

AY2021 Self-Assessment Report

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

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Introduction

APU celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2020, amid ongoing efforts to pursue teaching, research, and student support in accordance with its ideals of Freedom, Peace and Humanity; International Mutual Understanding; and the Future Shape of the Asia Pacific. Having become a mature university, we have maintained the unparalleled international diversity of our members and implemented distinctive educational programs, including bilingual education, at a high level while placing emphasis on constantly and substantively assuring and improving the quality of these distinctive educational programs during the third phase of accreditation that started in AY2015. Specifically, we have focused on establishing systems and infrastructure from the standpoint of internal quality assurance, including the formulation of key policies for internal quality assurance, the assessment of quality assurance activities from a university-wide perspective, and the establishment of an external advisory board comprising members from academia, local governments, and the business world both in Japan and abroad. In AY2019 and AY2020, we made progress in developing a permanent internal process as we worked to firmly establish the policies and procedures we formulated into the inner workings of the university.

At the same time, since AY2015, we have accelerated our efforts to obtain international accreditation in light of the importance of assuring and improving the quality of our world-class education. As a result of the continued quality improvement efforts required by the accrediting bodies, as of AY2021, two colleges and one graduate school have obtained and continue to maintain three separate international accreditations. Also, among the activities related to quality assurance, we have also strengthened our efforts with a focus on visualizing student learning. We established a university-wide IR system to visualize student growth and centralize the collection of student data from the time of admission to the time of graduation. In addition, we conduct university-wide IR surveys every year to check the actual status of students at fixed points, and the response rates on the New Student Survey and Graduation Survey now both surpass 90%. Furthermore, by using online tools, we are now able to visualize aggregated data on student learning and growth and share it throughout the university.

While implementing these quality assurance initiatives, the Self-Assessment Committee has confirmed the status of improvement of the two items that were identified as areas for improvement in the second phase of accreditation that we underwent in AY2015 (and passed with no warnings) as well as all other recommendations provided in the general comments. In AY2017, we submitted an Improvement Report to the Japan University Accreditation Association regarding the areas for improvement. Regarding unrefined syllabus content, which was one of the areas for improvement, we were commended for our efforts and were “deemed as having made improvements.” As for the ratios of transfer students to transfer capacities, the other area for improvement, the general comments we received indicated that “improvement is desirable as ratios remain low.” In response to this, we have decided to revise our transfer enrollment capacities in AY2023, so we expect this to improve. Meanwhile, the Self-Assessment Committee has confirmed that progress is being made on all 16 of the recommendations in the general comments that do not constitute areas for improvement.

In closing, in formulating this report, we have included descriptions of the situation up through AY2019 as well as explanation of the situation and our response amid the COVID-19 pandemic that

been ongoing since AY2020 in all chapters except Chapter 1 (underlined sections). Although the pandemic has had a significant impact on APU, where approximately half of the students are from overseas, it is also true that there are many things that can be utilized to strengthen education and research going forward, including the promotion of DX in education, research, and student support. At the university level, we will continue to consider our status as an international university in the post-pandemic era and take concrete action.

YAMAMOTO Shuji

Chair

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Self-Assessment Committee

March 22, 2022

Chapter 1: Mission and Purpose

● Strengths and Unique Features

The formulation of the APU2030 Vision in 2015 was important in that, by more clearly embodying the Opening Declaration and appropriately verbalizing the ideal and desirable state of APU in 2030, it not only serves to guide the formulation of mid- to long-term plans, it also communicates the vision of APU to our stakeholders, local communities, and industry. Not only the content of the Vision, but also the process of formulation—which took more than a year and was based on an interactive style of collecting opinions from students, faculty and staff, graduates in Japan and overseas, as well as local communities and industry—became a good practice in itself, which was utilized in the two year process of formulating the APU Design Challenge under the R2030 Academy Vision and has since become a part of our decision-making culture. As a result, both the APU2030 Vision and the APU Design Challenge under the R2030 Academy Vision are widely recognized by our constituent members.

● Problem Areas

None

● Summary

In 2000 our university was founded with the goal of producing human resources who can contribute to "Creating the Future of the Asia Pacific" and to create a new academic discipline. The basic ideals in our Opening Declaration are "freedom, peace and humanity," "international mutual understanding," and "the future shape of the Asia Pacific region." To create a multicultural campus where these ideals can be realized, we offer enrollment and graduation twice a year, we carry out admissions selection as well as provide student support in both English and Japanese, and have maintained the "Three 50s" for the past 20 years: ① Accept students from 50 countries and regions, ② maintain a 50:50 ratio of international to domestic students, and ③ have a faculty body that is 50% international. Additionally, in order to realize our founding principles and educational and research objectives, the university is managed through mid- and long-term plans that we have formulated, like the APU2030 Vision which describes "a vision of what APU will be like in 2030 and a vision of what the university wants to be like in 2030," and the APU Design Challenge under the R2030 Academy Vision.

Our educational and research objectives are appropriately stipulated and publicized in the University Regulations, and the educational and research objectives of each college and graduate program are stipulated and publicized in the regulations for each college and in the regulations for each graduate program. In addition, when formulating mid- to long-term plans, a system has been established to flexibly and proactively reflect the opinions of our highly diverse university community, graduates, and other stakeholders in important matters such as mid- to long-term plans.

Chapter 2: Internal Quality Assurance

● Strengths and Unique Features

To begin, the first point we would like to make is that in order to guarantee objectivity and validity according to international standards for internal quality assurance activities undertaken by the university as a whole, we have actively promoted efforts to acquire international accreditations as one of our mid- to long-term priorities. The AACSB accreditation we acquired in 2016 took nearly eight years to obtain and is an international accreditation focused on the College of International Management and Graduate School of Management. Since then, we have continued our quality improvement efforts based on AACSB's standards in order to maintain the accreditation. As of AY2021, we have obtained and are maintaining accreditations for two undergraduate colleges and one graduate school, for a total of three international accreditations.

APU is unique in that we have been strongly aware of and acted not only to improve the quality of education and research in the colleges and graduate schools through the acquisition of international accreditations, but also to adapt global-level standards for evaluation to the entire university. For example, one of the AACSB certification's main standards for evaluation is the implementation of ongoing AOL activities. In other words, with regard to the competencies established in the diploma policy, we conduct analyses of the level of student achievement and attainment of goals utilizing objective and subjective data, undertake improvement activities, and evaluate whether the flow of this cycle ("closing the loop") is functioning. Regarding AOL, after obtaining AACSB accreditation in 2016, in April 2018 we set up the University-Wide AOL Promotion Committee under the leadership of the president, which led to the adoption of AOL activities in all the colleges and graduate schools (Supporting document 2-28).

Next, we would like to raise the diversity of the Governing Advisory Board, our external evaluation committee. The Governing Advisory Board is composed of roughly ten members who are chosen from among our alumni, local authorities, the business world, and those involved in education. Of these ten, about half are of foreign nationality, which has made it possible for us to obtain advice related to operating APU, which is characterized by its diversity, from members of diverse backgrounds and nationalities.

