



NIAD-QE

National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education

Overview of the Higher Education and Quality Assurance Systems

Japan

Third Edition (2019)

日本の高等教育・質保証システムの概要(第3版)

Overview of the Higher Education and Quality Assurance Systems - Japan (Third Edition)

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(NIAD-QE)

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Preface

The National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE) is working closely with domestic and overseas quality assurance agencies, in addition to its core activities of university evaluation, awarding of degrees and conducting research activities. NIAD-QE works with countries that have close ties with Japan as well as those with advanced higher education systems, to ensure credibility of Japanese higher education in the international community and promote international collaboration among higher education institutions.

As each country possesses different political, societal, cultural and language elements, higher education systems and the structure of quality assurance systems for higher education also differ. In building relationships and realizing effective cooperation that transcend such barriers, as well as promoting globalization and mobility of students and academics, mutual understanding must be enhanced among cooperating organizations by exchanging accurate information on their respective quality assurance and higher education systems.

The Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualification in Higher Education (known as the Tokyo Convention) of UNESCO entered into force in February 2018 with the aim of promoting the international mobility of students and academics. Signatories to this convention, including Japan, are requested to provide information on the higher education system, qualifications, and a list of recognized and/or accredited higher education institutions of their own country. This exchange of information is required for the smooth recognition of academic qualifications when students cross international borders. Japan's official national information center (NIC), the National Information Center for Academic Recognition Japan, has been established within NIAD-QE in September 2019 to disseminate information about higher education in Japan.

Under such circumstances, NIAD-QE has compiled recent trends and published the third edition of "Overview of the Higher Education and Quality Assurance Systems - Japan" in both English and Japanese. This new edition includes updated information related to the smooth recognition of higher education qualification, such as Japanese higher education qualifications and admission requirements to Japanese higher education institutions. In regards to quality assurance, information about recent trends such as revision in legislation about the Certified Evaluation and Accreditation (CEA) system is also included.

NIAD-QE has developed the "information package" as a means for providing comprehensive information on higher education and quality assurance systems in Japan and other countries. We have so far compiled information of higher education and quality assurance systems of Japan, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, China, and Korea.

PDF of this document is also available from our website:

<https://www.niad.ac.jp/english/cqa/information.html>

We would like to thank the many people who contributed in creating this document, in particular, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

September 2019

National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education
(NIAD-QE)

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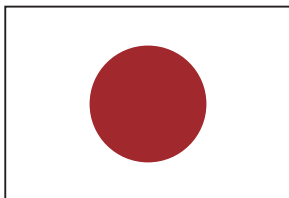
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Chapter 1. Basic Information About Japan

Country	Japan												
Capital	Tokyo												
Major Language of Instruction	Japanese												
Total Population ⁽¹⁾ (As of February 1, 2019)	126,309,690												
GDP ⁽²⁾ (2017)	4,872 billion USD												
GDP per Capita ⁽²⁾ (2017)	38,220 USD												
Total public expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure ⁽³⁾ (2015)	All levels of education: 8.0% (OECD average: 11.1%) Higher education: 1.7% (OECD average: 3.0%)												
Total expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP ⁽³⁾ (2015)	All levels of education: 4.1% (OECD average: 5.0%) Higher education: 1.4% (OECD average: 1.5%)												
Total expenditure on primary to tertiary education per student ⁽³⁾ (2015)	12,120 USD (OECD average: 10,520 USD)												
First-Time Entry Rates, by Tertiary Level ⁽³⁾ (2016)	<table><tr><td>Overall</td><td>Junior College Level</td><td>Undergraduate Level</td><td>Master's Level</td><td>Doctoral Level</td></tr><tr><td>80%</td><td>28%</td><td>50%</td><td>9%</td><td>1.2%</td></tr></table>	Overall	Junior College Level	Undergraduate Level	Master's Level	Doctoral Level	80%	28%	50%	9%	1.2%		
Overall	Junior College Level	Undergraduate Level	Master's Level	Doctoral Level									
80%	28%	50%	9%	1.2%									
Number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) ⁽⁴⁾ (As of May 1, 2018)	<table><tr><td>Universities</td><td>Colleges of Technology</td><td>Professional Training Colleges</td><td>Education institutions operated by government ministries & agencies</td></tr><tr><td>1,113</td><td>57</td><td>2,776</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	Universities	Colleges of Technology	Professional Training Colleges	Education institutions operated by government ministries & agencies	1,113	57	2,776	3				
Universities	Colleges of Technology	Professional Training Colleges	Education institutions operated by government ministries & agencies										
1,113	57	2,776	3										

⁽¹⁾ Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2019, August 1). *Population Census (July 2019)*. Retrieved from <https://www.stat.go.jp/data/jinsui/pdf/201907.pdf>

⁽²⁾ United Nations Statistics Division (2019, August 1). National Accounts – Analysis of Main Aggregates (AMA). Retrieved from <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/CountryProfile/>

⁽³⁾ OECD (2019, August 1). *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*. pp. 205, 254, 266, 288. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>

⁽⁴⁾ Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (2019, August 1). AY2018 School Basic Survey. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/toukei/chousa01/kihon/kekka/k_detail/1407849.htm
<Note> Calculated based on Japan's HEIs (excluding Prefectural Colleges of Agriculture) as defined by UNESCO's "The Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education". Education institutions operated by government ministries and agencies that meet these criteria are National College of Nursing, Japan, Polytechnic University, and National Fisheries University.

Chapter 2. The Higher Education System

.....

1. Overview of the Education System

1-1. Japanese Education System

The Japanese educational system starts with pre-school education, followed by 6 years of elementary education, then 6 years of secondary education (3 years of lower secondary and 3 years of upper secondary education), which leads to a wide range of higher education. The 9 years of elementary and lower secondary education cover compulsory education.

There are kindergartens (幼稚園 *yochien*), day care centers (保育所 *hoikusho*), and “centers for early childhood education and care” (認定こども園 *nintei-kodomo-en*) for pre-school education. As for elementary and secondary education, typical educational institutions include elementary schools (小学校 *shogakko*) for elementary education and lower secondary schools (中学校 *chugakko*) and upper secondary schools (高等学校 *kotogakko*) for secondary education. There are also schools for special needs education (特別支援学校 *tokubetsu-shien-gakko*) [departments of kindergarten, elementary, lower secondary, and upper secondary] for children and students with disabilities.

In addition, in 1998, it became possible to establish 6-year Secondary Education Schools (中等教育学校 *chuto-kyoiku-gakko*) which combine lower and upper secondary education, and in 2016, it became possible to establish Compulsory Education Schools (義務教育学校 *gimu-kyoiku-gakko*) which combine elementary and lower secondary education.

For upper division of Secondary Education Schools and upper secondary schools, there are also schools that offer part-time courses (定時制 *teiji-sei*) in the evening or at other specific times and periods, correspondence courses (通信制 *tsushin-sei*) that offer distance education, and 高等専修学校 *koto-senshu-gakko* which is Upper Secondary Courses of Specialized Training Colleges (専修学校高等課程 *senshu-gakko-koto-katei*).

Types of higher education institutions (HEIs), higher education qualifications, and admissions are described in the following sections.

■ Academic Calendar

Governed by law, the academic year for elementary and secondary education institutions and Colleges of Technology starts on April 1 and ends on March 31. At universities and Specialized Training Colleges, rectors or presidents determine the beginning and end of the academic year for their institutions. At upper secondary schools, upper secondary department of schools for special needs education, and universities, matriculation and graduation of students may take place in the middle of an academic year according to the division of academic term of each institution.

Many universities in Japan use a semester system (first semester from April to September, and second semester from October to March), but there are also some universities that use trimester or quarter systems.

REFERENCE Number of universities admitting students at times other than April (AY2016)

Undergraduate programs: 265 universities (36% of total)

Graduate programs: 318 graduate schools (52% of total)

1-2. History of the Higher Education System

The modern Japanese school education system originated with the promulgation of the Educational System in 1872. The system was changed to reflect the democratization policies in education immediately following the end of WWII. With the enactment of the Constitution in 1947, the Basic Act on Education (教育基本法 *kyoiku-kihon-ho*) and the School Education Act (学校教育法 *gakko-kyoiku-ho*) were enacted to ensure equal opportunities in education. The higher education system was consolidated into “universities” in line with the formulation of the 6-3-3-4 school year system.

The system for Colleges of Technology (高等専門学校 *koto-senmon-gakko*) was established in 1961 to provide a unified five-year period of education for secondary school graduates in response to increased needs for diverse human resources due to rapid industrial and economic development. In 1964, two- to three-year junior college programs, which had been established temporarily until then, were made into a permanent system under the School Education Act. Since then, the number of Japanese HEIs increased rapidly, especially with the rise of private universities. The percentage of national universities among all universities in the country, which was 31.6% in 1955, decreased to 11.1% in 2016.

In the context of the popularization of higher education in the 1970's, the percentage of students who attended universities or junior colleges more than doubled from 16.1% in 1966 to 38.6% in 1976. How to maintain and enhance the quality of higher education was raised as a major political task. The Central Council for Education (中央教育審議会 *chuo-kyoiku-shingikai*) set up in the Ministry of Education (currently MEXT) reported on reforms of the entire school education system in 1971. The report recommended that the government should secure quality of higher education by making systematic classification of institutions, managing the size and plans of all HEIs appropriately, and taking fiscal measures. In response, the government introduced the Private Education Institution Aid System (私学助成制度 *shigaku-josei-seido*) and developed a plan for higher education in 1975.

The Provisional Council on Educational Reform (臨時教育審議会 *rinji-kyoiku-shingikai*), the Prime Minister's advisory panel (1984-1987), recommended that the government should take actions to make the existing education systems and laws more flexible in order to promote individualization, diversification, and sophistication of Japanese higher education as a government policy. The Council submitted some proposals including deregulation of the Standards for the Establishment of Universities (大学設置基準 *daigaku-secchi-kijun*), thereby enabling each institution to develop its distinctiveness under its missions and objectives, and stressed the importance of university evaluation and information disclosure as a means to ensure the quality of higher education.

In response to these recommendations, the Council for Higher Education (大学審議会 *daigaku-shingikai*) was set up in the Ministry of Education in 1987 and conducted reviews of the entire

higher education system from three perspectives, i.e. (1) sophistication of education and research, (2) individualization of higher education, and (3) activation of university organization. As a result, the Council for Higher Education published a report on a flexible graduate school system in December 1988 followed by February 1991 recommendations on further actions including: deregulation of the Standards for the Establishment of Universities to promote individualization of learning contents and methods, revision of the academic degree system, implementation of institutional self-assessment, management of graduate schools from quantitative approaches, and establishment of new degree-awarding organizations.

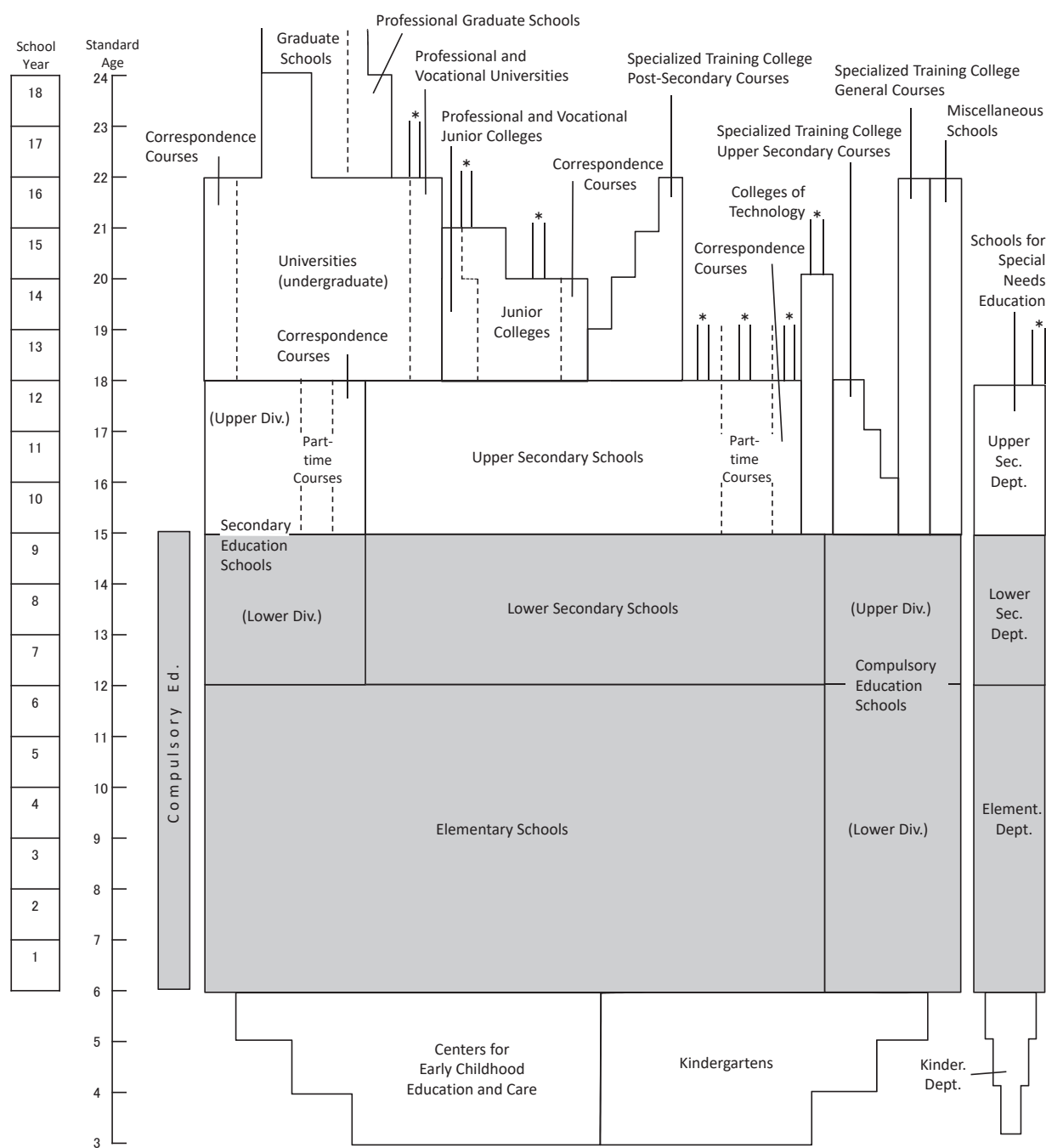
As the need for practical education specialized for fostering highly professional human resources was pointed out in the 1998 report, in 2003, for further development to fulfill such needs, Professional Graduate Schools (専門職大学院 *senmonshoku-daigakuin*) were established, Certified Evaluation and Accreditation (CEA) System was established as a third-party evaluation, and revision of the Act on Special Districts for Structural Reform (構造改革特別区域法 *kozo-kaikaku-tokubetsu-kuiki-ho*) allowed corporations to enter into university management. In 2004, corporatization of national universities and establishment of the public university corporation system were carried out.

