

X. Internal Quality Assurance

1. Description of Current Conditions

(1) Are we fulfilling our social accountability in reviewing and assessing university activities and disclosing outcomes?

In accordance with the “Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Self-Assessment Framework for 2008AY and Beyond – Proposal of the PDCA Cycle along with the Trust Action Plan” (2008.4.8 University Administration Meeting), a university-wide Self-Assessment Committee carries out assessment of the whole university. To confirm the adequacy of these self-assessments, APU has an external evaluation (University Evaluation Committee) once every two years.

APU underwent an external evaluation by the Japan University Accreditation Association in AY2008. The results of this evaluation were made public online. In addition, APU also gathers all its own basic data, which is called University Data, every year and voluntarily shares it publically online along with the Japan University Accreditation Association’s specific Basic University Data.

Moreover, the Ritsumeikan Trust, founder of APU, collects action plans and assessment sheets (progress reports) from each division and department every year. At APU we incorporate university standards and evaluation items in these action plans and progress reports, and implement initiatives in day-to-day administration and work duties that take into account the PDCA cycle and internal quality assurance (reference material 10-1).

In the “Ritsumeikan Trust Information Disclosure Regulations” (2010.3.7) formulated by the Ritsumeikan Trust, it stipulates, that the disclosure and release of information held by the schools established under the Trust aims to fulfill social accountability in both Trust management and in the various academic and research activities carried out under the Trust, as well as enforce fair and transparent management, and promote a high quality of education and research and an autonomous management run by organization members.

<Conducting and Releasing Findings of Self-Assessments>

As previously stated, the action plan and assessment sheets that are gathered by the Ritsumeikan Trust, are formulated with university standards and evaluation items in mind. Since AY2012, APU has drawn up Self-Assessment Report (Trial Version) in accordance with the evaluation items and university standards set down by the Japan University Accreditation Association.

Article 4, Paragraph 1, Item 5 of the Ritsumeikan Trust Information Disclosure Regulations stipulates that “(4) information regarding evaluation A) university self-assessment reports, B) basic university data etc. of. information items designated by the Japan University Accreditation Association” must be made public. APU follows these regulations, disclosing information on the regularly held self-assessments and the results on the official university homepage. We also plan to make this report, or a

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summary of this report, public online. This report “AY2012 Self-Assessment Report(Trial Version)” was formulated in accordance with university standards and evaluation items.

<Adequacy of Information Disclosure Content and Method, and Response to Information Disclosure Requests>

Article 4, Paragraph 1, of the “Ritsumeikan Trust Information Disclosure Regulations” stipulates what information is to be disclosed to the general public and information on the state of education and research activities which is stipulated in Article 172, Paragraph 2, Item 1, of the “Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act”.

Article 3, Item 2 of the “Ritsumeikan Trust Information Disclosure Regulations” stipulates that “information will be given based on the information request procedures outlined in these regulations”. It stipulates regulations regarding the “person requesting disclosure of information”, “disclosure request procedures”, “registration”, “disclosure decision”, “disclosure inquest”, “non-disclosure information”, “partial disclosure”, “existence of information”, “granting a third party an opportunity to submit a written opinion”, “disclosure method”, “presence at time of disclosure”, “prohibited acts by the person who obtained disclosure based on the disclosure decision”, rescission of a disclosure decision”, “cost allocation”, “motion of objection”, and “investigation committee”. Information will only be disclosed to persons who satisfy the criteria based on the request and scope of the information to be disclosed. In effect, personal information and confidential information will not be disclosed.

<Release of Financial and University Information to Current Students and Parents>

In an effort to widely disclose university information, financial and university information has been released to students and parents, as stakeholders, as well as to the general public, since its inauguration in 2000. The homepage introduces “Subsidy Initiatives”, “Tuition Revision Methods”, and “Costs Per Student” to promote understanding of the university’s account settlement of each year (Document 10-2).

Information Disclosure

- [List of APU Academic Programs selected and financially supported by MEXT as the Good Practice and other awards](#)
- [APU Public Information Disclosure \(Japanese version only\)](#)
- [Ritsumeikan Academy General Information \(Japanese Only\)](#)
- [Ritsumeikan Academy Financial Information](#)
- [Ritsumeikan Academy Management Plans](#)
- [Release of APU Financial and University Information](#)

Release of APU Financial and University Information

The “Release of Financial and University Information to the Public” is a measure through which information related to the university is widely disseminated to groups such as the Domestic Students’ Parents Association and others that have cooperated and assisted in the management of the University since its inception.

Data is available for public viewing on the web.