Furthermore, academic IR has also reached a certain level of accomplishment and we can say this activity is characteristic of APU. Data related to all students is stored in the Data Warehouse (DWH), allowing for analysis on all aspects of student growth and experience. The DWH houses all data concerning regular and extracurricular activities prior to enrollment, during enrollment, and at the time of graduation, in a format such that the data is tied to individual students (Supporting document 2-33). A team for managing and analyzing this data has been set up in the Office of the President. They process this data and provide it for issues that cut across organizations within the university.

● Problem Areas

Since the university evaluation conducted in AY2015, we have been strengthening our internal quality assurance system for the entire university from the perspective of institutional design,

including formulating various plans and policies intended to make the system more substantial overall; however, there are certain differences among organizations in terms of granularity and content of the task setting and assessment actually performed by each organization under each system, so it could be said that this is still a work in progress. As an organization as a whole, we will need to continue measuring the substantiality of our internal quality assurance activities based on the established policies and systems while carefully repeating these activities and also improving the systems themselves as we do so. Further, there are multiple plans and policies that were drawn up over the past few years and another task for the future will be to steadily accumulate specific examples of improvements based on these policies, etc.

Additionally, we have room for improvement regarding student participation in the university-wide system for internal quality assurance. Although some students' opinions are being used to improve the education of the colleges and graduate schools, the university as a whole has not yet identified a clear policy or regular procedures for incorporating students' feedback into university management. In AY2021, we ran a project to solicit students' opinions on a trial basis (Supporting document 2-43) (for details, see Assessment Item (2) in Chapter 7), and we plan to develop this initiative into a system in the future.

● **Summary**

On the basis of APU's founding ideals and the APU2030 Vision and from the perspective of university-wide internal quality assurance, we have worked to strengthen the university-wide PDCA cycle led by the University Senate and the Self-Assessment Committee. Since AY2016, we have prepared university-wide policies, such as the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Internal Quality Assurance Policy, the Basic Policy for Self-Assessment, and the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Assessment Policy. Drafting these policies resulted in university-wide academic management led by the University Senate, which is the organization driving university-wide internal quality assurance, and the university's fundamental approach, procedures, and tools for internal quality assurance activities being shared widely among its constituent members. With regard to the implementation of internal quality assurance activities in line with these policies as well, over the past few years the procedures described in the policies have been implemented consistently. We have also made progress in stimulating IR activities utilizing continuous student data from admission to graduation as a tool for self-assessment and evaluation, and we have prepared an environment where visualized data on the actual student situation can be accessed on-campus on a daily basis. Furthermore, the Governing Advisory Board, which conducts external evaluations of the university as a whole, has been restructured to ensure objectivity in assessments and to promote quality assurance at an international level. Having been positioned as a GAB that pursues diversity in terms of nationality and gender, it is implementing regular external evaluations.

With regard to accreditation for the colleges and graduate schools, while there are differences in the initiatives being taken in the colleges and graduate schools depending on whether or not they have obtained and/or are maintaining international accreditations, the good practices (e.g., AOL activities) being implemented in the colleges and graduate schools that have earned international accreditations

are being positioned as university-wide initiatives under the authority of the University Senate Meeting and have expanded to and firmly established in the other colleges and graduate schools as well.

Going forward, we will continue with the rigorous and stable administration of the basic policies that have been established and work on strengthening the internal quality assurance system university-wide. Furthermore, this connects to concrete improvements that will lead to data-based improvements in student learning and the quality of education in line with the Assessment Policy formulated in AY2021.

Chapter 3: Education and Research Organizations

● Strengths and Unique Features

The APU Future Vision, which outlines new academic developments scheduled for FY2023, including the establishment of a new college and reforms to the existing colleges, constitutes a major transformation of our educational organization. Having analyzed the needs of high school students and our current students and of companies and society, we have resolved as a university to open the first new college since our inception and reform the curricula of the existing two colleges.

To date, we have appropriately reviewed our organizations in light of education and research issues as evidenced by the establishment the Educational Development and Learning Support Center in AY2008, the establishment of the Institute for Professional Excellence in Global Learning (IPG) in AY2016, and the establishment of term-limited research centers under the umbrella of the Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies (RCAPS). One particular feature is that we established that IPG in light of the dual need to improve the teaching capacity of our faculty members and to develop the competencies of staff members who support educational and research activities at the university. To improve the quality of and effectively deliver teaching, research, and administrative duties that APU faculty and staff perform within the university and APU's educational environment, the IPG provides FD and SD programs where faculty and staff can learn together. Furthermore, the IPG aims to improve the quality of higher education as a whole, so some of its programs are open to faculty and staff from other universities, and going forward, it aims to become a hub of FD and SD for the entire Asia Pacific region.

● Problem Areas

The Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies (RCAPS) is a permanent research center of the university, and the International Cooperation and Research Division (ICRD) has been established as the organization that supports faculty members' research. Since APU's inception, these two organizations have primarily undertaken research activities and provided research support, but 20 years have passed since then, and the social demands and needs of the community have changed significantly in that time. Amid this backdrop, we are aware that we have reached a stage where we need to revisit our approach to research activities and research support, so we must do this after assessing and reviewing the organizations concerned with research activities.

One of the issues in the APU Challenge Design, the university's mid-term plan, is the advancement of research. We have already started discussing the advancement of research as well as the research support systems and organization required for this, and we plan to elaborate upon these efforts going forward.

● Summary

“To produce human resources who can contribute to creating the future of the Asia Pacific and to create a new academic discipline,” which are the objectives outlined in the Opening Declaration, as of AY2021, APU has two colleges, two graduate schools, and two university-wide centers that provide

common education. Every several years since inception, we have reviewed our academic activities within this two-college-two-graduate school structure, and we have revised our education and research organizations in response to social demands. When we formulated the mid-to-long-term APU2030 Vision in AY2015, we began discussing new academic developments including the establishment of a new college, and we are now planning to open the first new college (scheduled for AY2023) since APU's inception. The academics of the new college will be centered on the pillars of sustainability and tourism with the aim of realizing a sustainable society. Using the cycle of evaluating and reviewing academics, we will examine the consistency of how our education and research organizations align with the university's mission and purpose, giving particular emphasis to international compatibility.

With regard to the research organization, we have RCAPS, which conducts research on a wide array of issues pertaining to the Asia Pacific region, and we also have term-limited research centers under RCAPS that flexibly address various social and regional issues. After a certain period of time, we decide whether these research centers should be continued, so in this way, we undertake research while always keeping an eye on academic trends and societal demands.

Given this, we believe we have appropriately established our educational and research organizations in light of the basic ideals of the university and in consideration of academic trends and societal demands. Going forward, we will continue to improve our organizations in preparation for the establishment for the new college and the reforms to the existing colleges slated for AY2023, and at the same time, we will strive to realize the policies outlined in the APU Challenge Design, our mid-to long-term plan.