The Central Council for Education (the Council for Higher Education was integrated into this council in the 2001 restructuring of the Ministries) published two reports in 2005: "A Vision for the Future of Higher Education in Japan" in January and "Graduate School Education in the New Age: Towards the Development of Internationally Attractive Graduate School Education" in September. These reports recommended the introduction of more rigorous criteria for assessment of academic achievements and improvement in the content of graduate school education. This led to the government's policies in April 2008 to further improve education, such as explicit indication of academic assessment criteria and making faculty development (FD) activities mandatory.

In December 2006, the Basic Act on Education was revised substantially for the first time in about 60 years, and the definition of a university was redefined. In response to this legal revision, the Central Council for Education published two reports in December 2008: "Building Undergraduate Education", and "Enhancing Education at Colleges of Technology". These two reports made recommendations for articulating a policy on undergraduate education and enhancing education at Colleges of Technology in order to further promote educational reform.

As for the recent movement of higher education policy, universities located in the specific district (23 wards of Tokyo) have been restricted from increasing caps on numbers of undergraduate students, as a 10-year time-limited measure starting from 2018. The purpose of this measure is to promote youth study and employment in rural areas and correct "over-concentration of Tokyo". Also in July 2014, the fifth proposal of the Council for the Implementation of Education Rebuilding (教育再生実行会議 *kyoiku-saisei-jikko-kaigi*) proposed institutionalization of new types of higher education institutions for practical professional education. Then after specific system design at the Central Council for Education and partial revision of the School Education Act in 2017, Professional and Vocational Universities (専門職大学 *senmonshoku-daigaku*) and Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges (専門職短期大学 *senmonshoku-tanki-daigaku*) were established within the university system. In addition, by partial revision of the Standards for the Establishment of Universities and the Standards for the Establishment of Junior Colleges, it became possible to establish Professional and Vocational faculties and departments in existing universities and junior colleges; this new system was implemented in April 2019.

Organization of the School System in Japan



(Notes)

- (1) This diagram shows schools regulated by the School Education Act.
- (2) The scope of 'higher education institutions' subject to the UNESCO 'Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education' includes some educational institutions operated by government ministries and agencies (National College of Nursing, Japan; Polytechnic University; and National Fisheries University), in addition to the above.
- (3) * indicates advanced courses
- (4) Upper secondary schools, upper division of Secondary Education Schools, universities, junior colleges, and upper secondary department of Schools for Special Needs Education can have separate courses with course terms of 1 year or more.
- (5) A child aged from 0 to 2 years old can attend Centers for Early Childhood Education and Care because it functions as school as well as child welfare institution.
- (6) Age and admission requirements for Specialized Training College General Courses and Miscellaneous Schools are not defined uniformly.

Figure 1 Organization of the School System in Japan

2. Types of Higher Education Institutions and Qualifications

Japan's higher education system includes universities, Colleges of Technology (KOSEN), and Professional Training Colleges (Specialized Training Colleges that offer Post-Secondary Courses). Under the category of university, there are universities (undergraduate programs), junior colleges, and graduate schools. Within them, universities and junior colleges that aim to educate professionals through a high-quality vocational education are Professional and Vocational Universities (PVU) and Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges (PVJC), and graduate schools that specialize in fostering highly-specialized professionals with flexible and practical education are Professional Graduate Schools. HEIs are categorized as national, public, or private based on the establishing body.

2-1. Definition of Higher Education Institution

There is no legal definition on the scope of HEIs in Japan⁽¹⁾. On the other hand, the scope of "higher education institutions (HEIs)" subject to the "Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education" (known as "the Tokyo Convention") is defined by the "Guideline on Recognition of Higher Education Qualification - Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education"⁽²⁾. According to this Guideline, HEIs include "universities, graduate schools, junior colleges, Colleges of Technology, and Professional Training Colleges (except for Prefectural Colleges of Agriculture) as well as National College of Nursing, Japan, Polytechnic University, and National Fisheries University amongst education institutions operated by government ministries and agencies". This document describes HEIs following this definition as a standard.

■ Higher Education Institutions Stipulated by the School Education Act

University (大学 <i>Daigaku</i>)	Universities, as centers of science, shall cultivate advanced learning and specialized skills, while contributing to the development of society by pursuing the profound truth of things, creating new knowledge, and disseminating their outcomes throughout society. (Paragraph 1, Article 7, Basic Act on Education)
University (Undergraduate Program) (学士課程 <i>Gakushi-katei</i>)	Universities, as centers of science, shall teach wide knowledge, teach and research arts and sciences deeply, and develop intellectual, moral, and applied abilities. Universities conduct education and research to achieve its purposes while contributing to the development of society by disseminating their outcomes throughout society. (Paragraphs 1 and 2, Article 83, School Education Act)
Professional and Vocational University (PVU) (専門職大学 <i>Senmonshoku-daigaku</i>)	Within the category of universities, those of which are designed to teach and study arts and sciences deeply and to develop practical and applied abilities to engage in professions that require expertise are defined as Professional and Vocational Universities. (Paragraph 1, Article 83-2, School Education Act)

	Graduate School (大学院 <i>Daigakuin</i>)	Graduate Schools are designed to teach and study academic theories and applications, and inquire deeply into them or cultivate knowledge and outstanding ability in depth to engage in professions that require advanced expertise, while contributing to the development of culture. (Paragraph 1, Article 99, School Education Act)
		Professional Graduate School (専門職大学院 <i>Senmonshoku-daigakuin</i>) Within the category of graduate schools, schools which are designed to teach and study academic theories and applications, and cultivate knowledge and outstanding ability in depth to engage in professions that require advanced expertise are defined as Professional Graduate Schools. (Paragraph 2, Article 99, School Education Act)
	Junior College (短期大学 <i>Tanki-daigaku</i>)	Junior colleges can be designed to teach and study arts and sciences deeply and to develop abilities required for occupations or practical life. (Paragraphs 1 and 3, Article 108, School Education Act)
		Professional and Vocational Junior College (PVJC) (専門職短期大学 <i>Senmonshoku-tanki-daigaku</i>) Within the category of junior colleges, colleges which are designed to teach and study arts and sciences deeply, and cultivate practical and applied abilities to engage in professions that require expertise are defined as Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges. (Paragraph 4, Article 108, School Education Act)
College of Technology (KOSEN) (高等専門学校 <i>Koto-senmon-gakko</i>) Colleges of Technology are designed to teach arts and sciences deeply and to develop abilities required to engage in professions. Colleges of Technology conduct education to achieve its purposes while contributing to the development of society by disseminating their outcomes throughout society. (Paragraphs 1 and 2, Article 115, School Education Act)		
Professional Training College (Post-Secondary Course of Specialized Training College) (専門学校[専修学校専門課程] <i>Senmon-gakko [Senshu-gakko-senmon-katei]</i>) Specialized Training Colleges that have Post-Secondary Courses ⁽³⁾ can be called Professional Training Colleges. Professional Training Colleges provide systematic education to develop abilities necessary for work and everyday life, or to enhance liberal arts, on top of the foundation of upper secondary education. (Articles 124 – 126, School Education Act)		

2-2. Higher Education Qualifications and Awarding Institutions

Table 1 List of Higher Education Qualifications and Awarding Institutions

Type	Qualification	Awarding Institution		Standard Program Length (years)	Number of Credits Required	ISCED 2011 ⁽⁴⁾	Further Accessible Education
Degree (学位 <i>gakui</i>)	Bachelor's degree (学士 <i>gakushi</i>)	University	Standard	4	124	665	Graduate school, Professional Graduate School
			Medical, Dentistry		188		
			Pharmaceutical Sciences (Clinical)	6	186	766	
			Veterinary Medical Science		182		
		NIAD-QE	-	-	665 ⁽⁵⁾		
	Bachelor's degree (Professional) (学士[専門職] <i>gakushi [senmonshoku]</i>)	PVU		4	124	N/A	
	Associate degree (短期大学士 <i>tankidaigakushi</i>)	Junior College		2 3	62 93	544	Transfer to university, transfer to PVU
	Associate degree (Professional) (短期大学士 [専門職] <i>tankidaigakushi [senmonshoku]</i>)	PVJC, PVU that divides its course into two levels (the degree is awarded to those who have completed the first half (<i>zenki</i>))	2	62	N/A		
			3	93			
	Master's degree (修士 <i>shushi</i>)	Graduate School (Master's Program)	2	30	767	Graduate school (Doctoral program)	
NIAD-QE		-	-	767 ⁽⁵⁾			
Doctoral degree (博士 <i>hakase/hakushi</i>)	Graduate School (Doctoral Program)	5	30 (not required for persons who hold Master's or Professional Degree)	864	N/A		
		NIAD-QE	-	-		864 ⁽⁵⁾	
	Professional degree (専門職学位 <i>senmonshokugaku</i>)	Master of xxx (Professional) (修士 [専門職] <i>shushi [senmonshoku]</i>)	Professional Graduate School	Standard (except law school, Professional Graduate School for Teacher Education)	1-2	30	767
Law School				3	93		
Master of Education (Professional) (教職修士[専門職] <i>kyoshoku-shushi [senmonshoku]</i>)				2	45		
Title (称号 <i>shogo</i>)	Associate (準学士 <i>jungakushi</i>)	College of Technology	Standard	5	167	554	College of Technology (Advanced Course), transfer to university, transfer to PVU
			Mercantile Shipping	5.5	147		
	Diploma (専門士 <i>senmonshi</i>)	Professional Training College	2	62	554	Transfer to university, transfer to PVU	
	Advanced Diploma (高度専門 士 <i>kodosenmonshi</i>)	Professional Training College	4	124	554	Graduate school, Professional Graduate School	

2-2-1. University

■ University (Undergraduate Program), Professional and Vocational University (PVU)

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Qualification awarded	: Bachelor's degree
Program length	: 4 years 6 years for Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmaceutical Sciences (Clinical), and Veterinary Medical Science
Requirements for graduation	: Enrollment for 4 years or more and 124 or more credits earned. For Medicine and Dentistry, enrollment for 6 years or more and 188 or more credits earned. For Pharmaceutical Sciences (Clinical), enrollment for 6 years or more and 186 or more credits earned. For Veterinary Medical Science, enrollment for 6 years or more and 182 or more credits earned.
Early graduation	: Students who have enrolled for 3 years or more at a university (undergraduate program) and have earned the required credits with excellent grades may graduate early. However, this does not apply to students in programs of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmaceutical Sciences (Clinical), and Veterinary Medical Science.
Further studies	: Admission to graduate school or Professional Graduate School

PROFESSIONAL AND VOCATIONAL UNIVERSITY (PVU)

PVU is a type of university that pursues teaching and research in highly-specialized fields with the aim of developing practical and applicable abilities needed to take on specialized work. However, programs in Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmaceutical Sciences (Clinical), and Veterinary Medical Science cannot be established at PVU.

Qualification awarded	: Bachelor's degree (Professional) *Some PVUs divide their courses into two levels - first half (前期 <i>zenki</i>) (2 or 3 years) and second half (後期 <i>koki</i>) (1 or 2 years). When a student completes the first half (<i>zenki</i>) only at such institution, Associate degree (Professional) is awarded.
Program length	: 4 years
Requirements for graduation	: Enrollment for 4 years or more and 124 or more credits earned. The credits must include 40 or more in subjects of practicum, skills training, or experiment, and within those 40 credits, 20 or more must be from on-site training conducted off-campus.
Early graduation	: Students who have enrolled for 3 years or more at a PVU and have earned the required credits with excellent grades may graduate early.
Further studies	: Admission to graduate school or Professional Graduate School

■ Junior College, Professional and Vocational Junior College (PVJC)

JUNIOR COLLEGE

Qualification awarded	: Associate degree (Title of Associate was awarded until 2005)
Program length	: 2 or 3 years
Requirements for graduation	: For 2-year program, enrollment for 2 years or more and 62 or more credits earned For 3-year program, enrollment for 3 years or more and 93 or more credits earned
Early graduation	: There is no system of early graduation at junior colleges.
Further studies	: Transfer to university or PVU

PROFESSIONAL AND VOCATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE (PVJC)

PVJC is a type of junior college that pursues teaching and research in highly-specialized fields with the aim to develop practical and applicable abilities needed to take on specialized work.