Contents of the “Release of Financial and University Information to the Public” are as follows;

1. The Road to Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) Establishment
2. APU and its Multicultural Environment
3. 2010 Operating Report
4. APU’s Fiscal Revenues and Expenditures for AY2010
5. Subsidies and Research Funds Received from Outside Sponsors
6. Cost per Student
7. APU in Future

[Release of Financial and University Information to the Public 1-5 \(PDF\)](#)

[Release of Financial and University Information to the Public 6-7 \(PDF\)](#)

(Source: http://www.apu.ac.jp/home/about/index.php?content_id=157&cat_id=5&lang=english)

(2) Are systems in place for internal quality assurance?

Main Internal Quality Assurance Initiatives at APU

Assessment Type	Implementing Body	Cycle	Content	Committee Members Involved
Self-Assessment	Self-Assessment Committee	Every year	Self-assessment of education and research, organizations, management, facilities and equipment.	Vice-President, Deans of Colleges, and Deans
External Assessment	University Evaluation Committee	Every 2 nd year	Evaluation of the objectivity and adequacy of self-assessments	Not Trust Executives, faculty or Staff. A few external stakeholders.
Third Party Evaluation	Japan University Accreditation Association	Every 7 years	Evaluation based on University Standards	
AACSB Business Accreditation	AACSB Accreditation (GSM and College of International Management)	Every 5 years (application pending)	Evaluation based on AACSB business standards.	

<Clarity of Internal Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures>

Self-assessment and external evaluation methods and related policies and regulations are stipulated in the “Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Self-Assessment Framework for 2008AY and Beyond – Proposal of the PDCA Cycle along with the Trust Action Plan” (2008.4.8 University Administration Meeting).

<Development of an Organization that Administers Internal Quality Assurance>

Internal quality assurance is administered by the University Senate, Self-Assessment Committee and the University Evaluation Committee. The University Senate, the decision-making body for the university as a whole, decided on the “APU2020 Vision”, a plan that outlines the direction for the university over a mid to long-term period, as well as the “Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Master Plan” (a part of the “Creating the Future R2020 – Ritsumeikan Trust Master Plan”), and the “Phase Three Plan”.

Regulations stipulate that the Self-Assessment Committee shall “conduct an annual self-assessment of education, research, organizations, operations, and facilities and equipment for each academic organization”.

APU has established a “Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Evaluation Committee” as an organization that deals with external evaluations. This organization, which is comprised of a few external stakeholders, evaluates the objectivity and adequacy of self-assessments carried out internally by the university. The President receives committee advice and reflects it in Trust and university Plans. The Administration Office plays the role of secretariat for the University Senate, while the Office of the President is secretariat for the Self-Assessment and University Evaluation Committees.

<Establishment of a System for Self-Assessment Improvements and Reforms>

As stipulated in Article 4, Paragraph 1 and 2 of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

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Self-Assessment Committee Regulations, the Self-Assessment Committee “shall report results to the President and the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University University Evaluation Committee. The President, upon receiving assessment results, will reflect them in Trust plans.

In the past, the University Evaluation Committee reported self-assessment results, received an evaluation and then worked towards improving the assessment. Now, in an effort to achieve higher functionality of the internal quality assurance system, we are working towards initiatives that make self-assessment results and University Evaluation Committee evaluations more in line with the Japanese University Accreditation Association’s University Standards and Assessment criteria.

<Full Compliancy Awareness (adherence to laws and morals) by all Trust Members>

Current regulations pertaining to the authority and duties of the permanent Compliance Committee are stipulated in Article 2 of the Trust Compliance Committee Regulations as follows:

(Compliance Committee Duties)

Article 2: The duties of the Compliance Committee are listed as follows:

- (1) To propose important policies and policy revisions pertaining to the promotion of compliance in the Ritsumeikan Trust and the schools established thereunder to the Chairperson of the Board
- (2) To plan and implement training and awareness-raising initiatives in the Ritsumeikan Trust and the schools established thereunder for the promotion of compliance
- (3) To process cases of violation of compliance promotion policies in the Ritsumeikan Trust and the schools established thereunder and propose policies to prevent reoccurrence to the Chairperson of the Board
- (4) Recommend measures stipulated in Article 15, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the Ritsumeikan Trust Confidential Informant Claim Processing Regulations to the Chairperson of the Board
- (5) To disclose initiatives concerning the promotion of compliance
- (6) Any other items deemed necessary by the Committee for the promotion of Compliance

APU is currently not meeting the requirements stipulated in (2) of Article 2 sufficiently.

Article 6 stipulates that an Investigative Committee can be established in response to individual compliance violation cases and that this Committee will have the following duties and authority.