Chapter 4: Educational Programs and Learning Outcomes

● Strengths and Unique Features

First, in order to ensure that courses suited to the program are offered, we formulate a Summary of Course Offerings and a Course Offering Policy every academic year. The Academic Affairs Committee and the colleges take responsibility for the formulation of the Summary of Course Offerings, which outline the status of offerings for each academic year, and we conduct a comprehensive review of factors including course offerings for each category and semester, changes in instructors, class cancellations, whether courses are taught by full-time or part-time faculty, and expenditures on faculty salaries. Based on the summary in the "Summary of Course Offerings," we formulate a Course Offering Policy, and after appropriately assessing and improving upon the previous year's course offerings, we formulate a Course Offering Policy for the next year, and we engage in university-wide coordination to ensure that all courses are offered in accordance with the policy.

The second point is that the academic improvements we have pursued with an eye on international compatibility can be considered distinctive. In the College of International Management and the Graduate School of Management, we have formulated educational goals, diploma policies and curriculum policies have been with a keen eye on international accreditation, and the college and graduate school successfully earned AACSB accreditation in AY2016. In addition, the Graduate School of Management earned accreditation from the Association of MBAs (AMBA), a U.K.-based international accreditation agency for graduate level management education, in AY2020, thus certifying it as a provider of world-class MBA education. Going forward, we will undertake initiatives aimed at maintaining AACSB accreditation, seek other international accreditations, and pursuing academic reforms and efforts to advance teaching and research with an eye on ensuring international compatibility. Likewise, the College of Asia Pacific Studies eared received the TedQual international accreditation for the tourism field in 2018, so our commitment to international accreditation to certify our education as world-class now spans two colleges and one graduate school.

The third point is the actual situation of our first-year education. At APU, we have provided first-year education with an understanding of the importance of the transition from high school to university-level learning. With regard to first-year education, the Educational Development and Learning Support Center (EDLSC) plays a central role in the fundamental reform and strengthening of first-year courses with the aim of supporting a smooth transition to university and providing students with a foundation for actively taking advantage of the university's multicultural environment. In addition, the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC), Writing Center, and Analytics and Math Center (AMC) have been established to support student learning outside of the regular curriculum, and academic advising and other learning support and pre-entrance education programs have been established. In this way, we are taking a comprehensive approach to the deployment of first-year education.

The fourth point pertains to encouraging students to gain intercultural and overseas experiences from the early stages after enrollment. Based on the recognition that it is extremely important for Japanese students to experience different cultures early on after enrollment in order to make full use

of APU's multicultural environment to ensure a fulfilling four years, we offer an overseas field research program called Freshman Intercultural Relations Study Trip (FIRST) during the quarter break (late May to early June) when classes are not in session. This program is a regular curriculum course in which new students who have not had extensive cross-cultural experience can learn the local language and conduct research on a specific topic in an Asian country or region. Through the intercultural experiences gained on this program, students are given an opportunity to objectively look at how they want to spend their four years at APU. Although this is not a required course, 293 students (about 45% of the Japanese undergraduate students who enrolled in spring 2019) participated in the course in AY2019. In implementing the program, older students from the country or region that the students will visit accompany the students as Teaching Assistants (TAs) to ensure the safety of the students, and if the situation in the destination country or region is unstable, we change the destination to guarantee students an opportunity to experience a different culture.

We have not been able to send students overseas on the FIRST program due to COVID-19, so the program was postponed in AY2020. However, the expectations of students and their guardians for the FIRST Program remained high, so given its position as a distinctive part of our first-year education, we offered the FIRST Program online in AY2021. Specifically, instead of targeting one country or region as we did in previous programs, students conducted their research on a set topic with the help of international student TAs, who introduced the participating students to people living in the country or region that they were assigned to research.

● **Problem Areas**

Based on the university's mission, human resources development goals, and social trends, we have implemented academic reforms in AY2004, AY2006, AY2011, and AY2017. However, to date, there have been no guidelines that indicate what each college should take into consideration when discussing academic reforms. Based on this, in September 2021, we formulated the Guidelines for Academic Affairs in the Undergraduate Colleges (Bachelor Degree Programs), and we decided to implement academic reforms based on these guidelines starting with the next round of academic reforms (Supporting document 3-11). On the other hand, we still have no guidelines for graduate school academic reforms, so we plan to formulate these guidelines in the future.

● **Summary**

We formulate diploma policies and curriculum policies for each degree program and publish these on the university homepage. We have classified common education courses into the three categories of APU Literacy, Foundations for Global Citizens (which itself contains the subcategories of Asia Pacific Studies, Japan Studies, Foundation, and Introductory Major Subjects), and Response to Societal Needs, and we have established courses appropriately. In terms of major courses, we have established key courses (core courses and required courses), designed a four-year systematic enrollment scheme, and tightened graduation requirements to further enrich major learning.

The curricula in the Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies master's programs are designed to provide students with basic research skills and ensure a good balance of knowledge on issues facing

the Asia Pacific region and deeper knowledge in each of the specializations. Meanwhile, the curriculum in the Graduate School of Management includes two basic analytical courses that provide students with basic research skills and eight required courses on core business fundamentals in which students can gain a broad knowledge of management. Each specialization is designed to ensure systematic enrollment based on these foundations.

To activate student learning and ensure effective education, each college and graduate school has taken measures such as implementing an easy-to-understand course numbering system, setting a limit on the number of courses that students can register each semester, and enhancing the information contained in the syllabi. In addition, during the orientation period before classes start every semester, events are held in the dormitories and the on-campus cafeteria where new students can consult with older students about course registration.

In terms of grade evaluation, we have used a GPA system ever since inception. We also use GPAs for the priority registration system, which gives outstanding students priority for course registration, and as screening criteria for student exchange programs and scholarships. We also set a rule that final examinations cannot exceed 50% of the total grade. With regard to the conferral of degrees, we have established degree conferral criteria in each college and graduate school in accordance with the Standards for Establishing Universities, and degree conferral procedures are conducted in strict accordance with these criteria.

With regard to the understanding and evaluation of student learning outcomes as stated in the diploma policies, the College of International Management and the Graduate School of Management have taken the lead in implementing AOL, which has since been expanded to the entire university and is being promoted in all educational organizations. In addition, we established a system to more precisely understand and evaluate student learning outcomes by cross-analyzing the results of the Graduation Survey, which we conduct as part of our IR activities, with the surveys conducted at the time of admission and while students are enrolled.

In the future, there are still issues to be addressed, such as the formulation of guidelines for academic reforms in the graduate schools, although we formulated the Guidelines for Academic Affairs in the Undergraduate Colleges (Bachelor Degree Programs) in September 2021, for the purpose of implementing academic reforms based on systematic reviews and evaluations. While these issues remain, the implementation of education based on the university's basic ideals, educational and research objectives, and diploma policies is generally appropriate in light of the University Standards.

Chapter 5: Student Intake

● Strengths and Unique Features

Our first strength is our ability to recruit students from around the world to ensure the university's international diversity. In AY2021, the undergraduate and graduate student bodies combined consisted of 46.0% international students and 54.0% domestic students, and our international students hailed from 95 countries and regions. In light of the targets indicated in the university's mid- to long-term plan, we have maintained a diversity of nationalities, and among Japanese universities, we attract the most undergraduate self-funded students from Africa. Our student recruitment and selection framework that allow us to consistently secure regularly enrolled students from around the world can be considered a unique feature of the university.