Qualification awarded	: Associate degree (Professional)
Program length	: 2 or 3 years
Requirements for graduation	: For 2-year program, enrollment for 2 years or more and 62 or more credits earned. The credits must include 20 or more in subjects of practicum, skills training, or experiment, and within those 20 credits, 10 or more must be from on-site training conducted off-campus. For 3-year program, enrollment for 3 years or more, and 93 or more credits earned. The credits must include 30 or more in subjects of practicum, skills training, or experiment, and within those 30 credits, 15 or more must be from on-site training conducted off-campus.
Early graduation	: There is no system of early graduation at PVJC.
Further studies	: Transfer to university or PVU

■ Graduate School, Professional Graduate School

GRADUATE SCHOOL - MASTER'S PROGRAM

Qualification awarded	: Master's degree
Standard program length	: 2 years
Requirements for completion	: To fulfill all of the following: 1. Enrollment for 2 or more years (may differ depending on the standard length of the program) 2. 30 or more credits earned

	3. Received necessary supervision for research, and passed dissertation defense, and examination on the Master's thesis or research project on a specific topic.
Early completion	: Students who have enrolled in a Master's program for 1 year or more and made excellent research achievement may complete early.
Further studies	: Admission to graduate school (Doctoral program)

GRADUATE SCHOOL - DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Qualification awarded	: Doctoral degree
Standard program length	: 5 years (Some doctoral programs divide their curriculum into the first two years' Master's level (前期 <i>zenki</i>) and the following three years' Doctoral level (後期 <i>koki</i>). The Master's level (<i>zenki</i>) is referred to as "Master's program" in this document.)
Requirements for completion	: To fulfill all of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enrollment for 5 years or more (may differ depending on the standard length of the program; includes 2 years of Master's program) 2. 30 or more credits earned (not required for persons who hold Master's degree or Professional degree) 3. Received necessary supervision for research, and passed dissertation defense and examination.
Early completion	: Students who have enrolled in a Doctoral program for 3 years or more and made excellent research achievement may complete early.

PROFESSIONAL GRADUATE SCHOOL

Professional Graduate School assumes a leadership role in various areas of society, providing graduate courses (professional degrees) which specialize in fostering highly-specialized professionals who will be active internationally. Among the Professional Graduate Schools, law school aims to provide education for legal professional training, and Professional Graduate School for Teacher Education aims to provide education for the training of teachers with highly-specialized abilities and excellent qualities.

Qualification awarded	: Professional degrees [Master of xxx (Professional), J.D. (Juris Doctor), Master of Education (Professional)]
Standard program length	: Each school decides the length of the program, either 2 years or a within a range of 1 to 2 years. 3 years for law school.
Requirements for completion	: For Professional Graduate School, enrollment for 2 years or more (may differ depending on the standard length of the program) and 30 or more credits earned. For law school, enrollment for 3 years or more (may differ depending on the standard length of the program) and 93 or more credits earned. For Professional Graduate School for Teacher Education, enrollment for 2 years or more (may differ depending on the standard length of the program)

and 45 or more credits earned.

Early completion : When the school recognizes credits earned before admission as part of its curriculum after a student is qualified to enter a Professional Graduate School, the student may shorten the period of required enrollment as follows.

Professional Graduate School and Professional Graduate School for Teacher Education: For half the duration of standard program length at maximum (must be enrolled for at least one year).

Law school: For one year at maximum (in addition to the above condition, also applicable for those who are recognized as having the basic knowledge of legal studies required by the school).

Further studies : Admission to graduate school (Doctoral program)

2-2-2. College of Technology

College of Technology (KOSEN) is a type of HEI that provides five-year-consistent professional education for graduates of lower secondary school, placing emphasis on experiments and practicums. KOSENs foster practical and creative engineers who will support the manufacturing industry.

Qualification awarded : Title of Associate

Program length : 5 years. For Mercantile Shipping, 5 years and 6 months.

Requirements : 167 or more credits earned.

for graduation : For Mercantile Shipping, 147 or more credits earned.

Early graduation : There is no system of early graduation at Colleges of Technology.

Further studies : Admission to College of Technology (Advanced Course), transfer to university or Professional and Vocational University

2-2-3. Professional Training College (Specialized Training College that Offers Post-Secondary Course)

Specialized Training Colleges that offers Post-Secondary Courses can be called Professional Training Colleges. Professional Training College aims to develop the abilities necessary for work and everyday life, or to enhance liberal arts, on top of the foundation of upper secondary education. Graduates of Professional Training Colleges who have completed programs approved by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology are awarded title of Diploma or Advanced Diploma.

Qualification awarded : Diploma or Advanced Diploma

Program length : 1 year or more

Requirements for completion : For daytime courses, completion of 800 credit hours or 30 credits multiplied by the number of years of the program length or more.

	For evening courses, completion of 450 credit hours or 17 credits multiplied by the number of years of the program length or more. However, earning 800 credit hours or 30 credits or more is a minimum requirement.
Early completion	: There is no system of early completion at Professional Training Colleges
Further studies	: Diploma → transfer to university, transfer to Professional and Vocational University Advanced Diploma → admission to graduate school, admission to Professional Graduate School

2-2-4. Educational Institution Operated by Government Ministries and Agencies

Education institutions operated by government ministries and agencies are educational facilities other than schools, that are regulated by laws other than the School Education Act. Among them, there are some cases in which universities can award credits if the university approves that the education of the institution is equivalent to the level of university education (see Ministry of Education notification for details: http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/nc/k19910605001/k19910605001.html [Japanese only]). For those who completed a curriculum approved by NIAD-QE, degrees are awarded by NIAD-QE after passing designated examinations.

Qualification awarded	: Cannot award degrees or titles
Program length	: Depends on institution and curriculum
Requirements for completion	: Depends on institution and curriculum

<Education Institutions Operated by Government Ministries and Agencies that are included in the scope of the Tokyo Convention>

- **National College of Nursing, Japan:** An HEI of Nursing Science established by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare with the purpose of training people to become nurses and midwives and work as staff members of the National Centers for Advanced and Specialized Medical Care (NCs). It is established as a facility for teaching theories and expertise of nursing, research, and training and is operated by the National Center for Global Health and Medicine. (Reference: Act on National Research and Development Corporation, which conducts research on highly specialized medical care.⁽⁶⁾)
- **Polytechnic University:** Established by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare which has three foundational operations: (1) fostering vocational training instructors, (2) training of vocational training instructors (re-training), and (3) research on development and improvement of vocational skills. It is operated by the Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly, Persons with Disabilities and Job Seekers (JEED). (Reference: Human Resources Development Promotion Act⁽⁷⁾)
- **National Fisheries University:** An HEI related to fisheries established by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. It aims at providing scientific fundamentals and technologies on fisheries for cultivating human resources contributing to fisheries. It is managed by the National

Research and Development Agency, Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency (FRA) and receives funding from the government. (Reference: National Research and Development Agency, Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency Act⁽⁸⁾)

2-3. Degrees Awarded by NIAD-QE

NIAD-QE evaluates various learning outcomes at the higher education level and awards degrees to persons recognized as having academic ability equivalent to or greater than those who have graduated from a university undergraduate program or completed graduate school.

NIAD-QE awards degrees in two schemes: (1) for graduates of junior colleges and Colleges of Technology, who have accumulated credit hours to a certain level of learning (such as a Bachelor's degree); and (2) for those who have completed courses at education institutions operated by government ministries/agencies recognized as equivalent to university undergraduate programs or graduate programs (Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees).

(1) Awarding Degrees to Learners Who Have Completed Study at a Junior College or College of Technology (Bachelor's degree)

NIAD-QE awards Bachelor's degrees to learners who have attained a certain level of studies at an HEI, acquired certain academic credits on top of that from a university as a non-degree student or from an advanced course recognized by NIAD-QE, and then recognized, as a result of NIAD-QE examination, as having academic ability equivalent to or greater than the graduates of university undergraduate program.

REFERENCES Japanese https://www.niad.ac.jp/n_gakui/tsumiage/

English <https://www.niad.ac.jp/english/adegrees/aod/scheme1.htm>

(2) Awarding Degrees Upon Completion of Study at a NIAD-QE-Approved Program (Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral Degrees)

NIAD-QE examines academic programs offered by education institutions operated by government ministries and agencies in light of the School Education Act, Standards for the Establishment of Universities, and Standards for the Establishment of Graduate Schools, and recognizes programs offering education equivalent to a university undergraduate program or a graduate school Master's or Doctoral program. Those who completed these academic programs, applied to NIAD-QE, and passed the examination are awarded a corresponding degree. As a rule, NIAD-QE confirms that the above-mentioned level is being maintained by conducting a review of education conditions every five years for each program.

REFERENCES Japanese https://www.niad.ac.jp/n_gakui/nintesisetsu/

English <https://www.niad.ac.jp/english/adegrees/aod/scheme2.htm>

2-4. Number of Credits

Credits are treated differently at each type of HEI. At universities (including undergraduate program, PVU, junior college, PVJC, graduate school, and Professional Graduate School), subjects are categorized into lectures, seminars, experiments, practicums, and skills training. Classes are conducted in one of these forms or in a combination of them, and for each subject, students who took classes and passed exams can receive credits.

The number of credits for each subject is determined at the institutional level based on the standardized credit system in Japan. Under the system, 45 hours of study is required for one credit as a standard. However, the number of required study hours per one credit may vary within a range of 15-30 hours for lectures and seminars, and 30-45 hours for experiments, practicums, and skills training, since educational effectiveness and necessary out-of-class study hours are different for different teaching methods. In the case of skills training in fields of art which require individual guidance, the number of study hours for one credit can be decided by each institution. As for thesis or research required for graduation, each university can decide the number of credits when it is considered adequate to assess learning outcomes.

Each subject runs for a 10- to 15-week term, and universities offer classes for 35 weeks (including examination period at the end of each semester) in principle. However, it is not limited to the above period when it is recognized that it is necessary from an educational point of view and considered that sufficient educational effects can be achieved.

At Professional Graduate Schools, courses must be delivered through case studies, fieldwork, interactive or multi-directional discussions, Q&A sessions, or other appropriate methods depending on the major field so as to provide practical education and achieve their purposes.

At Colleges of Technology, with the aim of smooth credit transfer and approval with other HEIs, the system of learning-based credits were introduced since 2006 in addition to the traditional curriculum-based credits. Curriculum-based credits are awarded one credit per 30 credit hours (standard one credit hour is 50 minutes). Learning-based credits can be introduced at the discretion of each College of Technology with a limit of 60 credits. The standard one credit subject consists of contents requiring 45 hours of study. The hours can vary between 15-30 hours for lectures and seminars and 30-45 hours for experiments, practicums, and skills training.

At Professional Training Colleges based on a year-long term system, one standard credit hour is 50 minutes. Daytime courses conduct 800 credit hours or more per year, and evening courses conduct 450 credit hours or more per year. At Professional Training Colleges based on this credit-system, one standard credit for a subject consists of content that requires 45 hours of study. The hours can vary between 15-30 hours for lectures and seminars and 30-45 hours for experiments, practicums, and skills training at the discretion of each college.

2-5. Qualification Framework and Learning Outcome

Although there is no qualification framework defined nationally, each institution awarding degrees sets its own learning outcomes and evaluation measures. On the other hand, in December 2008, the Central Council for Education announced guidelines on learning outcomes commonly developed in university undergraduate programs in the report “Building Undergraduate Education”. This guideline is called “Graduate Attributes” or “Bachelor’s Competencies” (学士力 *gakushi-ryoku*) and consists of 13 items in four categories as stated below.

“Graduate Attributes” Developed in Each Major⁽⁹⁾

— Guidelines for “Learning Outcomes” Common in Undergraduate Programs —

1. Knowledge and Understanding

To systematically understand the basic knowledge in a particular field of major study, and to understand the meaning of the body of knowledge and existence of the self in relation to history, society, and nature.

- (1) Understanding of multicultural and cross-cultural knowledge.
- (2) Understanding knowledge of human culture, society, and nature.

2. General Skills

Skills necessary in intellectual activities, work life, and social life.

- (1) Communication Skills
Able to read, write, listen and speak in Japanese and another foreign language.
- (2) Quantitative Skills
Able to analyze, understand, and express natural and social events using symbols.
- (3) Information Literacy
Able to collect and analyze diverse information using ICT, judge appropriately, and utilize them effectively in accordance with morals.
- (4) Logical Thinking
Able to analyze and express information and knowledge logically and from multiple viewpoints.
- (5) Problem Solving
Able to identify problems, collect, analyze, and organize the information necessary for the solution, and solve the problem with certainty.

3. Attitude and Intentionality

- (1) Self-Management
Able to act autonomously.
- (2) Teamwork, Leadership
Able to act in harmony and collaboration with others. Able to show direction to others and mobilize them for achievement of set goals.
- (3) Ethics
Able to act in accordance with self-conscience and the norms and rules of society.
- (4) Social Responsibility and Citizenship
Can be actively involved in the development of society while having awareness as a member of society and properly exercising duties and rights.
- (5) Lifelong Learning
Able to study autonomously and independently after graduating from undergraduate program.

4. Comprehensive Learning Experience and Creative Thinking Ability

Ability to comprehensively utilize knowledge, skills, attitudes, etc. acquired, apply them to new issues identified by oneself, and solve those issues.

2-6. Number of Higher Education Institutions, Students, Faculty and Staff

Table 2 Number of HEIs (by Establishment Type)

(As of May 1, 2018)

	National	Public	Private	Total
University (including Graduate School) ⁽¹⁰⁾	86	93	603	782
Junior College ⁽¹¹⁾	0	17	314	331
College of Technology ⁽¹²⁾	51	3	3	57
Professional Training College (Specialized Training College Post-Secondary Course) ⁽¹³⁾	9	186	2,610	2,805
Total	146	299	3,530	3,975

Table 3 Number of Students Enrolled in HEIs (by Establishment Type)

(As of May 1, 2018)

	National	Public	Private	Total
University ⁽¹⁴⁾	608,969	155,520	2,144,670	2,909,159
Junior College ⁽¹⁵⁾	-	6,221	112,814	119,035
College of Technology ⁽¹⁶⁾	51,545	3,756	2,166	57,467
Professional Training College (Specialized Training College Post-Secondary Course) ⁽¹⁷⁾	357	24,474	563,484	588,315
Total	660,871	189,971	2,823,134	3,673,976

Table 4 Number of Full-time Faculty and Staff in HEIs (by Establishment Type)

(As of May 1, 2018)

		National	Public	Private	Total
University	Full-time faculty ⁽¹⁸⁾	64,562	13,840	108,761	187,163
	Full-time staff ⁽¹⁹⁾	82,944	16,699	145,983	245,626
Junior College	Full-time faculty ⁽²⁰⁾	-	421	7,239	7,660
	Full-time staff ⁽²¹⁾	-	161	4,089	4,250
College of Technology	Full-time faculty ⁽²²⁾	3,772	294	158	4,224
	Full-time staff ⁽²³⁾	2,519	86	52	2,657
Professional Training College (Specialized Training College Post-Secondary Course)	Full-time faculty ⁽²⁴⁾	89	2,846	34,613	37,548
	Full-time staff	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Total	Full-time faculty	68,423	17,401	150,771	236,595
	Full-time staff	-	-	-	-

3. Admission to Higher Education Institution

To enroll in an HEI, applicants must fulfil admission qualifications in accordance with the School Education Act and its Enforcement Regulations (hereinafter referred to as “law”), and pass examinations or other selection procedures determined by each institution.