(Investigative Committee)

Article 6: When violations to Compliance Promotion Regulations are discovered and an investigation is deemed necessary, it is possible for the Compliance Committee to establish an Investigative Committee.

- 2 The Director of the Office of Legal Compliance shall establish an Investigative Committee upon the approval of the Compliance Committee Chairperson.
- 3 The Director of the Office of Legal Compliance must issue a report to the Compliance Committee if an Investigative Committee is established.
- 4 Necessary items concerning the Investigative Committee's investigation procedures shall be stipulated separately.
- 5 When deemed urgent by the Investigative Committee, the Chairperson of the Board must halt the individual or organization's actions that are suspected of violation of Compliance Promotion Regulations and enact any other required measures.

Separate to the role of the Compliance Committee, Article 8 of the Ritsumeikan Trust Compliance Promotion Regulations stipulates the following duties and authority of the Director of the Office of Legal Compliance.

(Duties and Authority of the Director of the Office of Legal Compliance)

Article 8: Duties and authority of the Directory of the Office of Legal Compliance are listed as follows:

- (1) To collect information and ascertain the compliance situation in each organization.
- (2) To conduct processing procedures for cases of compliance issues or investigations on claims stipulated in the Ritsumeikan Trust Confidential Informant Claim Processing Regulations.
- (3) To report findings of the investigations concerned in the preceding item to the Compliance Committee and request decisions as needed.
- (4) To request organizations to make improvements when the Compliance Committee determines there have been actions that constitute compliance issues.
- (5) To report the details of processing mentioned in the preceding item to the Chairperson of the Board.
- (6) To conduct legal reviews of documents and request necessary corrections.
- (7) To enact any other measures required to prevent actions of non-compliance from occurring.
- (8) To undertake consultation pertaining to compliance
- (9) Any other items ordered by the Chairperson of the Board

In terms of measures for assisting the Chairperson of the Board, both the Office of Inspections and Auditing and the Office of Legal Compliance carry out this role, with audits functioning to ascertain any problems found after conducting a review of enforcement outcome. The Office of Legal Compliance however deals in preventative measures to alleviate inappropriate decision making or implementation and ensuring that decision-

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making and enforcement processes are carried out appropriately.

Likewise, the Compliance Committee carries out the role of supervising the status of compliance initiatives, understanding the circumstances involved with handling any incidents that arise, and advising the Chairperson of the Board on any internal control issues and corrective measures.

(3) Is the internal quality assurance system functioning properly?

As previously stated, the Self-Assessment Committee plays a focal role in achieving internal quality assurance university-wide at APU. The Self-Assessment Committee is comprised of the Vice-President, Deans, Division Managers and other officials. If a self-assessment brings to light an issue that needs dealing with, the official in question will be notified at the meeting of the Self-Assessment Committee and appropriate measures taken. If the measures require to be decided by the University, they will be brought up for discussion at the University Senate Meeting.

<Enhancing Self-Assessment Activities at the Individual and Organizational Level>

In order to develop PDCA cycle implementation, we will analyze the findings of this report to formulate methodical and verifiable achievement targets, stipulate action plans to achieve these targets, and decide on which division will be responsible for carrying out each action plan. This report will form the starting point from which we will tie the processes leading up to the 2015 Accreditation Screening with the implementation and organization of self-assessment activities.

In addition, we will endeavor to implement continual improvements in education, research, and other fields, to reach a level of international quality assurance pertinent to the processes being carried out by the College of International Management and the Graduate School of Management in order to achieve AACSB International Accreditation.

With regards to individual faculty, the university uses a summary of the "Class Evaluation Survey" results as part of the previously outlined Faculty Assessment System. In addition, the Faculty Assessment System promotes reform and improvement in a variety of fields through encouraging faculty to carry out self-assessment in the areas of teaching, research and community service, as well as giving them the opportunity to discuss their progress and assessment with the Dean and Center Director. With regards to research activities, through being required to write up and submit an "Individual Research Funds Progress Report and Research Plan for Next Year", we hope to encourage faculty to reflect on whether they have used their individual research allowance in accordance to their research plan.

With regards to individual staff, self-assessment reports by division and administrative managers, reflect on office organization and administrative roles over the course of the year, aiming to improve management capabilities within the workplace. Office staff are also required to submit self-assessment forms. These assessments are then used as reference

documents for staff evaluations and consideration for personnel transfers.

<Promotion of the Education and Research Activity Data Base>

In 2012 we started the IR Project so that we could use objective data to get a better understanding of the student, faculty and class situation. Inputting a student's ID number brings up an array of information pertaining to enrollment, academic studies, extracurricular activities and career path. We are currently working towards developing a Data Warehouse that allows the above mentioned function called the "Enrollment Management" system.