The second point to note is how quickly we were able to support international students entering Japan amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Responding to the immigration restrictions was a major issue for us as a university with students from 95 countries and regions; however, we have established a system to promptly accept those international undergraduate and graduate students who have been unable to enter Japan, and we provided appropriate immigration support including airport pickups, subsidies for the hotels where students quarantined or isolated, free cell phone loans, and online exchange sessions for students and faculty members during quarantine. During this time, we have been able to welcome 232 students. We have made preparations to use the same system if immigration restrictions are further eased going forward (Supporting document 3-28).

Third, we have shifted our process from application to admission entirely online. We started the online system before the pandemic on a trial basis before fully rolling it out. The online switchover functioned effectively amid the travel restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic since AY2020. We were able to recruit students, hold entrance examinations, and handle application procedures entirely online. In the undergraduate colleges, for example, in addition to our own events, we held cooperative webinars with several domestic universities that actively recruit international students, and we held an online version of the Academic Cultural Exchange (ACE) program, a summer program where Japanese and foreign high school students study together on the APU campus. Furthermore, we held the Virtual Mini University Program (VMUP), a series of lectures by the university's faculty members, online in English to convey the attractiveness of the university's academic activities to both Japanese and foreign high school students, and this also proved successful in terms of student recruitment (Supporting document 5-15).

Our fourth strength is the introduction of an entrance examination that helps us cultivate graduates who can change the world centered on the adoption of the logical flower chart as part of the AY2021 admissions reforms for domestic student recruitment and selection. On this entrance examination, which measures applicants' ability to think inquisitively, applicants must formulate a hypothesis about why a problem or issue is occurring (and how it can be solved), form an argument to verify whether the hypothesis is correct in a way that everyone can understand, and draw a conclusion. This entrance examination was shared in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's University Entrance Examination Review Committee as an example of a "proactive" admission

selection reforms, so it can be considered as a progressive example of such reforms in Japan (Supporting document 3-29, p. 25).

- **Problem Areas**

The first problem area is whether admissions is appropriately verified in accordance with the Admissions Policy as university-wide process. At present, the Admissions Committee is working to verify whether admission selection is conducted appropriately in accordance with the Admissions Policy by conducting an interannual comparison of our assessments of language proficiency and application documents at the time of application and selection with students' credit completion status and GPAs after enrollment (Supporting documents 5-43, 5-44). One area that we need to strengthen in the future is to collaborate with the colleges and graduate schools to verify the actual post-enrollment situation and growth of students, and by cross-referencing these results with the Admissions Policy, review the suitability of the policy itself as well as the suitability of our student recruitment and selection process. As a means of addressing this issue, we formulated an Assessment Policy in AY2021, which outlines the approaches and methods for verifying and assessing the university's educational outcomes. Going forward, we plan to conduct assessments of the post-enrollment student situation and student growth in line with this Assessment Policy.

The second issue is the challenge of maintaining a high level of diversity and internationalism among the student body. In our mid- to long-term plan, we set a goal of achieving the steady intake of international students from 100 countries and regions, but we only reached 95 countries and regions in AY2021. Although we maintain a high level of intake compared to other Japanese and foreign universities, we have yet to achieve our stated goal. With an eye on the ongoing COVID-pandemic and the post-pandemic era and referring to the digitalization initiatives at universities overseas, we will conduct student recruitment appropriate to the various target segments in each country and region, upgrade the admissions homepage, and disseminate information via social media as we strive to achieve appropriate student intake from even more countries and regions in line with our Admissions Policy.

- **Summary**

We appropriately define and publicize admissions policies for each college and graduate school as well as for each program and major, and we disclose these appropriately in the admissions guidelines and university brochures and via the university homepage. Based on the admission policies, we administer a variety of undergraduate and graduate school entrance examinations, each of which appropriately corresponds to the common qualities and abilities that both colleges and both graduate schools require as well as to the policies unique to each college and graduate school.

With regard to efforts to improve and ensure the fairness of systems and administrative frameworks for student recruitment and admission selection, we have established an Admissions Committee that decides university-level matters related to admissions. Specifically, this committee deliberates and decides matters related to entrance examination types, examination subjects and score distributions, entrance examinations, matters related to acceptance announcements and enrollment procedures, matters related to the administration of entrance examinations, and matters related to the planning of entrance examinations. Also, for the sake of fair and proper student selection, we publish admissions handbooks and admissions guides to widely communicate accurate information, including the

recruitment quotas, application qualifications, and entrance examination dates determined by the Admissions Committee. We also disclose this information on the university homepage.

Our policy to ensure the implementation of fair admissions selection based on the concept of reasonable accommodation is clearly stated in the admissions handbooks for each college and graduate school. This indicates that any applicant who wishes to receive accommodation on the entrance examination should submit an Application for Accommodation on Entrance Examinations before applying to the university. The Admissions Committee appropriately handles these requests after ascertaining the applicant's disability and other individual circumstances.

Regarding the appropriate setting of enrollment capacities and the proper management of current student numbers based on the intake capacity, unfulfilled transfer student capacities are an issue, but in conjunction with the elaboration of new academic developments in AY2023 under the APU Future Concept (see Chapter 3 for details), we passed a resolution to revise transfer student capacities in AY2023, and we are making improvements to ensure that we will fulfill these reduced capacities.

In terms of periodically assessing student intake, the Division of Admissions serves as the secretariat. Meanwhile, the Admissions Committee assesses and reviews entrance examination types and entrance examination plans, and it determines a policy for planning and administering entrance examinations in the following academic year and the academic year after that.

As for future issues related to admissions policies, we must set appropriate ratios of international students to domestic students over the medium to long term and formulate and implement a policy for enrollment composition and student selection by appropriately responding to digitalization using various data and homepages, keeping in mind the entrance examination policy trends for undergraduate colleges and graduate schools at both Japanese and foreign universities.

In light of this, although there are some areas for improvement in terms of student intake, such as the above-mentioned unfulfilled transfer student capacities in the undergraduate colleges, our assessment is that our initiatives are generally aligned with efforts to realize the university's mission and purpose.

Chapter 6: Faculty Members and Faculty Organizations

● Strengths and Unique Features

Our first strength is that we have established a Personnel Affairs Committee as a university-level body. The Personnel Affairs Committee, which is chaired by the President, verifies the suitability of all faculty organizations while making decisions on faculty appointments and promotions. This enables the hiring of faculty based on a university-wide effort to assure the quality of faculty and the suitability of faculty for each organization, as opposed to closed-off hiring decisions by each college's Faculty Council Meeting, as well as impartial, stringent, and fair hiring across all colleges and centers.