There are also cases in which individual institutions set their own application requirements in addition to those of the law.

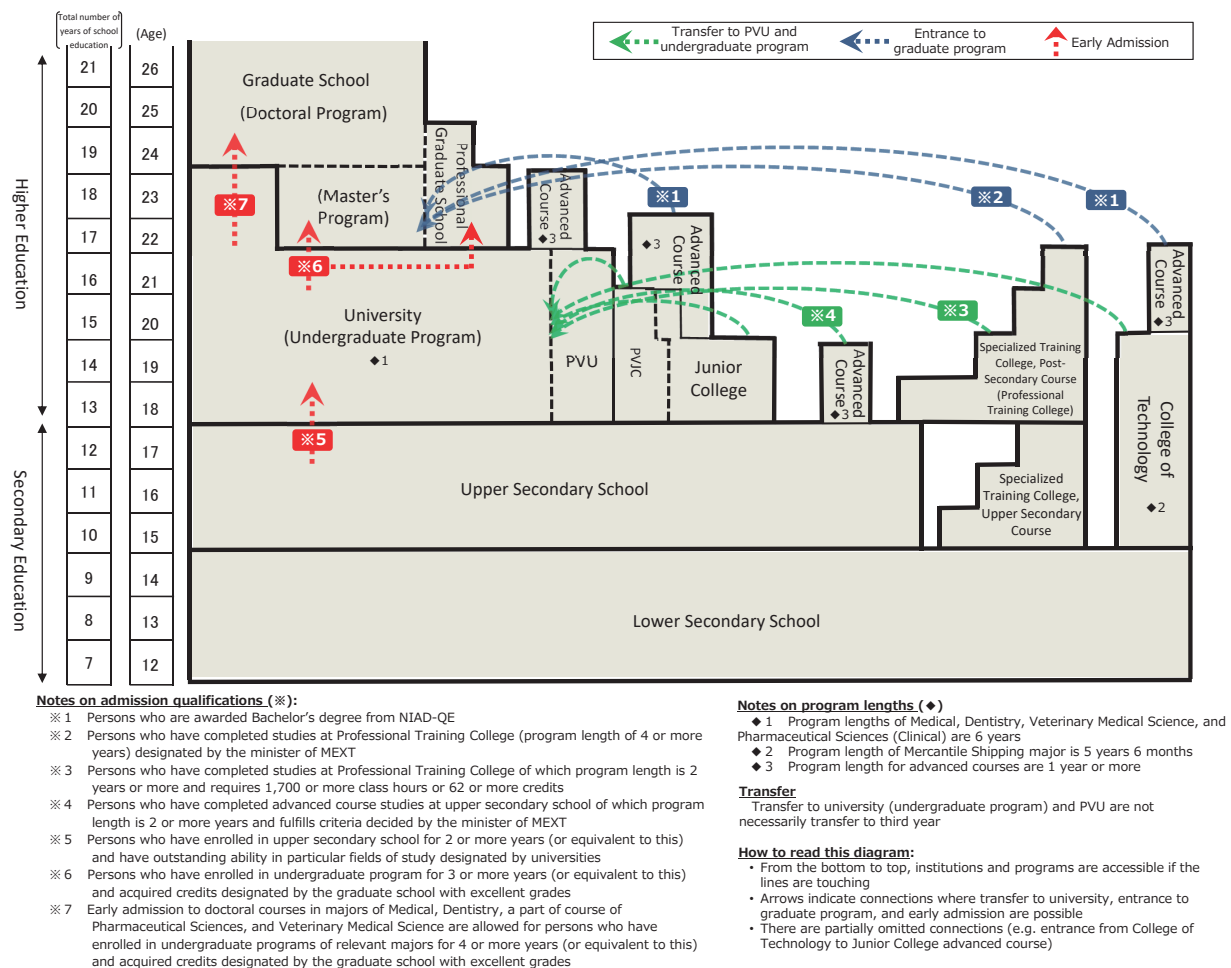


Figure 2 Higher Education Pathway and Qualifications

3-1. Admission Eligibility

3-1-1. Admission to University

■ University (Undergraduate Program), PVU, Junior College, PVJC

In principle, under the law, persons who have completed 12 years of school education or designated school education (primary and secondary education) are eligible to enroll in a university (undergraduate program), PVU, junior college and PVJC. Persons who have received 12 years of school education outside Japan are treated equally.

Alternatively, persons who have passed Upper Secondary School Equivalency Examination (高等学校卒業程度認定試験 *kotogakko-sotsugyo-teido-nintei-shiken*, the exam which certifies equivalency of one's scholastic competency to completion of 12 years of school education), or have a certificate to enroll in foreign universities, International Baccalaureate, Abitur, Baccalaureate, and General Certificate of Education Advanced Level are also eligible for university admission in Japan. There are also cases in which each institution accepts applicants based on its own admission qualification assessment.

REFERENCE

See MEXT website below for details on admission qualifications [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111314.htm

See MEXT website below for admission eligibility of those who have graduated from a foreign or international school [in Japanese and English]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2019/04/01/1232840_1_1.pdf

TRANSFER TO UNIVERSITY (UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM) OR PVU

Transfer refers to the admission when a person who has completed education at an institution enters another type of institution. Transferred students start from the middle of the course and are exempted from a part of the curriculum. Persons who have fulfilled one of the following legal requirements can transfer to a university (undergraduate program) or PVU:

- (1) Graduation from junior college (also applicable for junior colleges overseas),
- (2) Graduation from Professional and Vocational Junior College,
- (3) Graduation from College of Technology,
- (4) Completion of Post-Secondary Course at Professional Training College (program length must be 2 years or longer, with 1700 credit hours or more or 62 or more credits),
- (5) Completion of certain upper secondary school Advanced Courses, or
- (6) Graduation from a Japan branch campus of foreign university, which is designated as being equivalent to Japanese junior college by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

REFERENCE

See MEXT website below for details on transfer to university [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111315.htm

See MEXT website below for details on a Japan branch campuses of foreign universities, which are designated as being equivalent to Japanese junior college by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (as of April 15, 2015) [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111315/001.htm

EARLY ADMISSION

The system of early admission allows students to enroll in a university at earlier stage than the above standard. It aims to develop further the talents of persons with outstanding ability in a particular field from the viewpoint of promoting education that corresponds to individual abilities and qualities. Persons who are considered to have outstanding ability in particular fields of study, designated by each university, and have attended upper secondary school for 2 years or longer are eligible for early admissions. The universities must fulfill legal requirements in order to implement the system.

REFERENCE

See MEXT website below for details on early admission [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111318/001.htm

■ Graduate School, Professional Graduate School

Admission to graduate school and Professional Graduate School is eligible to persons who have graduated from a university (undergraduate program), have graduated from a Professional and Vocational University, have received bachelor's degree from NIAD-QE, or have completed 16 years of school education (18 years for medicine, dentistry, pharmaceutical sciences, and veterinary medical science majors). There are also cases in which each institution accepts applicants based on its own admission qualification assessment.

Details on admission eligibility for graduate school Master's programs, Professional Graduate Schools, and Doctoral programs can be found on the following MEXT websites.

Details on admission eligibility for graduate school Master's programs and Professional Graduate Schools [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111316.htm

Details on admission eligibility for graduate school Doctoral programs [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111317.htm

EARLY ADMISSION

The system of early admission allows students to enroll in a graduate school at an earlier stage than the above standard. It aims to develop further the talents of persons with outstanding ability in a particular field from the viewpoint of promoting education that corresponds to individual abilities and qualities. Students who have attended university (undergraduate program) for 3 years or longer and earned required credits with excellent grades are eligible for early admissions. The graduate schools must fulfill legal requirements in order to implement the system.

REFERENCE

See MEXT website below for details on early admission [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111318.htm

3-1-2. Admission to College of Technology

College of Technology programs begin from the level of upper secondary education. Therefore, admission eligibility is the same as that for upper secondary schools, i.e. completion of lower secondary education in the Japanese school system or 9 years of school education in a non-Japanese school system.

REFERENCE

See MEXT website below for details on admission to College of Technology [Japanese only]:

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/kousen/nyugaku.htm

3-1-3. Admission to Professional Training College

As is the case with university (undergraduate program), under the law, persons who have completed 12 years of school education (primary and secondary education) are, in principle, eligible to enroll in a Professional Training College. Persons who have received 12 years of school education outside Japan are treated equally.

Alternatively, persons who passed Upper Secondary School Equivalency Examination, or has a certificate to enroll in foreign universities such as International Baccalaureate or Abitur are also eligible for university admission in Japan. There are also cases in which each institution accepts applicants based on its own admission qualification assessment.

3-1-4. Admission to Educational Institution Operated by Government Ministries and Agencies

Admission to educational institutions operated by government ministries and agencies depends on the institution. In some cases, they are regulated by legislation and instruction of the operating government ministry.

3-2. Entrance Examinations

In principle, Japanese HEIs select students based on each institution's own procedures established in line with its admission policy.

3-2-1. University

■ University (Undergraduate Program), PVU, Junior College, PVJC

Entrance examinations for university (undergraduate program), PVU, junior college, and PVJC are conducted based on "the Guidelines for University Entrance Examinations"⁽²⁵⁾ stipulated and renewed every academic year by MEXT. The Guideline contents include selection methods, timing of selection, etc. Selection processes vary from institution to institution: considering the National Center Test (see explanation below) scores, conducting original scholastic exams and interviews, combining document screening and interview, to name a few. In addition, some institutions employ special procedures for non-Japanese applicants.

THE NATIONAL CENTER TEST

The National Center Test is a standardized exam designed for students who are graduating or have already graduated from upper secondary school and willing to enter a university (undergraduate program). It takes place simultaneously throughout the country in mid-January every year. It is an option for universities to take scores from this exam into consideration, and the universities that use its scores administer the Test in collaboration with the National Center for University Entrance

Examinations. Multiple choice written exams (and listening comprehension for English) are administered for 30 subjects in six subject areas (i.e. Japanese Language, Geography and History, Civics, Mathematics, Science, and Foreign Languages). It is up to each university to specify the subject areas and subjects and how to use the scores for their admission procedures, whether it is a requirement or just a supplementary resource.

The National Center Test will be replaced with a new “Common Test for University Admissions (大学入学共通テスト *daigaku nyugaku kyotsu tesuto*)” from AY2020 (for AY2021 university entrants). This new Test will introduce essay questions in some subjects with the aim to appropriately measure abilities to think, make judgement, and express themselves as well as the knowledge and skills already measured in the current Test.

EXAMINATION FOR JAPANESE UNIVERSITY ADMISSION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS (EJU)

The EJU is an examination for international students planning to study at a Japanese university (undergraduate program) to measure Japanese language proficiency and basic academic abilities needed to study at a Japanese HEI.

EJU is administered by Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) and it takes place twice a year, in June and November, both in Japan and overseas. The exam can be taken in Japanese or English, and the subjects include Japanese as a Foreign Language, Science (Physics, Chemistry, and Biology), Japan and the World, and Mathematics. It is up to each university to specify the subjects and language of the exam the examinees take. Many universities use EJU scores as a reference resource in the special selection for international applicants.

■ Graduate School, Professional Graduate School

Entrance examinations for graduate school and Professional Graduate School are conducted based on the Guidelines for Graduate School Entrance Examinations stipulated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in 2008. Selection procedures vary from institution to institution; for example, applicants are judged comprehensively by combination of document screening, scholastic test, interview, etc. When a student is continuing studies from undergraduate program to the graduate school in the same university, s/he can take recommendation-based entrance exam, which gives exemption from part of the selection procedures. Recently, the number of graduate schools introducing AO exams (exams conducted independently by an Admissions Office) are increasing. There are also cases in which non-Japanese applicants undergo special selection procedures, and such cases may use EJU scores as a reference.

3-2-2. College of Technology

Entrance examination for College of Technology (KOSEN) is either scholastic test or recommendation-based entrance exam for all national, public, and private colleges. In addition to the above, some KOSENs also conduct AO exams and special selection for Japanese students who received secondary education abroad. All 51 national KOSENs use the same examination for scholastic testing which takes place simultaneously throughout the country. There are also cases in which non-Japanese

applicants undergo special selection procedures, and such cases may use EJU scores as a reference.

3-2-3. Professional Training College

Entrance examination for Professional Training College differs from institution to institution. The exams vary depending on the characteristics of the study areas and departments. There are also cases in which non-Japanese applicants undergo special selection procedures, and such cases may use EJU scores as a reference.

3-2-4. Educational Institution Operated by Government Ministries and Agencies

Each educational institution operated by a government ministry or agency decides its own admission procedures. They are written exams, recommendation-based entrance exams, and special selection for Japanese students who received secondary education abroad, to name a few. Types of exams also vary from document screening, scholastic test, interview, to short essay, etc.

4. Agencies Responsible for Higher Education

MEXT is responsible for the development of creative people with rich character through the promotion of education and lifelong learning, the promotion of academic, sports and cultural activities, and the comprehensive advancement of science and technology. It is also in charge of administrative affairs regarding religions. (Article 3, Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

3-2-2 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8959 Japan

Website <http://www.mext.go.jp>

5. Organizations Related to Higher Education

- The Japan Association of National Universities <http://www.janu.jp/>
- The Japan Association of Public Universities <http://www.kodaikyo.org/>
- Association of Private Universities of Japan <http://www.shidaikyo.or.jp/>
- The Japan Association of Private Universities and Colleges <http://www.shidai.or.jp/>
- Japan Association of Public Junior Colleges <http://www.kotankyo.jp/>
- The Association of Private Junior Colleges in Japan <http://www.tandai.or.jp/>
- National Institute of Technology, Japan <http://kosen-k.go.jp/>
- National Association of Vocational Schools of Japan http://www.zensenkaku.gr.jp/zensen_index.cgi

6. Student Union and Student Participation in University Administration

There is no nationwide student union associated with university administration.