With regards to faculty research activities, APU formulated and operates its own unique "Researcher Database". The university also transmits research achievements both within Japan and internationally. The data inputted into the Researcher Database is, with faculty agreement, sent to the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), as well as added to the ReaD&Reseachmap, an online collaborative network run by the National Institute of Informatics (NII), and thus APU is succeeding in broadening its scope for transmitting research achievement information (Document 10-3). For the purpose of accumulating information in a timely fashion, The Research Database runs on an incentive system that requires faculty to input their latest research data in order to satisfy criteria to receive their individual research funds and as part of their faculty assessment (Document 10-4 and 10-5).

< Reflecting External Opinions>

The University Evaluation Committee, established as an advisory board to the President, carries out an evaluation into the objectivity and adequacy of the APU's self-assessment outcome. The President then receives advice from the Committee, which is then reflected in Trust and university plans, as outlined in Article 1, Article 2, Paragraph 2, and Article 3, Paragraph 1 of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University University Evaluation Committee Regulations. This "AY2012 Self-Assessment Report(Trial Version)" will be subject to next external evaluation in 2013.

<Response to Recommendations made by MEXT and Certified Evaluation Bodies>

Recommendations by the Japan University Accreditation Association

Following the university evaluation carried out by the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in AY2008, APU received 9 advice and 1 recommendation. Based on the advice and recommendation, the colleges and graduate schools assessed themselves and an improvement report was drawn up. After verification from the Self-Assessment Committee, the report was submitted to the JUAA on July 26, 2012. The university received a "Review Outcome" report with the date of March 15, 2013 from the JUAA. In response to our Improvement Report, the JUAA said that they were able to verify that APU "took on board the advice and recommendation sincerely, making strong efforts towards improvement". With regards to "Degree Conferral and Approval of Completion", the JUAA

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said that screening of master's research reports in place of master's theses was now being under consideration to assure transparency, objectivity and stringency and that they looked forward to future achievements.

2. Self Assessment

[1] Items That Are Showing Results

<1> Promoting international quality assurance initiatives

The AACSB International Accreditation process being carried out by the College of International Management and the Graduate School of Management takes into account international quality assurance as it strives towards internal quality assurance in the areas of education and research.

[2] Items Requiring Improvement

<1> Late Response to "Basic Evaluation" and "Achievement Level Assessment"

APU has been carrying out assessments in line with its "Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Self-Assessment Framework for 2008AY and Beyond – Proposal of the PDCA Cycle along with the Trust Action Plan", and based on the Plan Sheet (Action Plan) and Assessment Sheet (Progress Report) submitted to the Trust, as well as the advice and recommendation and advice received from the JUAA. However, initiatives to date have been missing some perspective on "Basic Evaluation" and "Achievement Level Assessment".

<2> Failure to Respond to the Recommendations made for the AY2008 Evaluation Results Regarding the advice received on the AY2008 University Evaluation Report, we are still in the process of reviewing to assure transparency, objectivity and stringency involved in the screening of research reports in place of Master's theses. A conclusion has yet to be reached.

3. Development Policies towards the Future

[1] Items That Are Showing Results

<1> Promoting international quality assurance initiatives

The College of International Management and Graduate School of Management initiatives adopted as Good Practices are being spread university-wide.

[2] Items Requiring Improvement

<1> Late Response to "Basic Evaluation" and "Achievement Level Assessment"

Striving to improve self-assessment and evaluation, we are formulating the AY2012 Self-Assessment Report(Trial Version) in line with the university standards and evaluation items

required by the JUAA. In addition, we will initiate a scheduling system during AY2013 to ensure assessment and evaluation is carried out in accordance to JUAA required evaluation items.

<2> Failure to Respond to Recommendations made for the AY2008 Evaluation Results

The review into the transparency, objectivity and stringency involved in the screening of research reports in place of Master's theses is being carried out and necessary measures will be taken to coincide with the AY2014 graduate school curriculum reforms.

4. Supporting Documents

10-1 AY2013 Plans for APU Divisions and Offices (Administration Meeting on December 13, 2012)

10-2 http://www.apu.ac.jp/home/about/index.php?content_id=157

(Last accessed on December 21, 2012)

10-3 Data Provision to ReaD&Researchmap and Updating (Faculty Discussion Meeting on April 25, 2012)

10-4 AY2012 Faculty Assessment System (University Senate on October 16, 2012)

10-5 AY2013 Procedures for Individual Research Funds Payment (University Senate on December 18, 2012)