to progress as planned. We need to maintain current quality and to discuss about further improvement, for example, the expansion of the fields of study under the JDP.</p>