Our second strength is that we have maintained a 50% ratio of non-Japanese faculty members since our inception. By using international open recruitment, stringent checks of candidates' degrees and research achievements, firmly established interviewing methods, and a tenure track system, we have established a system that allows us to successfully recruit talented young researchers from throughout Japan and around the globe. As a result, since our inception, we have maintained a 50% ratio of non-Japanese faculty members, one of the Three 50s we defined as a goal when we opened. In addition, to ensure the intake of a diverse array of faculty members, further enhance support for their lives at the university and within the community, and to create an inclusive environment, the university's mid-term plan for AY2021 and beyond includes a decision to establish the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Promotion Office (tentative name; see Chapter 10 for details).

Third, we have established a Faculty Assessment System that is operated on a university-wide basis. We have implemented assessments annually for faculty members of all colleges, graduate schools, and centers since AY2006, and this system provides an opportunity to reflect on achievements related to education, research, social contributions, etc. on an annual basis. One particular feature of this system is that it encourages faculty members to engage in the PDCA process by having them submit a Reflection on Classes and Areas for Improvement form that refers to the Class Evaluation Survey results for the courses they taught in a given academic year.

● Problem Areas

The first issue is that there is no clearly defined image of our ideal faculty member. In our faculty recruitment guidelines, we clearly present expectations for faculty members and define the following application requirements: possession of a degree or certifications, work experience or other qualifications, agreement with the university's basic ideals, and enthusiasm for teaching and conducting research at the university. However, we must clearly define what constitutes "skills related to areas of expertise and attitude toward teaching in each degree program" in order to present a more concrete image of our ideal faculty member. We are currently discussing how to clearly present the image of our ideal faculty member as part of the Faculty Assessment System, which is continuously improved and revised, and this policy is scheduled to be finalized in AY2022.

The next issue is strengthening efforts to improve the ratio of female faculty members. Although we provide maternity leave before and after childbirth and childcare leave, we must pursue further efforts to improve the ratio of female faculty members. In the past, we have clearly stated the existence of these systems in our open calls for faculty recruitment and on our homepage, and we have

demonstrated our commitment to securing outstanding female faculty researchers. In addition, we will create conditions and systems that will allow female faculty members to engage in education and research activities even more than before centered on the establishment of the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Promotion Office (tentative name), and we are considering ways to disseminate more detailed information on this in our open calls and through other means.

Finally, we must clarify the positioning of the Institute for Professional Excellence in Global Learning. At APU, the Institute for Professional Excellence in Global Learning (IPG) is in charge of planning and implementing FD activities. Since its establishment in AY2016, it has continuously implemented initiatives that help improve the teaching capacity of our faculty members and, to this end, its role within the university has become firmly established. However, there are no regulations that clearly define the roles and positioning of the IPG within the university. Going forward, in order to ensure even more appropriate planning and implementation of FD activities and undertake a process of assessment and improvement, we will clarify the roles and positioning of the IPG by formulating regulations for the Institute.

● **Summary**

We conduct education and research based on the university's basic ideals. In our faculty recruitment guidelines, we clearly present expectations for faculty and define the following application requirements: possession of a degree or certifications, work experience or other qualifications, agreement with the university's basic ideals, and enthusiasm for teaching and conducting research at the university.

In terms of the faculty organization, we have stipulated appropriate Faculty Organization Development Plans each time we undertook academic reforms, and the faculty members are organized in accordance with these plans. We plan to establish a new college in AY2023, and the University Senate Meeting has issued a decision on the Faculty Organization Development Plan for the colleges and centers, including the new college, based on the discussions of the New Faculty Organization Development Plan Review Committee.

The current faculty organization exceeds the required number of full-time faculty stipulated in the Standards for Establishing Universities and the Standards for Establishing of Graduate Schools. We have maintained a policy since inception to secure at least 50% of faculty from outside of Japan in order to realize the university's ideals and objectives, and the realization of a faculty organization composed of faculty from many different countries and regions is one of the university's distinctive features. We take considerations to ensure that full-time faculty members teach key lecture subjects, and all faculty holding the positions of professor, associate professor, and assistant professor must undergo mandatory screenings every five years to determine their graduate instructor qualifications. In this way, the faculty organization is designed to properly maintain and improve the quality of education.

Procedures for the appointment and promotion of faculty are set forth in the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Appointment and Promotion Regulations for Faculty Members, and detailed screening criteria for appointments and promotions are also in place. Policies for faculty hiring,

detailed rules for recruitment and screening, and rules on promotion screenings are all decided by the university-level Personnel Affairs Committee chaired by the President. Issues with faculty frameworks specific to the colleges and centers are also shared in the committee to ensure consistency and impartiality for the university as a whole.

As for the suitability of our faculty organization, the Personnel Affairs Committee assesses the situation in each college and center when it formulates its annual faculty hiring plans. Moreover, graduate school instructor qualification screenings and faculty assessments contribute to improving the quality of faculty organizations throughout the university by way of evaluating the teaching and research achievements and outcomes of each faculty member.

Over the years, we have regularly reviewed and improved the processes for evaluating and utilizing the teaching and research achievements of our faculty members. Regarding AACSB accreditation, the university is scheduled for a re-accreditation screening in 2023, so it must meet all of the targets for faculty qualifications in order to maintain its accreditation. The university recognizes the maintenance of accreditation as a means to both improve the quality of its teaching and research and enhance its international compatibility, and it plans to spread those initiatives throughout the university.

As described above, although there are areas that need to be improved or strengthened, we have clearly defined policies on our expectations for faculty members and faculty organization development in line with the university's mission and purpose, based on which we conduct strict faculty hiring led by the Personnel Affairs Committee, implement FD activities institutionally and multilaterally, and assess the suitability of the faculty organization. In conclusion, all of these endeavors can be deemed as contributing to improving the quality of our teaching and research activities.

Chapter 7: Student Support

● Strengths and Unique Features

In order to provide appropriate support for our diverse student population in terms of their studies, daily life, and job placement, we have provided support in two languages and have maintained support offices and systems that do not discriminate between international and domestic students since the founding of our university. In the past few years we have taken this one step further, moving from supporting multinational students to making various efforts to create an inclusive campus that embraces diversity in an even broader sense. We carried out concrete initiatives after the creation of our Policy on Support for Students with Disabilities in AY2016 and our Policy Statement on Sexual and Gender Diversity in AY2017, among others. Since the implementation of these policies, we have continued to strengthen our support systems for students with disabilities, have invited outside experts to conduct workshops for faculty and staff, and have made changes and renovations to university systems and facilities with the perspective of LGBT students, faculty, and staff in mind.

The practice of peer learning to promote learning among diverse students is another of our distinct features. The experience of understanding one another's diversity and differences, and learning from and collaborating with each other based on this understanding is something that can only truly be realized in this multicultural environment. Peer learning mechanisms exist in all aspects of the university, including the assignment of undergraduate students as TAs in lecture courses, using student support staff in centers such as the Writing Center, AMC, SALC, and ALRCS, and the system of using RAs to proactively manage AP House.

In the area of career support, a unique point of our program is that it is strengthening support that leads to the building of diverse careers other than domestic corporate employment in order to meet the needs of multinational students regarding their diverse careers. Specifically, we provide support for proceeding to graduate schools both in Japan and abroad, for job placement abroad, including at international organizations, NGOs, and NPOs, and for starting their own businesses. Substantial initiatives include grouping and providing information to students who wish to pursue careers in international organizations (SAIA), holding seminars that feature graduates who actually work in international organizations, and establishing the APU Startup Program to support students who wish to start their own businesses.