7. Admission⁽²⁶⁾ and Tuition⁽²⁷⁾ Fees

Table 5 Admission Fee and Annual Tuition Fee (University)

(Unit: JPY)

	Admission Fee	Annual Tuition Fee	Total
National ⁽²⁸⁾	282,000	535,800	817,800
Public ⁽²⁹⁾	(Designated area) 230,186 (Other area) 394,225	538,294	(Designated area) 768,480 (Other area) 932,519
Private ⁽³⁰⁾	252,030	900,093	1,152,123

Table 6 Admission Fee and Annual Tuition Fee (Junior College)

(Unit: JPY)

	Admission Fee	Annual Tuition Fee	Total
National ⁽²⁸⁾	169,200	390,000	559,200
Public (Daytime Course) ⁽³¹⁾	(Designated area) 131,413 (Other area) 217,093	387,880	(Designated area) 519,293 (Other area) 604,973
Private ⁽³⁰⁾	244,948	699,876	944,824

Table 7 Admission Fee and Annual Tuition Fee (Graduate School)

(Unit: JPY)

	Admission Fee	Annual Tuition Fee	Total
National ⁽²⁸⁾	282,000	535,800	817,800
Public (Daytime Course) ⁽³²⁾	(Designated area) 228,359 (Other area) 363,666	537,957	(Designated area) 766,316 (Other area) 901,623
Private ⁽³³⁾ Master's program	210,086	743,629	953,715
Private ⁽³³⁾ Doctoral program	200,842	613,568	814,410
Private ⁽³³⁾ Professional Graduate program	195,960	1,117,992	1,313,952

Table 8 Admission Fee and Annual Tuition Fee (College of Technology)

(Unit: JPY)

	Admission Fee	Annual Tuition Fee	Total
National ⁽³⁴⁾	84,600	234,600	319,200
Public ⁽³⁵⁾	(Designated area) 51,700 (Other area) 84,600	234,600	(Designated area) 286,300 (Other area) 319,200
Private ⁽³⁰⁾	202,609	455,478	658,087

8. Major Scholarship Loans and Grants

Under the principle of equal opportunities for education, scholarships of the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) provide financial aid⁽³⁶⁾ to outstanding students with difficulty pursuing studies for economic reasons. This system provides loan or grant scholarships based on economic and social conditions so that students can learn with peace of mind.

There are two types of loans: Type 1 is interest-free, and Type 2 is interest-bearing. The number of students for which loans were issued in AY2015 was 1.34 million (one in 2.6), and the ratio between Type 1 and Type 2 is approximately 1:2.5.

Grant scholarships are funded by the state. They encourage students to enter higher education by providing scholarships that are not obligated to be repaid, so that motivated and capable young people do not need to give up their studies for economic reasons. 18,566 students (total of university undergraduates, junior colleges, Colleges of Technology, and Specialized Training Colleges) newly received grant scholarship in AY2018, of which 516 (2.8%) are under social welfare.

In addition, as a grant scholarship for those who study abroad, there is Student Exchange Support Program which includes “Scholarship for Short courses” and “Scholarship for Degree courses (undergraduate, master or Ph.D.)”. Scholarship for Short courses is designed for students who are sent from a Japanese university to a university overseas for eight days to one year, based on the student exchange agreement signed between the universities. Scholarship for Degree courses (undergraduate, master or Ph.D.) is designed to provide scholarship and tuition fees for students who study abroad in order to obtain a degree at a foreign university.

Table 9 JASSO Scholarship Loans and Grants

(New system from AY2020)

Provider	Type of Scholarship	Eligibility	Amount per Year (JPY10,000)
Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO)	Interest-free loan ⁽³⁷⁾	University	24~76.8
		Graduate school: Master's program	60~105.6
		Graduate school: Doctoral program	96~146.4
		Junior college	24~72
		College of Technology: 1 st -3 rd year	12~42
		College of Technology: 4-5 th year	24~72
		Specialized Training College: Post-Secondary Course	24~72
	Interest-bearing loan ⁽³⁸⁾	University	24~192
		Graduate school	60~180
		Graduate school (law school)	60~264
		Junior college	24~144
		College of Technology: 1 st -3 rd year	N/A
		College of Technology: 4-5 th year	24~144
		Specialized Training College: Post-Secondary Course	24~144
	Grant ⁽³⁹⁾	University, junior college, College of Technology: 4-5 th year, Specialized Training College: Post-Secondary Course	7.1~91
		Correspondence course: university, junior college Specialized Training College: Post-Secondary Course	1.7~5.1

9. Student Status at Higher Education Institutions

The types of student registration status include “students” who enroll in a formal academic program to obtain a degree, “non-degree students,” and “research students.”

10. Information for International Students

Websites such as **Japanese College and University Portraits** (<https://jpcup.niad.ac.jp/>) and **Study in Japan** (<https://www.studyinJapan.go.jp/en/>) provide information for international students interested in studying in Japan.

11. Major Laws and Regulations Pertaining to Higher Education

11-1. Foundations of Higher Education

- Basic Act on Education (Act No. 120 of 2006)
- School Education Act (Act No. 26 of 1947)

11-2. Standards for Establishment of Higher Education Institutions

- Standards for the Establishment of Universities (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 28 of 1956)
- Standards for the Establishment of Distance Learning Programs at Universities (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 33 of 1981)
- Standards for the Establishment of Professional and Vocational Universities (Ordinance of MEXT No. 33 of 2017)
- Standards for the Establishment of Junior Colleges (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 21 of 1975)
- Standards for the Establishment of Distance Learning Programs at Junior Colleges (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 3 of 1982)
- Standards for the Establishment of Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges (Ordinance of MEXT No. 34 of 2017)
- Standards for the Establishment of Graduate Schools (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 28 of 1974)
- Standards for the Establishment of Professional Graduate Schools (Ordinance of MEXT No. 16 of 2003)
- Standards for the Establishment of Colleges of Technology (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 23 of 1961)
- Standards for the Establishment of Specialized Training Colleges (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 2 of 1976)

11-3. Awarding Degrees

- Article 104, School Education Act (Act No. 26 of 1947)
- Rules for Degrees (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 9 of 1953)

《Notes and References on Chapter 2》

- (1) Article 1 of the UNESCO “Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education”, which Japan has acceded on December 6, 2017, defines “higher education” as “post-secondary education, training or research that is recognised by the relevant authorities of a Party as belonging to its higher education system,” and “higher education institution” as “an establishment providing higher education recognized by the relevant authorities of a Party.”
- (2) MEXT. (2019, August 20). *Koto-kyoiku no shikaku no shonin ni kansuru gaidorain – koto-kyoiku no shikaku noshonin nikansuru ajia-taiheiyō chiiki kiyaku*. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shitu/1404607.htm
- (3) Amongst educational facilities other than those listed in School Education Act, Article 1 (under this law, schools refer to kindergarten, elementary school, lower secondary school, Compulsory Education School, upper secondary school, Secondary Education School, school for special needs education, university and College of Technology), those of which aim to develop abilities necessary for work and everyday life or to enhance liberal arts (excluding those defined by other laws and schools established mostly for the foreigners living in Japan) are called Specialized Training Colleges. There are Upper Secondary, Post-Secondary, and General Courses in Specialized Training Colleges. (Articles 124 and 125, School Education Act)
- (4) ISCED2011: ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) is a framework developed by UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) to enable comparison of education systems around the world. It is one of the United Nations International Family of Economic and Social Classifications. It was first approved at the UNESCO general assembly in 1976, and the current version was revised in 2011. ISCED2011 categorizes educational program into 9 levels (from 0 to 8) based on the qualifications received, and tertiary level is from 5 to 8. Subcategories are set based on the characteristics of the academic program, and the three digits express levels, categories, and subcategories.
UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2019, January 30). *ISCED Mappings*. Retrieved from <http://uis.unesco.org/en/isced-mappings>
- (5) ISCED classification applies only to the second type of NIAD-QE degrees (awarding degrees upon completion of study at a NIAD-QE approved program).
- (6) e-Gov website. (2019 January 30). *Kodosenmon-iryo ni kansuru kenkyūto o okonau kokuritsu kenkyū-kaihatsu-hojin ni kansuru horitsu*. Retrieved from https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/search/elawsSearch/elaws_search/lsg0500/detail?lawId=420AC0000000093&openerCode=1
- (7) e-Gov website. (2019 January 30). *Shokugyo noryoku kaihatsu sokushin ho*. Retrieved from https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/search/elawsSearch/elaws_search/lsg0500/detail?lawId=344AC0000000064&openerCode=1#231
- (8) e-Gov website. (2019 January 30). *Kokuritsu kenkyū kaihatsu hojin suisan kenkyū, kyouiku kiko ho*. Retrieved from https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/search/elawsSearch/elaws_search/lsg0500/detail?lawId=411AC0000000199&openerCode=1#8
- (9) Central Council for Education. (2019 January 30). *Report “Building Undergraduate Education”*, pp.12-13. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/component/b_menu/shingi/toushin/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2008/12/26/1217067_001.pdf
- (10) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Universities and graduate schools: number of institutions)*. Retrieved from https://www.e-stat.go.jp/*References#11-24 are retrieved from the same URL.
- (11) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Junior colleges: number of institutions)*.
- (12) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Colleges of Technology: number of institutions and students by prefecture)*.
- (13) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Specialized Training Colleges: number of institutions)*.
- (14) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Universities and graduate schools: number of students by daytime and evening courses)*.
- (15) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Junior colleges: number of students by daytime and evening courses)*.
- (16) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Colleges of Technology: number of institutions and students by prefecture)*.
- (17) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Specialized Training Colleges: number of students by prefecture)*.
- (18) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey (AY2018, Universities and graduate schools: number of full-time faculty by prefecture)*.

- (19) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey* (AY2018, Universities and graduate schools: number of full-time staff by prefecture).
- (20) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey* (AY2018, Junior colleges: number of full-time faculty by prefecture).
- (21) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey* (AY2018, Junior colleges: number of full-time staff by prefecture).
- (22) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey* (AY2018, Colleges of Technology: number of faculty by prefecture).
- (23) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey* (AY2018, Colleges of Technology: number of staff and school doctors).
- (24) e-Stat. (2019, January 30). *School Basic Survey* (AY2018, Specialized Training Colleges: number of full-time faculty by prefecture).
- (25) The “Guidelines for University Entrance Examinations” states that it is desirable for universities to implement not only the general written examination but also other diverse methods of entrance examinations such as AO exams (a combination of detailed document screening and interviews that examine applicants’ abilities, aptitude, motivation and objectives for study, etc.), recommendation from upper secondary schools, special exam for graduates of Professional Training Colleges and integrated secondary schools, special exam for returnee students, special exam for adult learners, etc. The Guideline also suggests different methods of written scholastic aptitude exams including individual scholastic exams, introduction of the National Center Test, short essay, interview, and utilization of practical teaching and other qualification examinations. MEXT. (2019, January 30). *Nyugakusha senbatsu jisshi yoryo AY2019 edition*. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/senbatsu/1346785.htm
- (26) Admission fee required only in the year of matriculation.
- (27) Annual tuition fee is the total amount needed in one academic year. At national universities, invoice is issued per semester or other divisions of academic calendar.
- (28) The amount for national universities is the standard for daytime courses. Each university makes decisions based on this standard amount. Evening courses are half the amount of daytime courses. There is no existing institutions for national junior college, but there are legal regulations (as of May 2019). e-Gov website. (2019, May 13). *Kokuritsu daigakuto no jugyoryo sonota no hiyo ni kansuru shorei* (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 16 of 2004). Retrieved from https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/search/elawsSearch/elaws_search/lsg0500/detail?lawId=416M60000080016
- (29) The amount for public universities is the average of 87 universities in AY2017. MEXT. (2019 May 15). *AY2017 Gakusei nofukin chosa kekka*. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/detail/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2017/08/23/1284481_08_1.pdf
- (30) The amount for private university, junior college, and College of Technology is the average of 580 universities, 300 junior colleges, and 3 Colleges of Technology in AY2017. MEXT. (2019, May 15). *Shiritsu daigakuto no Heisei 29 nendo nyugakusha nikakaru gakusei nofukinto chosa kekka ni tsuite*. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shinkou/07021403/1412031.htm
- (31) The amount for public junior colleges is the average of daytime courses of 15 junior colleges in AY2017. MEXT. (2019, May 15). *Koritsu tanki daigaku jugyoryoto AY2017*. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/tandai/1312330.htm
- (32) The amount for public graduate school is the average of 79 universities in AY2017. MEXT. (2019, May 15). *Heisei 29 nendo gakusei nofukin chosa kekka*. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/detail/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2017/08/23/1284481_08_1.pdf
- (33) The amount for private graduate schools is the average of 430 Master’s programs, 316 Doctoral programs, and 47 Professional Graduate Schools in AY2017. MEXT. (2019, May 15). *Shiritsu daigakuto no Heisei 29 nendo nyugakusha ni kakaru gakusei nofukinto chosa kekka ni tsuite*. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shinkou/07021403/1412031.htm
- (34) The amount for national College of Technology is the standard amount which becomes the basis when the National Institute of Technology makes decisions. e-Gov website. (2019, May 13). *Kokuritsu koto senmon gakko no jugyoryo sonota no hiyo ni kansuru shorei* (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education No. 17 of 2004). Retrieved from https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/search/elawsSearch/elaws_search/lsg0500/detail?lawId=416M60000080017
- (35) The amount for public College of Technology is the average of three colleges in 2017.
- Osaka Prefecture University College of Technology. (2019, May 13). *School Expenses*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ct.osakafu-u.ac.jp/for-applicant/school-expenses/>

- Kobe City College of Technology. (2019, May 13). *Gakuhi ni kansuru joho*. Retrieved from <http://www.kobe-kosen.ac.jp/koukai/gakuhi/>
- Tokyo Metropolitan College of Industrial Technology. (2019, May 13). *Gakuhi, nyugakukin oyobi menjo seido*. Retrieved from <http://www.metro-cit.ac.jp/examinee/jugyoryo/>

(36) JASSO. (2019, May 13). *Jasso no shogakukin towa*. Retrieved from <https://www.jasso.go.jp/shogakukin/about/index.html>

(37) JASSO. (2019, August 7). *Shogakukin no seido (taiyogata)> Kingaku> Dai1shu (risoku no nai taipu)> Reiwa 2 nendo iko nyugakushano taiyo getsugaku*. Retrieved from <https://www.jasso.go.jp/shogakukin/seido/kingaku/1shu/2019ikou.html>

(38) JASSO. (2019, May 13). *Shogakukin no seido (taiyogata)> Kingaku> Dai2shu (risokuga tsuku taipu)> Taiyo getsugaku*. Retrieved from <https://www.jasso.go.jp/shogakukin/seido/kingaku/2shu/index.html>

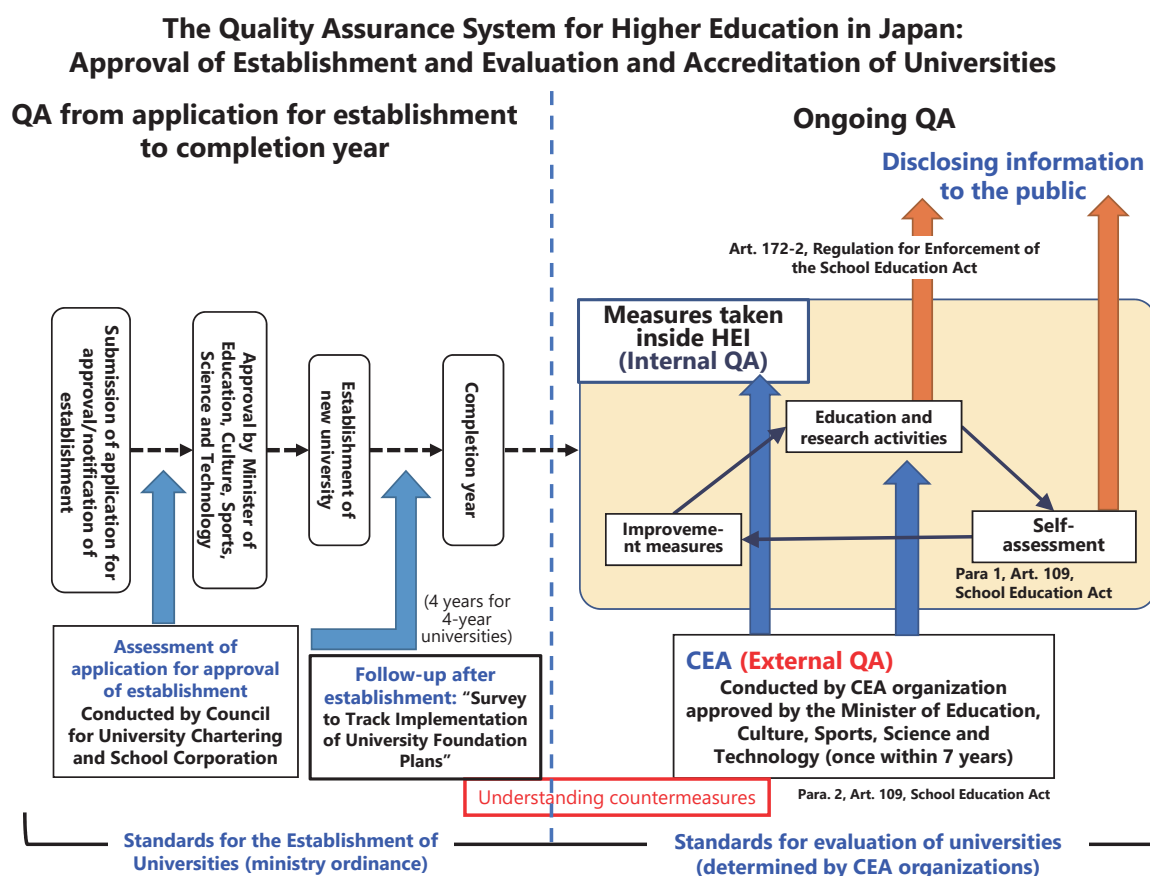
(39) JASSO. (2019, May 13). *Shogakukin no seido (kyufugata)> Shikyu getsugaku*. Retrieved from <https://www.jasso.go.jp/shogakukin/kyufu/kingaku/index.html>

Chapter 3. The Quality Assurance System

1. Outline of the Quality Assurance System for Higher Education in Japan

In accordance with the School Education Act, the following two systems make up the quality assurance for higher education in Japan.

- Approval/notification system for establishment of universities and colleges (Article 4, School Education Act)
- Certified evaluation and accreditation (CEA) system (Paragraphs 2 and 3, Article 109, School Education Act)



This figure was created based on documents from a Subdivision on Universities of the Central Council for Education.

Figure 3: The Quality Assurance System for Higher Education in Japan: Approval of Establishment and Evaluation and Accreditation of Universities

Under the approval/notification system for establishment of universities and colleges, approval of the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (the Minister) is required for any

university to be newly established. In addition, any faculty or graduate school to be newly established within existing universities and colleges must undergo the same approval process. However, under certain conditions, an existing university and college can newly establish a faculty or graduate school by filing a notification. The Minister's approval requires advisory from the Council for University Chartering and School Corporation. Furthermore, the Minister will request newly established universities and colleges and existing universities and colleges that newly establish a faculty or graduate school to report on the status of their establishment plan, matriculation of students, appointment of academic staff, and any ancillary items noted on their application for approval until the academic year in which the newly established school graduates their first class (completion year). The Committee for Survey to Track Implementation of University Foundation Plans established under the Council for University Chartering and School Corporation assures the steady implementation of the establishment plan by providing instructions and advice as needed.

The CEA system obligates universities and colleges to undergo evaluation of the overall condition of education, research and other activities based on evaluation standards determined by a CEA organization approved by the Minister (hereafter referred to as "CEA organizations"). From AY2020, CEA results for universities and colleges will decide whether their educational and research activities satisfy evaluation standards of the CEA organization. This change will enforce institutions to make efforts to be accredited. The Minister is obliged to require universities and colleges that do not satisfy the evaluation standards for accreditation to submit documents or reports. Not only are universities and colleges required to undergo CEA, they are also required to conduct self-assessment of the conditions of educational and research activities and disclose the results.

As corrective measures against universities and colleges that are not in compliance with laws including the School Education Act and Standards for the Establishment of Universities, the Minister can take the steps of (1) recommendation for improvement, (2) order to change, and (3) order to abolish a department or an entire institution.

A characteristic common to both approval/notification system for establishment and CEA system conducted after a certain amount of time from establishment, which are the basis of quality assurance in higher education in Japan, is that quality assurance for universities and colleges is conducted at institutional level. On the other hand, there is no legal framework to conduct evaluation by academic field of programs for an established faculty or graduate school with the aim of developing specific human resources, besides that for Professional Graduate Schools, Professional and Vocational Universities and Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges. Furthermore, although procedures for approval/notification of establishment are taken as needed, CEA is carried out periodically as stipulated in law. Institutional CEA is conducted once within seven years for universities, junior colleges, Colleges of Technology, etc. On the other hand, CEA by academic discipline is conducted once within five years for Professional Graduate Schools, etc.

Furthermore, each of these two systems has uniform standards. The Minister has established the Standards for the Establishment of Universities, and each CEA organization has established evaluation standards for quality assurance, and these standards do not change regardless of the size or aim of the university.

Furthermore, most members of the Council for University Chartering and School Corporation, which receives requests for consultation in establishment approval, are members of universities. In

In addition, CEA organizations also employ members of universities when they form committees to conduct evaluations. This system implies that quality assurance of universities is considered as independent and autonomous activities conducted by members of universities.

To sum up, “institution-level”, “periodical”, and “autonomous activities” are the three elements that characterize the current Japanese system for quality assurance of higher education.

There is one more trend that should be noted in regards to Japanese quality assurance. It is that the information disclosure of universities and colleges is considered to be the main element of quality assurance, and the disclosure of specific information is required by law. For the most part, these are information related to the educational goals, programs, academic staff, management, and finances of the institution, and CEA organizations are required to take into consideration whether this information is provided or not when they conduct evaluations.

The following sections describe details of the two quality assurance systems as well as their historical background.

2. Approval/Notification System for Establishment and Institutional Certified Evaluation and Accreditation (CEA) System

2-1. Approval/Notification System for Establishment of Universities and Colleges

■ Overview

In principle, approval of the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (the Minister) is required for new establishment of a university, college, or a faculty or department in an existing university and college. Standards for establishment of higher education institutions, including the Standards for the Establishment of Universities and Standards for the Establishment of Graduate Schools, are all based on ministerial ordinance introduced by the ministry, and exist as standards for this approval process. In the past, any faculties and graduate schools needed individual approval to be established. However, the School Education Act was revised in 2003 to allow universities and colleges to simply submit a notification in the event they establish a faculty or graduate school, as long as it is not a new type of degree or academic field for the university. Furthermore, there is no fixed term of validity for approval of establishment.

■ Process

An application for the establishment of an institution such as a university and college is submitted to the Minister. Upon request from the Minister, MEXT's Council for University Chartering and School Corporation assesses the application in light of relevant standards such as the Standards for the Establishment of Universities. Examination results are reported to the Minister, and the Minister makes a final decision regarding approval.

Under the Council for University Chartering and School Corporation, cumulative total of approximately 500 academics and experts undertake deliberate and fair assessments with their knowledge and experience. The assessments are carried out by the Council's subcommittees from two perspectives; the subcommittee on university chartering assesses teaching and learning, and the subcommittee on school corporation assesses financial plan and administration. The assessment process comprised of document analysis, interviews and site visits takes approximately ten months in the case of the establishment of a new university, and about five months for establishment of a new faculty.

A penalty system was introduced in 2006 to prevent dishonesty and corruption, and to make sure the approval for establishment is operated accurately. In this penalty system, applications are not approved if any of the below are true of applicants for approval of establishment.

- (1) Any applicants that provided false statements or conducted other dishonest acts, for which the period designated (5 years maximum, depending on severity) from when that act was committed has not yet passed.
- (2) Any university or college that has received an order or advice for corrective action in response to violation of laws or regulations, and has not yet taken any measures of improvement.
- (3) Any entity establishing a university or college that is judged to have inappropriate execution of the establishment plan.

Furthermore, system of "early decision (unsatisfied)" was introduced in 2009 to allow completion of the assessment in the midst of the process for applications with insufficient preparation.

■ Assessment standards

Assessments are conducted based on standards for teaching and learning and standards for financial plans and administration. Regarding teaching and learning, compliance with the School Education Act and Standards for the Establishment of Universities and satisfaction of the items below are used as assessment standards.

- (1) There is an outlook for long-term and stable admission of students.
- (2) The aims for education and research sufficiently take societal demands and trends for human resources into consideration.
- (3) Over-enrollment rate of the university or college being established by the applicant is below a certain level.
- (4) It is not establishment of a university or college that fosters medical doctors, dentists, veterinary doctors, or marine personnel.

The Standards for the Establishment of Universities are the minimum standards necessary, and are composed of the 14 chapters below. Universities must not only make sure that these standards are satisfied, but also work to rise above these standards. Junior colleges, Professional Vocational Universities, Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges, and Colleges of Technology all have separate standards for establishment.

<Structure of Standards for the Establishment of Universities>

Chapter 1 - General provisions	Chapter 8 - Facilities (land, building) and equipment
Chapter 2 - Educational and research organization	Chapter 9 - Administrative organization
Chapter 3 - Academic staff organization	Chapter10 - Special provisions on Professional and Vocational department
Chapter 4 - Qualification of academic staff	Chapter11 - Special provisions on domestic cooperative curricula
Chapter 5 - Student quota	Chapter12 - Special provisions on undergraduate programs in engineering field
Chapter 6 - Academic programs	Chapter13 - Special provisions on international cooperative department
Chapter 7 - Graduation/completion Requirements	Chapter14 - Miscellaneous provisions

■ Follow-up

In order to contribute to the maintenance and improvement of the academic level of each university and college and encourage its independent improvement, the Minister requires universities and colleges to submit written reports about the items and remarks given to the entity at the time of its approval, academic courses/programs, academic staff organization, and progress of other establishment plans until the academic year in which it produces its first graduates (completion year). The process includes interview or on-site visit as well as document review. This is called a Survey to Track Implementation of University Foundation Plans (aftercare). The types and definition of comments that are provided to universities and colleges as a result of these surveys are outlined as below. The results of these surveys are made public through MEXT website.

Ancillary items	Items that should be followed in regards to implementation of the establishment plan items and should be improved on, by the entity granted approval or submitting notification.
Remarks (improvement)	Remarks that are notified to the entity granted approval or submitting notification regarding improvement that should be made as a result of Survey to Track Implementation of University Foundation Plans.
Remarks (correction)	Remarks that request correction by the entity granted approval or submitting notification regarding inappropriate points to the status of implementation of establishment plan as a result of Survey to Track Implementation of University Foundation Plans.
Remarks (violation of law)	Remarks that request necessary measures by the entity granted approval or submitting notification regarding points that are identified as violation of law as a result of Survey to Track Implementation of University Foundation Plans.

■ Publication of results and measures for ensuring transparency

Applications and results of assessments are made public through MEXT website.

In the assessment process, applicants have an opportunity to revise their original plans in light of the comments from the Council and make further explanations.