While providing continuous support like this as a university, the most important issue we have grappled with has been in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic that has been present since the end of AY2019. We urgently expanded student support in many ways, especially in terms of not interrupting students' learning, protecting their health and safety, and providing a safe and secure living and learning environment. In particular we are taking careful measures in support of international students—who make up half of our student body—and domestic students living away from their families, such as in providing health monitoring and support with daily necessities for students unable to leave their homes, and in thoroughly disseminating information from the government and local authorities. Additionally, the Trust as a whole provided support in setting up the necessary environment for taking online classes, and in providing financial and other support to students whose family

finances suddenly changed due to the suspension of social and economic activities. Even under the state of emergency brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have sought to implement the best possible measures and have continued to provide various support as indicated in our founding principles and student support policies.

- **Problem Areas**

One issue that we will need to elaborate upon is to further strengthen career support in line with the actual condition of students, such as their diverse needs and differences in language abilities. For international undergraduate and graduate students with various levels of Japanese language ability, while we have made efforts in the past to connect students with foreign companies where they would be able to use English in their work or to find employment overseas, in the future we will further strengthen our efforts to expand the number of partner companies and our support for overseas employment and entering higher education by utilizing the online environment.

- **Summary**

Based on our basic ideals and the APU Challenge Design (mid- to long-term plan), the priority issues for student support are to strengthen the system to support diverse students and to establish a system to reflect the opinions of diverse students in university administration. Policies for student life support, activities support, career support, and study support have been established and publicized through our website and other channels.

We have a system in place to appropriately support students based on these policies, and also have a cross-departmental committee structure in place to provide support requiring collaboration across divisions. A distinctive feature of our university is that since our founding we have provided support in two languages and have maintained support offices and systems that do not discriminate between international and domestic students in order to provide appropriate support for our diverse student population in terms of their studies, daily life, and career search activities.

When it comes to supporting students, we offer pre-entry and supplementary educational support according to the needs of each student, whether international or domestic, and in their basis language. Additionally, our entire university promotes peer learning in all areas, academic and extracurricular, while encouraging development through collaboration among students. Appropriate support is also supplied to students having difficulties in their studies and daily life through the establishment of support systems based on credits acquired and financial support systems. With regard to career placement, we have been strengthening support for various career paths in order to meet the diverse needs of students. During the COVID-19 pandemic this support has been provided in an online environment, and we are considering to continue offering some support online even after the pandemic subsides.

During the pandemic the university as a whole has been working to support physical and mental health as well as provide financial assistance, placing the highest priority on protecting the health and lives of our students and ensuring they continue to have opportunities to learn and gain experience as

university students.

Based on this situation, it can be said that we are appropriately implementing student support, although there are some developmental issues such as establishing a mechanism to take in student voices in a systematic fashion and further strengthening the employment support system for international students. Going forward, we will continue to develop an inclusive campus, which is being promoted university-wide, and to strengthen our intrinsic inclusiveness, which is not based on nationality alone.

Chapter 8: Education and Research Environment

● Strengths and Unique Features

Advancing one step further from the multinational and multicultural environment established at the time the university opened, APU's educational and research environment developed since AY2015 is characterized by the importance it places on creating an inclusive campus where there is acceptance of a wider sense of diversity. As part of this, we have developed facilities accommodating religious and gender diversity as well as accessible environments for universal facilities to accommodate students, faculty, and staff with disabilities. In addition, when renovating facilities, we have held hearings with the students who actually use these facilities to hear their opinions, and we have reflected these opinions in our plans.

The development of the learning commons in the library, which also plays an important role in promoting the multicultural collaborative learning that APU practices university-wide, is one of our characteristic educational environments. The majority of the first floor of the library has been set aside as space for collaborative learning among students and with presentation rooms, group workspaces, etc., it is a facility that accommodates the collaborative learning styles of students.

As for the development of a mechanism for promoting research activities, we can mention the expansion of the APU Academic Research Subsidy. International joint research and international jointly authored articles are being actively disseminated because of the international networks that our faculty from various countries and regions have, and it is the enrichment of the APU Academic Research Subsidy and the increase in competitive Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research obtained as a result of this enrichment that are contributing to this activity. In the spring of 2021, one of our faculty members was selected for a Scientific Research (A) grant for the first time since APU opened. The research content of many of APU's competitive research funds focuses on joint research with overseas researchers. Furthermore, APU researchers have also been selected almost every year for the International Joint Research Acceleration Fund (Grant-in-Aid for Fostering International Joint Research Types A and B), a type of Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research that encourages young researchers to engage in international joint research (Supporting document 8-37). In addition, researchers who have been selected for a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research are paid special research subsidies to further enhance their adopted research projects, and researchers whose Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research applications were rejected with an 'A' grade are paid an internal APU subsidy of up to ¥500,000 to support the continuation of their research until they can apply for a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research in next academic year.

The APU Academic Research Subsidy forms a foundation that enables faculty members to apply for and receive competitive research funds as well as the dissemination of their research outcomes both in Japan and abroad. Support for Academic Conference Presentations (up to ¥200,000), Support for Article Submission (up to ¥200,000), Support for Book Publication (up to ¥300,000), and the Article Publication Subsidy (up to ¥200,000) are examples of APU Academic Research Subsidies.

● Problem Areas

As of AY2021, the reality is that the formulation of policies for improving education on a university-wide basis with an eye on AY2030 remains a work in progress. In the future, in order to fully demonstrate concrete measures for strengthening research activities, we plan to draft a policy related to advancing research without delay, and we plan to engage more systematically in research support for faculty in a way that aligns with the APU Challenge Design, the university mid-term plan.

● Summary

In keeping with the university's basic ideals and the Campus Master Plan from the time of APU's inception and as part of the university's mid- to long-term plan, we have undertaken facility developments and improvements to create a campus with internationality appropriate to APU's educational objectives. In order to develop an inclusive campus where students from diverse communities come together and their humanity is respected, we proceeded with lavatory renovations in support of LGBT students, faculty, and staff and modified doors to be automatic in order to improve accessibility. In addition, during the pandemic together with making improvements to the classroom environment, such as setting up a network environment for realizing online classes in order to create an international-standard educational and research environment, and installing more power outlets for student computers in classrooms, we also made progress in creating a campus that gives attention to measures for controlling the spread of infection. With regard to the library as well, we made progress in improving the learning and research environment, including expanding our collection of databases and e-journals that can also be used from abroad and initiating a new book mailing service, etc., so that students, faculty, and staff who are unable to visit the library, including students located abroad, will always be able to enjoy the services they need. We have moved forward with the creation of a campus that aligns with the needs of students, such as when we built the Tokimachiba bus shelter in AY2020 in a manner that incorporated feedback from our students. In the university's mid- to long-term plan that started from AY2021, we decided to construct a new academic building and a new dormitory based on new academic expansions (the APU Future Concept), including the establishment of a new college in AY2023. In this way, we are undertaking facility improvements in a way that aligns with society's demands and the university's plan at all times.

Our development of a system for promoting research focuses on the provision of research funds based on individual research funds and the APU Academic Research Subsidy, which is our internal system, and holding seminars, etc. for obtaining competitive research funds, such as Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research. In addition, since AY2019 we have developed a research subsidy system with the objective of promoting the dissemination of research results, and we have undertaken an initiative to increase the number of submissions to and acceptances by international peer-reviewed journals. Furthermore, in order to ensure researchers have time for their research activities and writing articles, we provide them with systems for securing time for research, such as Academic Development Leave (ADL) and the buyout system.

From the perspective of research ethics, faculty and students who have received competitive research funds and research grants, and administrative staff who engage in work related to research funds are thoroughly trained in compliance education and research ethics. Additionally, the Research

Ethics Review Committee handles consultations and complaints regarding the behavior of researchers who commit research ethics violations stipulated in the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Code of Ethics, as well as reports of misconduct, such as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in articles and other materials. Furthermore, as one aspect of our efforts to forestall occurrences of ethical issues with research, when researchers conduct research investigations involving human subjects, the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Compliance/Ethics Review Committee convenes and conducts a review regarding compliance of the research with research guidelines.

From current conditions, we can say that, taking into account APU's fundamental ideals and academic trends, and also social demands, the environment for education and research is on the whole maintained appropriately. We will continue moving forward with campus improvements, including the new academic building, aimed at new academic expansions beginning from AY2023. Additionally, in particular from the perspective of promoting research, we will aim to draw up a policy for advancing research by the end of AY2022 and develop a system that contributes to improving research capability.

Chapter 9: Social Cooperation and Contribution

● Strengths and Unique Features

Since our inception, we have focused on building networks with the local and international communities and industry, and we have signed cooperative agreements with Oita Prefecture, all the local governments within the prefecture, companies, and organizations to promote wide-ranging social cooperation and contribution projects. The most distinctive feature is that we actively implement various initiatives aimed at contributing to the needs of the region in terms of internationalization, taking advantage of the fact that half of the students and faculty members are international students and faculty members with diverse backgrounds from all over the world. We are contributing to realizing authentic international exchange by having our diverse student body interact with the local community.

We also use the university's unique features to offer programs for companies that feature content that only APU can provide. The Global Competency Enhancement Program (GCEP) takes advantage of the unique features that cannot be found at any other university, including our dual language education system, multicultural campus, and international student dormitory, to help Japanese companies faced with the major challenge of global human resources development provide their employees with English proficiency, an understanding of other cultures, and intercultural understanding skills (Supporting document 9-9).

● Problem Areas

As stated in “Strengths and Unique Features” above, the strength of the university's social collaboration and contribution activities is that students of diverse nationalities mix with the local community and contribute to the realization of authentic international exchange; however, there is room for improvement in terms of institutionally cataloging and analyzing these activities (and their impact). In AY2021, we decided to establish the Social Collaboration Meeting as the body in charge of these activities, so from AY2022 onward, the Social Collaboration Meeting will need to play a central role in collecting data institutionally and systematically, analyzing the outcomes (impact) of social collaboration activities, and making concrete improvements. In addition, we will elaborate upon the tentatively named Center for Regional Collaboration, which we decided to establish for the purpose of comprehensively implementing activities and partnerships that contribute to solving regional issues, as we work on defining the roles of this center and the Social Collaboration Meeting.

● Summary

Based on the university's basic ideals in place since its founding, the APU2030 Vision, and the APU Mission Statement for Social Outreach and Regional Partnerships, we have leveraged our networks with residents, government agencies, universities, and alumni to deepen cooperation with a diverse array of stakeholders throughout Japan and around the world, and we have incorporated these activities into our teaching, research, and university administration. We promote the internationalization of the local Beppu/Oita/Kyushu region and the development of social

cooperation on an international scale with the involvement of a diverse range of students, faculty, and staff members. We implement a wide range of initiatives. Primarily, we provide open lectures for citizens, contribute to internationalization projects undertaken by local governments and communities, cooperate with companies (on employee training programs and research), and engage in international cooperation projects. Aiming to deepen ties with local communities through a range of exchange events, since our inception, we have concluded cooperation agreements with every municipality in Oita Prefecture and several municipalities outside of Oita Prefecture, including Fukuoka City and Arita Town in Saga Prefecture. With regard to cooperation with companies, we have implemented and expanded upon the GCEP, which aims to develop global human resources for companies, over the 10 years up through AY2021, and to date, we have accepted participants from nearly 60 companies. Although many of these initiatives, such as exchange events with communities and local governments and the GCEP, were severely restricted by or cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have taken measures including conducting online exchange meetings with all elementary schools in Beppu City and offering the GCEP to companies online, and we did everything possible to ensure we could continue our social cooperation activities.

Maintaining a framework centered on the Liaison Director and the Vice President in charge of social cooperation, in AY2022 we will establish the Social Cooperation Meeting to serve as the contact point for collaboration based on a review of the operation of the Office of the President Meeting until AY2021. In this way, we have put in place a framework to appropriately ascertain and analyze the state of activities undertaken by the various organizations within the university. Although there are still issues to be addressed, such as comprehensively ascertaining the various social cooperation activities conducted by each organization within the university, including those related to education, student activities, and research, and strengthening institutional improvement activities rooted in a data-driven analysis of outcomes (i.e., impact), we will continue to appropriately implement social cooperation activities in ways that involve our highly diverse students, faculty, and staff in order to contribute to the promotion of the internationalization of Beppu, Oita, and the greater Kyushu region. Going forward, by establishing the Center for Regional Collaboration (tentative name) and taking other measures, we will strengthen our social collaboration activities to help solve regional issues by using the various regions of the world where everyone involved with APU live and work as venues to deploy social collaboration activities.

Chapter 10: University Administration and Financial Affairs

● Strengths and Unique Features

For APU, the promotion of international compatibility in university administration and governance was defined as a priority issue in the APU2020 Second Half Plan, our mid- to long-term plan for AY2015-AY2020 from the standpoint of encouraging the participation of our highly diverse constituent members in university administration to contribute to the realization of the university's basic ideals and vision. More specifically, we undertook governance reforms and improved the university executive framework to make it more internationally compatible, and based on this, we have issued international calls for applications for presidential candidates. In AY2018, we established the 10-person (four of whom were non-Japanese) Presidential Candidate Selection Committee composed of faculty members, staff members, and alumni which selected presidential candidates from among those individuals who or were recommended from both inside and outside the university and from within and outside Japan. Although many foreign universities issues open calls for applications for the position of president, ours was a rare case among Japanese universities and can be considered a unique feature of our university administration.

Another unique feature is that we have put in place a dual language environment (Japanese and English) for the operation of meetings pertaining to university administration and the implementation of all aspects of routine duties as a means to encourage the participation of our highly diverse constituent members in university administration. By assigning bilingual non-Japanese staff and Japanese staff who can speak English to every office, we have been able to effectively provide dual language education and operate a bilingual university administration system. To support this dual language environment, we are working to improve the English proficiency of our staff through SD programs and other means, and over 50% of our staff have TOEIC scores of 800 or higher.