2-2. Certified Evaluation and Accreditation (CEA) System

■ Overview

The CEA system is a mandatory evaluation system in which CEA organizations conduct evaluation of the status of education and research of universities, junior colleges, Professional and Vocational Universities, Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges, Colleges of Technology, and Professional Graduate Schools, based on standards for evaluation and accreditation made by each CEA organizations.

In accordance with Paragraph 2, Article 109 of the School Education Act, institutional CEA of universities, junior colleges, Professional and Vocational Universities, Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges, and Colleges of Technology evaluate a higher education institution as a whole, and are conducted once within seven years. In accordance with Paragraph 3, Article 109 of the School Education Act, CEA by academic discipline is conducted for Professional and Vocational Universities, Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges, and Professional Graduate Schools once within five years, according to the characteristics of that field of study. Universities and colleges are obligated, under law, to select an organization to be evaluated by among the CEA organizations certified by the Minister.

■ Purpose and roles

- To improve education and research as well as to enhance accountability to society through periodical third-party evaluation after approval of establishment of universities and colleges.
- To contribute to the development of distinct education and research through multidimensional assessments based on individual criteria developed by evaluation organizations.

■ Process, publication of results and measures for ensuring transparency

(1) Process for CEA organizations to be approved by the Minister

Regulations for CEA organizations are stated in Article 110 of the School Education Act. The certification process begins with applications from organizations wishing to become CEA organizations. After receiving reports from the Central Council for Education, the Minister confers certification as an evaluation and accreditation organization when the applicant body is judged whether it complies with legislation including the School Education Act and fulfill certain criteria concerning their standards, methods, and framework for evaluation. Information on certified organizations is made public through government newspapers. Standards for this certification process are detailed in the Ministerial Ordinance Providing Details Required to Apply Standards Provided in Paragraph 2 of Article 110 of the School Education Act (hereafter referred to as "detailed ministerial ordinance").

(2) Process of evaluation by CEA organizations

CEA organizations evaluate by analysis of self-assessment conducted by universities and colleges (document analysis) and site visits. Evaluation and accreditation results are reported to evaluated institutions and the Minister, and made public to society. Evaluated institutions have an opportunity to make remarks/objections about evaluation results prior to finalization of the process.

■ Standards for determining evaluation

Each organization creates its own evaluation standards and uses these standards when conducting CEA. Detailed ministerial ordinance states which items should be included in CEA in order to ensure a fair and appropriate evaluation process, and each CEA organization sets their detailed evaluation standards within this legal framework. As a result of revision of the detailed ministerial ordinance in April 2018, the current evaluation items to be included in institutional CEA are as follows.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) Basic organizational unit for education and research | (6) Diploma policy, curriculum policy and admissions policy |
| (2) Academic staff organizations | (7) Disclosing information about the status of educational and research activities |
| (3) Academic programs | (8) System for continuous improvement in educational and research activities |
| (4) Facilities and equipment | (9) Finance |
| (5) Administrative organizations | (10) Other aspects of educational and research activities |

In particular, the item (8) “system for continuous improvement in educational and research activities”, also referred to as internal quality assurance, is a focus when conducting CEA.

See Table 10 “List of Standards for Institutional CEA of Universities” for evaluation standards of each CEA organization.

Besides, each university and college is obliged to disclose their diploma policy, curriculum policy, and admissions policy to the public in accordance with the revised Regulation for Enforcement of the School Education Act.

2-3. Corrective Actions Ordered by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology If a University or College Fails to Comply with Laws and Regulations

■ Overview

Following the revision of the School Education Act of 2003 and other related regulations, the authority was given to the Minister to take corrective actions against a higher education institution if it fails to comply with laws and regulations including the School Education Act and/or the Standards for the Establishment of Universities. The traditional single action of issuing an order for the closure of an entire institution has been replaced by three gradual measures: 1) recommendation for improvement, 2) order to change and 3) order to abolish a department or an entire institution.

■ Process

The autonomy of universities and colleges should be fully taken into account when taking any actions. Prior to actions, the Minister should consult with the Council for University Chartering and School Corporation. The Council, with its abundant knowledge and experience, considers necessary actions in a fair and careful manner.

■ Publication of results and measures for ensuring transparency

The Minister may request a university and college to submit reports and materials as documentary evidence in considering necessary actions.

Information on corrective actions is made public through MEXT website.

3. Historical Background

The approval/notification system for establishment of universities and colleges was put into place in 1951 when the Standards for the Establishment of Universities were determined by ordinance of the Ministry of Education. However, it was not until the introduction of the CEA system in 2003, entities that clear certain conditions became able to simply submit a notification in the event of establishment. This is considered as a result of deregulation policy taking effect at the time. The change allowed for the approval of establishment of universities and colleges as long as they meet the criteria of laws such as the Standards for the Establishment of Universities. The role of the approval/notification system as “ex-ante regulation” in quality assurance of higher education has been decreased, given that it was being used to manage the quantitative scale of universities and colleges.

Revisions to the School Education Act made in 2003 (and put into effect in April 2004) replaced ex-ante regulations for quality management with the CEA system as “ex-post evaluation”. Before this reform, a Provisional Council on Educational Reform was established in the Prime Minister’s Office in the 1980s to deliberate on issues including higher education. With the need for evaluation of universities being brought up, self-assessment conducted by universities and colleges in light of their educational goals and objectives came into the spotlight before external and third-party evaluations. By identifying good practices and areas for improvement through self-assessment and disclosing these, universities and colleges assured the quality of the education they provided and were able to make efforts to improve. This system for quality assurance eventually became mainstream in the 1990s.

Revision to the School Education Act in 1991 made efforts to strive for improvement, including self-assessment by universities and colleges, mandatory. Furthermore, in 1999, the Standards for the Establishment of Universities was revised to make self-assessment and the disclosure of results mandatory. It was stated in the revision of the School Education Act in 2002 that self-assessments were to be conducted and results were to be disclosed. During this time, it was encouraged that external parties verify the results of self-assessment conducted by universities and colleges, and many started conducting external evaluations for the institution as a whole, or faculties and graduate schools. However, external evaluations in this case simply meant that the evaluators were members from outside the university and college, and did not mean that evaluations were conducted from a third-person point of view.

Revision of the School Education Act in 2003 defined CEA as evaluation conducted by a third-party organization approved by the Minister. This reform encompassed the developments in the 1990s regarding self-assessment conducted by universities and colleges. In addition, legislative reform gave the Minister authority to make recommendation for improvement, order to change, and order to close

a department or an entire institution in order to take clear action against universities and colleges violating the law after they had been established.

Table 10 List of Standards for Institutional CEA of Universities

Standard /Area No.	National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE) (6 areas)	Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) (10 standards)	Japan Institution for Higher Education Evaluation (JIHEE) (6 standards)
1	Basic Organizations for Education and Research	Mission and Purpose	Mission and Objectives
2	Internal Quality Assurance	Internal Quality Assurance	Student
3	Financial Management, Administrative Management, and Publication of Information	Education and Research Structure	Educational Curriculum
4	Facilities and Equipment, and Student Support	Educational Program and Outcome	Faculty and Staff
5	Student Admissions	Student Enrollment	Management, Administration and Finance
6	Academic Programs and Learning Outcomes	Faculty and Faculty Organization	Internal Quality Assurance
7		Student Support	
8		Education and Research Environment	
9		Social Cooperation and Contribution	
10		University Management and Finance	

This table was created based on the following documents.

National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE) (2018). *Institutional Certified Evaluation and Accreditation of Universities Standards for Evaluation and Accreditation of Universities: 2019-2026*.

Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) (2017). *Universities Standards*.

Japan Institution for Higher Education Evaluation (2017). *Evaluation Standards (Universities)*.

Table 11 List of Institutional Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Organizations

Name of CEA Organization	CEA Organizations Evaluate	Date Certified
NIAD-QE	Universities	Jan 14, 2005
	Colleges of Technology	Jul 12, 2005
JUAA	Universities	Aug 31, 2004
	Junior colleges	Jan 25, 2007
JIHEE	Universities	Jul 12, 2005
	Junior colleges	Sep 4, 2009
Japan Association for College Accreditation (JACA)	Junior colleges	Jan 14, 2005

Table 12 List of Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Organizations for Professional Graduate Schools

Name of CEA Organization	CEA Organizations Evaluate	Date Certified
Japan Law Foundation	Law schools	Aug 31, 2004
NIAD-QE	Law schools	Jan 14, 2005
JUAA	Law schools	Feb 16, 2007
	Management	Apr 8, 2008
	Public policy	Mar 31, 2010
	Public health	Jul 4, 2011
	Intellectual property	Mar 29, 2012
	Global communication	Mar 29, 2016
	Digital contents	Aug 24, 2017
ABEST21	Management	Oct 12, 2007
	Intellectual property	Oct 31, 2011
Japanese Institute of International Accounting Education (JIIAE)	Accounting	Oct 12, 2007
Japan Institute of Midwifery Evaluation	Midwifery	Apr 8, 2008
Foundation of the Japanese Certification Board for Clinical Psychologists	Clinical psychology	Sep 4, 2009
The Institute for the Evaluation of Teacher Education (IETE)	Professional Graduate Schools for Teacher Education, School Education	Mar 31, 2010
Japan Accreditation Board for Engineering Education (JABEE)	Information technology, innovation for design and engineering, embedded technology, nuclear technology	Mar 31, 2010
JIHEE	Fashion business	Mar 31, 2010
Institution for Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Professional Higher Education	Beauty business	Jul 31, 2012
Japanese Institute of Landscape Architecture	Landscape architecture	Jul 31, 2012
Japanese Association for Social Work Education	Social welfare	Feb 2, 2017

4. Other Quality Assurance

4-1. Quality Assurance by Academic Discipline as Stated in Laws Regarding Educational Activities - Certified Evaluation and Accreditation by Academic Discipline

Universities and colleges are required to undergo institutional CEA in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Article 109 of the School Education Act (see “2-2. Certified Evaluation and Accreditation (CEA) System” on page 38-39 for details). Paragraph 3 of the same article states that Professional and Vocational Universities, Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges, and universities operating Professional Graduate Schools (referred to below as “Professional Graduates Schools and so on”) must undergo CEA (CEA by academic discipline) in light of the status of goals for establishment, educational curricula, academic staff organization, and other education and research activities.

CEA of Professional Graduate Schools and so on is conducted by area of academic discipline such as law, business management, public policy and so on. They are conducted by CEA organizations approved by the Minister (after consultation with the Central Council for Education), of which a “List of Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Organizations for Professional Graduate Schools” is provided on Table 12. Furthermore, in the event there is no existing CEA organization for an academic discipline of a Professional Graduate School and so on for a special reason, the institution must undergo evaluation by a foreign evaluation organization approved by the Minister to conduct fair evaluations. The results must then be disclosed, and reported to the Minister to be used as a replacement for undergoing CEA.

Each CEA organization can establish standards, methods, and systems for evaluation based on the Ministerial Ordinance Providing Details Required to Apply Standards Provided in Paragraph 2 of Article 110 of the School Education Act.

4-2. Other Quality Assurance of Educational Activities by Academic Discipline

Regarding educational activities by academic discipline, there are also quality assurance measures being taken independently by organizations in the private sector in Japan and abroad. These activities are not covered in the CEA by academic discipline. In addition, there are instances in which Japanese universities receive international accreditation from international accrediting organizations.

4-2-1. Quality Assurance by Academic Discipline Conducted by Private Organizations in Japan

(1) Accreditation of Engineering Programs (Engineering, Science, and Agriculture)

This is a professional accreditation system under which the Japan Accreditation Board for Engineering Education (JABEE) conducts examinations as to whether engineering education programs offered by higher education institutions fulfill the level expected by society, based on uniform standards established in cooperation with the academic and industrial communities, and confers the status of accreditation on successful programs.

The accreditation period is 6 years maximum. JABEE signed the Washington Accord in June 2005, which is an international agreement signed by 20 countries and regions including the USA, Canada, and the UK for the mutual recognition of engineering qualifications. The Washington Accord aims to ensure the substantial equivalence of engineering programs in signatory countries through mutual recognition of educational programs and systems to certify engineers.

(2) Accreditation of Medical Education

The Japan Accreditation Council for Medical Education (JACME) was established in 2015, and was recognized by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) as an accrediting organization in the academic discipline of medicine in 2017. JACME now conducts accreditation by academic discipline for faculties of medicine in universities and medical schools.

(3) Evaluation of Pharmaceutical Education Programs

This is a system implemented by the Japan Accreditation Board for Pharmaceutical Education (JABPE). Trial evaluations were conducted in 2011 and full evaluations began in 2013. Evaluations of six-year undergraduate pharmaceutical education programs are carried out once every seven years to guarantee the quality of pharmaceutical education institutions.

(4) Accreditation of Nursing Programs

The Japan Accreditation Board for Nursing Education (JABNE) was established in 2018, and conducts accreditation by academic discipline for schools of nursing and faculties of nursing in universities. They accredit nursing programs according to their own evaluation standards.

(5) Evaluation of Education Programs for Rehabilitation Therapists

The Japan Council on Rehabilitation Education (JCORE) was established in 2012. JCORE evaluates programs that train physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language hearing therapists in order to assure the quality of education provided at rehabilitation education facilities.

(6) Accreditation of Educational Programs for Veterinary Medical Science

The Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) officially began third-party evaluations for veterinary medical science in 2017. The evaluation covers Bachelor's degree programs in veterinary medical science, and aims to both improve the level of education through accreditation, and guarantee the quality of the program to society.

4-2-2. Quality Assurance of Japanese Universities by Academic Discipline Conducted by International Accrediting Organizations

In recent years, some Japanese universities have independently requested evaluation and received international accreditation from organizations that are active internationally. Some prominent examples of these international organizations are AACSB, EFMD, and AMBA, which conduct international accreditation of business schools. The aim for being accredited internationally may depend on the characteristic of the academic discipline or strategy of the university and college as a whole. However, the major aims are to be recognized as an institution or program that provides an international standard of education, and to improve both the chances of attracting international students and career prospects of its graduates, as well as improve the quality of education it provides in light of international standards. Examples of Japanese universities and colleges granted international accreditation or currently requesting international accreditation are listed below.