● Problem Areas

In the APU Challenge Design, the university's mid- to long-term plan, we decided to establish the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Promotion Office (tentative name) as one of our priority issues for AY2021 and beyond in order to create an inclusive campus environment. Although a survey was conducted to better understand the needs of faculty and staff in preparation for the establishment of this office, we have yet to work out the details on the specific scope of duties and the office framework as of the end of AY2021. The establishment of this office is one of the concrete measures we will take to promote the creation of an inclusive faculty organization by providing various types of support related to diversity in terms of nationality, culture, gender, etc., and by eliminating barriers, so we will hold discussions in or after AY2022 to work out these details as early as possible.

● Summary

The university operates based on five to ten-year mid- to long-term plans. As of AY2021, we have set priority issues and other measures for the university in accordance with the First Half Plan (AY2021-AY2025) of the APU Challenge Design, our mid- to long-term plan for AY2021 to AY2030.

To ensure our highly diverse constituent members can participate in a broad range of university activities, we conduct all meetings and procedures related to university administration in both Japanese and English.

Trust-level administration is conducted in accordance with the Ritsumeikan Trust Act of Endowment, which is based on the Private School Act, the Ritsumeikan Trust Act of Endowment Bylaws, and the Ritsumeikan Trust Code. Meanwhile, academic affairs are appropriately managed in accordance with the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University University Regulations, which are based on the School Education Act and related laws. The University Regulations clarify the roles and authority of the president and other executives as well as the Faculty Council Meeting, and based on these regulations, we have appropriately established a wide range of other rules and regulations. We select our president using an international call for applications for presidential candidates, which is a rarity among Japanese universities and constitutes a step forward in our efforts to internationalize governance.

The administrative organizations that perform university duties are assessed and improved on a short cycle in order to ensure we have a flexible organization in place to achieve the university's tasks. In addition, we offer a variety of training programs for staff members to build competencies that contribute to continuous reform and improvement and to the management of the university from a global perspective.

Although the issue of building a framework to systematically incorporate student feedback into university administration remains, we can state that we are appropriately undertaking university administration based on our mid- to long-term plan in order to achieve the basic ideals and vision of the university.

Section 2: Financial Affairs

● Strengths and Unique Features

○ Boosting non-tuition revenue

At APU, we undertake educational reforms and actively seek out university reform subsidies. We have boosted non-tuition revenue by securing subsidies under the Re-Inventing Japan Project (AY2011), the Project for the Promotion of Global Human Resources Development (AY2012), the Top Global University Project (AY2014), and the Private University Research Branding Project (AY2018). In particular, we are actively developing revenue-generating programs such as the Global Competency Enhancement Program. More recently, we have secured funds to support student startups through a crowdfunding campaign, solicited donations for campus improvements, and established the Fund for Global Human Resources Development Scholarships and other new scholarships as a means to diversify our revenue streams. By making contact with chapters of our Alumni Association and Parents' Associations around the world, we will continue to solicit donations from individuals who endorse and agree with the university's ideals.

○ Operational streamlining and cost-cutting

We have proactively reviewed all tasks (and eliminated or reduced tasks in some cases), and we are striving to thoroughly streamline operations and cut costs by standardizing, formally specifying, concentrating, and outsourcing back office duties.

In addition, as part of the IT-driven review of operations, we are moving forward with the establishment of an advanced administrative system with the aim of making administrative work more sophisticated and labor-saving, for example, by introducing robotic process automation (RPA) for some routine operations. We have also decided to introduce a chatbot on a trial basis, which will allow for a faster and round-the-clock response to inquiries, together with the Ritsumeikan Trust.

● Problem Areas

None

● Summary

We have held many internal discussions about the future of the university after the pandemic. In the course of these discussions, we have considered what shape society may take in the future and the academic fields on which APU should focus its efforts, and based on this, we formulated the R2030 Challenge Design and APU Future Concept. In terms of financial management, in order to achieve our action plans without surpluses or shortfalls, we must proceed with operations in such a way that duties are executed and realized while maintaining financial discipline.

We will work constantly to diversify our revenue streams, including income from donations and other sources, update our administrative systems, and further pursue operational efficiency our operations.

Epilogue

The most distinctive aspect of the 2021 self-assessment was the issue of maintaining continuity and ensuring quality in all aspects of education, research, and student support amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the most important tasks since AY2020 have been continuing to provide quality-assured education and various forms of support to all students, including international students throughout the world who have not been able to come to campus due to immigration restrictions, and protecting the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff, and we have been undertaking these initiatives on a university-wide basis. First, we decided to hold all classes online at the start of the 2020 spring semester. We strived to offer interactive online classes in real time except in cases where there was a major time difference. This is rooted in the recognition that mutual understanding and multicultural co-curricular activities among students, which are commonly expressed in the university's basic ideals, the APU2030 Vision, and the diploma policies of the colleges and graduate schools, should also be pursued in the online environment. To ascertain the situation of those students who are unable to come to campus, we took various measures including conducting additional student surveys. Although the sudden switch to an online setting for various aspects of the university due to the pandemic resulted in changes to various systems and procedures, it also provided an opportunity for us to strongly recognize the benefits and necessity of promoting the digital transformation of our teaching, research, and student support in the post-COVID era.

In this way, we have undertaken a sudden university-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we have also initiated various efforts with an eye on 2030 given that AY2021 was the first year of the APU Challenge Design, the university's mid- to long-term plan. One distinctive proposal based on this mid- to long-term plan is the new academic developments including the establishment of a new college in AY2023. This will be the first new college established since APU's inception, and we have worked out a detailed plan to leverage our international environment to contribute to solving local issues based on the needs of society, including the needs of high school students, our current students, companies, and other stakeholders. Going forward, we will keep global standards in mind as we deploy teaching and research in our new educational organization consisting of three colleges, including the new college, and two graduate schools. In addition, the APU Challenge Design defines the development of an inclusive campus, which we have been working on for the past several years, as an issue to be continued and strengthened. The plan is to go beyond just a multicultural and multinational environment based on the number of international students and the number of their home countries and regions to create an environment where diversity in the broader sense is fairly integrated into various aspects of the university, including education, research, student support, student activities, and university administration.

As we roll out these new initiatives with an eye on 2030 based on our mid- to long-term plan, with regard to assuring the quality of education as the core duty of the university, it is crucial that we continue to firmly establish the procedures outlined in policies pertaining to internal quality assurance that we have been developing over the past several years and to build up a track record of improvement at the university level, college and graduate school level, and the course level. By conducting objective

and continuous assessment activities based on appropriate data and external perspectives on student growth and the actual status of classes at each of these levels, we will not only improve upon problem areas and issues, but also further develop this process as a strength of the university and improve our teaching and research to a world-class level under the three-college-two-graduate school framework from AY2023 onwards, which in turn, will ensure that we will remain a globally chosen university.