■ Business schools

- (1) AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business / headquarters in the USA)
- (2) EFMD (European Foundation for Management Development / headquarters in Belgium)
- (3) AMBA (Association of MBAs / headquarters in the UK)

■ Tourism studies

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) certifies tourism education through TedQual (Tourism Education Quality).

■ Veterinary education

The European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) conducts international certification for veterinary education.

4-3. Various Evaluation Activities

In addition to the CEA systems and activities mentioned above, there are also evaluations of Japanese higher education institutions that are conducted depending on the types of establishing entity (such as National University Corporation Evaluation, Public University Corporation Evaluation, and other evaluations for school corporations) as well as for Professional Training Colleges. Thematic evaluations are also conducted to be used for university rankings.

4-3-1. National University Corporation Evaluation

■ Overview

Comprehensive evaluations conducted, based on Article 31-2 and 31-3 of the National University Corporation Act, by MEXT's National University Corporation Evaluation Committee in regards to educational and research activities and management in light of mid-term objectives, mid-term plans and annual plans of national university corporations and inter-university research institute corporations. Each corporation undergoes evaluation regarding how successful they have been in achieving their mid-term objectives for their six-year mid-term plans along with evaluations conducted for each fiscal year. Of these evaluations, the National University Corporation Evaluation Committee commissions the evaluation of the status of achieving mid-term objectives regarding education and research to NIAD-QE to conduct.

■ Purpose and roles

The National University Corporation Act was enacted in 2004, which began the national university corporation system. Since then, national universities have been independent from the public sector, and have been required to undergo evaluation by the National University Corporation Evaluation Committee. The goal of the national university corporation evaluation system is to respect the specific areas of education and research and the independent management of each university. At the same time, it aims to promote continuous improvement in quality, fulfil national universities' responsibility to society to explain its activities, and to reflect evaluation results and content of mid-term objectives and plans in the calculation of management expense grants.

■ Process and judgments in the evaluation process

The National University Corporation Evaluation Committee is comprised of up to 20 experts appointed by the Minister. The committee may set up subcommittees and working teams. It conducts

reviews on the progress of mid-term plans for corporations based on their performance reports submitted every fiscal year. Then, it evaluates their overall attainment of mid-term objectives in respect of the results of reviews and the features of each corporation.

Each national university corporation's mid-term objectives vary according to its features and characteristics. The committee therefore conducts reviews and makes judgments about university corporations individually.

The results of the annual review reported to each corporation at the end of the fiscal year are used in identifying a corporation's strengths, making improvements and enhancing their activities. Evaluation results of all mid-term objectives are used in developing the next mid-term objectives. The results of the national university corporation evaluation affect the rate of governmental grants allocated during the next period of mid-term objectives. Evaluation and review results are made public. Information on the evaluation including meeting agendas, minutes and evaluation reports are also available from MEXT website.

4-3-2. Public University Corporation Evaluation

The public university corporation system was introduced in 2004. The local government that established each of these public universities decides whether or not the university is incorporated under the principle of local autonomy, but as of April 1, 2019, 82 (75 corporations) of the 93 public universities have been incorporated.

Article 78-2 of the Local Incorporated Administrative Agency Act stipulates that public university corporations must undergo evaluation by the Local Incorporated Administrative Agency Evaluation Committee after the end of each fiscal year. Each corporation undergoes evaluation on both the performance for that academic year, and performance for the overall 6-year period for their mid-term objectives. The results of evaluations conducted by CEA organizations are thought to be used as reference for the evaluations this committee conducts.

4-3-3. Ministry Efforts Related to School Corporation Management

Quality assurance for private universities is conducted through the approval/notification system for establishment and CEA system, as stipulated in the School Education Act. In addition, the Minister approves a school corporation that establishes a private university as the competent authority, and is responsible for providing any instructions or advice as needed regarding the management of private universities, in accordance with the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

MEXT conducts survey regarding management operations, organizations, status of activities, and financial condition of school corporations. In addition, it has been conducting the Inspection of School Corporation Management since 1984 with the aim of contributing to securing the sound administration of school corporation through providing necessary instructions and advice.

With the revision of the Private Schools Act in 2014, a system in which the competent authority respects the autonomy of the private institution while maintaining the capacity to respond

appropriately to exceptional cases in which a general distrust in private institutions as a whole may result. To be specific, this refers to cases in which the operation of the school corporation violates the law, and is remarkably inappropriate. In these instances, the competent authority (MEXT) can conduct on-site inspection, issue official order, or issue recommendation to dismiss a member of the board.

4-3-4. Evaluation of Specialized Training Colleges

Revision in legislation such as that of the School Education Act in 2007 made it mandatory for Specialized Training Colleges to conduct and disclose the results of self-assessment. At the same time, it became mandatory to make efforts to strive for improvement by conducting and disclosing the results of evaluation by parties related to school based on the results of self-assessment. This paved the way for efforts by Specialized Training Colleges and related groups to conduct evaluations.

The School Evaluation Guideline in Specialized Training College was established by MEXT in 2013 with the aim to assure and improve quality of Specialized Training Colleges and to promote the practicality of efforts for evaluation. In addition to self-assessment and evaluation by parties related to the school, it mentions how third-party evaluation should be carried out. Currently, there are private organizations that conduct third-party evaluation of Specialized Training Colleges, and each institution undergoes third-party evaluation voluntarily.

4-3-5. Thematic Evaluations

■ University Rankings

The media, private companies, universities and other entities from around the world create and publish university rankings. When Japanese universities are included in internationally prominent university rankings, the changes in their rankings are often reported in the media in Japan. There are different types of rankings: rankings that weigh a number of different indicators as overall university rankings, rankings by academic field, and rankings that deal with specific themes.

- Examples of overall university ranking

World University Rankings (Times Higher Education, UK), QS World University Rankings (Quacquarelli Symonds, UK), and Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China)

- Examples of rankings that deal with for specific themes

University Impact Rankings, which evaluate efforts by universities to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in the UN Summit in 2015; (Times Higher Education, UK)

Domestically, there are rankings of higher education institutions created in the private sector —e.g. the university ranking based on the level of difficulty in passing entrance examinations of universities released by the entrance examination support service, and the ranking by academic discipline developed by newspaper companies. In addition, Times Higher Education has been publishing the Japan University Rankings recently.

5. History of Quality Assurance System

- Apr. 1947 The new university system was launched upon the School Education Act coming into force.
- Jul. 1947 The Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) was established by alliance among universities, based on guidance given by the CIE (GHQ Civil Information and Education Section). Its University Standards were developed.
- Jan. 1948 The University Establishment Committee was set up within the Ministry of Education.
- Jun. 1952 JUAA conducted evaluation of the qualification of universities and approved 38 universities for membership.
- Oct. 1956 The Standards for the Establishment of Universities were established.
- Apr. 1986 The Provisional Council on Educational Reform report "The Second Report on Education Reform" recommended universities to carry out self-assessment.
- Feb. 1991 The Council for Higher Education report "Improvement of University Education" was compiled. It recommended the government to deregulate the Standards for the Establishment of Universities (to make regulations on subjects, graduation requirements, and academic staff organizations more flexible) and to introduce a self-assessment system.
- Jun. 1991 The Standards for the Establishment of Universities were revised. The Standards for the Establishment of Universities was deregulated, making the university approval system more flexible. Self-assessment was stipulated as a task that universities should strive to implement.
- Oct. 1998 The Council for Higher Education report "A Vision of Universities in the 21st Century" recommended enhancement of the existing self-assessment system (i.e. indicated the need for publication of assessment results and verification by external persons) and introduction of a third-party evaluation system (with the establishment of third-party evaluation organizations).
- Sep. 1999 The Revised Standards for the Establishment of Universities stated that self-assessment and publication of assessment results should be mandatory and that universities should strive to implement verification by external parties.
- Apr. 2000 National Institution for Academic Degrees was reorganized as National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE).
- Jul. 2000 NIAD-UE conducted trial university evaluation of national and public universities from July 2000 to March 2004.
- Aug. 2002 The Central Council for Education report "Establishment of a New System Pertaining to the Quality Assurance of Universities" recommended reviews of the existing approval system

for establishment, the introduction of a new third-party evaluation system (certified evaluation and accreditation), and the development of regulations concerning corrective actions against universities failing to meet laws and regulations.

Nov. 2002 The Revised School Education Act mandated the review of the approval system, the introduction of the certified evaluation and accreditation system, the development of regulations concerning corrective actions against a university if it fails to comply with laws and regulations, and the development of Professional Graduate School system. (The certified evaluation and accreditation (CEA) system was enforced in April 2004.)

As a result of the major revision of the Standards for the Establishment of Universities, simple conformance with related regulations has become the basic principle of the approval assessment. It was also decided that the assessment standards which had thus far been prescribed in the internal regulations of the Council for University Chartering and School Corporation should be stipulated in laws above the level of notification and all internal regulations were abolished.

Mar. 2003 The standards for establishment of Professional Graduate Schools were enacted.

Jul. 2003 The National University Corporation Act was enacted and national universities were incorporated from April 2004.

Apr. 2004 The certified evaluation and accreditation system (CEA) was introduced.

Jan. 2005 The Central Council for Education submitted the report "A Vision for the Future of Higher Education in Japan," recommending the classification of universities by their functions, appropriate use of the approval system, and enhancement of the certified evaluation and accreditation (CEA) system.

Sep. 2005 The Central Council for Education report "Graduate School Education in the New Age: Towards the Development of Internationally Attractive Graduate School Education" recommended enhancement of learning contents in graduate schools and assurance of their quality by introducing a new evaluation system.

Dec. 2006 The Basic Act on Education was revised to specify the basic roles of universities.

Apr. 2008- The National University Corporation Evaluation Committee of MEXT conducted performance-based evaluations of national university corporations and inter-university research institute corporations during the mid-term objective periods.

NIAD-UE conducted the evaluation of education and research of national university corporations and inter-university research institute corporations, commissioned by the National University Corporation Evaluation Committee.

Dec. 2008 The Central Council for Education report "Building Undergraduate Education" recommended clarification of the policy of undergraduate education, enforcement of self-assessment, and development of the internal quality assurance system.

- Jan. 2010 The Japan Network of Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies (JNCEAA) was established by ten certified evaluation and accreditation (CEA) organizations.
- Jun. 2010 The revision of the Regulation for Enforcement of the School Education Act clarified the information categories that universities need to publish regarding education, research, and other activities.
- Aug. 2011 The “Interim Report on the Announcement and Application of Educational Information by Universities” by the MEXT’s Collaborators Meeting recommended the development of a common structure for publication and application of educational information using a database.
- Aug. 2012 The Central Council for Education report “Towards a Qualitative Transformation of University Education for Building a New Future – Universities Fostering Lifelong Learning and the Ability To Think Independently and Proactively” recommended the increase and securement of study hours and the shift to organizational and systematic curricula.
- Apr. 2014 Private Schools Act was revised to allow the competent authority to conduct on-site inspection, issue corrective measures and orders, and issue recommendation to dismiss a member of the board in the event the school corporation’s operations are in violation of law or remarkably inappropriate.
- Dec. 2014 The Central Council for Education report, “Articulation Reform of High School Education, University Education, and Selection of University Entrants Aimed at Realizing Articulation of High Schools and Universities Appropriate for a New Era” recommended improvement of evaluation by focusing on student learning outcomes and internal quality assurance.
- Mar. 2015 Japanese College and University Portraits (JPCUP) website was launched to disclose and utilize educational information about national, public, and private universities and junior colleges.
- Apr. 2017 A legislative revision of the Ministerial Ordinance Providing Details Required to Apply Standards Provided in Paragraph 2 of Article 110 of the School Education Act that must be common to university evaluation standards. Items regarding diploma policy, curriculum policy, and admissions policy (the three policies) as well as items regarding internal quality assurance were added.
- May 2017 As a partial revision of the School Education Act, a system for establishing Professional and Vocational Universities and Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges as new higher education institutions in the higher education system was added.
- Sep. 2017 Standards for the Establishment of Professional and Vocational Universities and Standards for the Establishment of Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges were established.
- Nov. 2018 The Central Council for Education report, “Grand Design of Higher Education Toward 2040” recommended that establishment standards are reviewed and that the CEA system is improved (strict adherence to violation of law).

6. Major Laws and Regulations Related to Quality Assurance

- Basic Act on Education
- School Education Act
- Order for Enforcement of the School Education Act
- Regulation for Enforcement of the School Education Act
- Rules for Degrees
- Standards for Changing Academic Discipline and Type of Degree Granted
- Ministerial Ordinance Providing Details Required to Apply Standards Provided in Paragraph 2 of Article 110 of the School Education Act
- Regulation for Procedures in Submitting Applications for Approval and Notification of Establishment of Universities
- Standards for Approval of Establishment of Universities, Graduate Schools, Junior Colleges, and Colleges of Technology
- Standards for the Establishment of Universities
- Standards for the Establishment of Distance Learning Programs at Universities
- Standards for the Establishment of Graduate Schools
- Standards for the Establishment of Professional Graduate Schools
- Standards for the Establishment of Junior Colleges
- Standards for the Establishment of Distance Learning Programs at Junior Colleges
- Standards for the Establishment of Professional and Vocational Universities
- Standards for the Establishment of Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges
- Standards for the Establishment of Colleges of Technology
- Standards for the Establishment of Specialized Training Colleges
- Private Schools Act
- Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
- Ordinance of the Council for University Chartering and School Corporation
- Act on Organization and Operation of Local Education Administration
- Local Incorporated Administrative Agency Act
- National University Corporation Act
- Act on the General Rules for Incorporated Administrative Agency
- Act on the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education
- Act on Coordination among Education at Law Schools, National Bar Examination, and Training of Legal Apprentices
- Act on Special Districts for Structural Reform
- Measures pertaining to Exceptions to a Ministerial (MEXT) Ordinance Related to Projects Regulated by a Cabinet Order Provided in Article 34 of the Act on Special Zones for Structural Reform

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