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Special Issue

Ritsumeikan Style 2026

Toward the AY 2026 Plenary Council

To All Undergraduate and Graduate Students of Ritsumeikan University

As we begin AY 2026, we would like to share the contemporary challenges we are currently facing and the future we aim to envision from them.

The assumptions of the society surrounding us are undergoing significant changes. In the international community, divisions and conflicts continue, and the order and values that were once taken for granted are no longer self-evident. And in light of this global situation, we must again question what the university's academic philosophy of "Peace and Democracy" means today and how it can be given concrete form. This also raises the question of how we, as students at Ritsumeikan University, should think and act. At the same time, abnormal weather and natural disasters caused by climate change have already become everyday issues, and they are challenges that cannot be separated from our communities and daily lives. Furthermore, the rapid advancement of digital technologies, including AI, is continuously reshaping the way we learn and work, as well as our very vision of the future at an unprecedented pace. These changes are by no means confined to "events happening in a distant world;" they have the potential to impact each and every one of you in various ways—through your studies, research, student life, and future choices.

How we perceive this era and engage with it is directly connected to the future each student will build and live, and the efforts to envision and realize that future themselves are becoming increasingly important. We are now being called upon to actively consider "how we will engage with society and what kind of value we will create." The process of revising the Ritsumeikan Charter and the desires set forth in it to be "independent, democratic, fair, open, nonviolent" and "realize world peace" are clues that you can refer to in your own daily learning and dialogue to think about and put into practice what they mean. To encounter people from diverse backgrounds, confront differences in values,

and experience decision-making through dialogue. Please think of your student life as such a place of learning.

In these rapidly changing times, the role of education and research at universities is being questioned once again. We believe that universities are not only places for accumulating and passing on knowledge, but also places to confront social issues, ask new questions, and continue to think critically amidst the intersection of diverse perspectives and values. It is our students, who play an important role in this process.

At Ritsumeikan University, we have always viewed our students not merely as participants in a one-way relationship, where one side "teaches" and the other "learns," in an educational and research setting, but rather as active contributors who, while each assuming different roles and responsibilities, work together to envision and shape the ideal form of the University. In this document, we define "Academy Co-creation" as an approach through which the University advances improvements and reforms in education and research, student life, and student-led extracurricular activities through dialogue and collaboration with students. The relationship with the "Academy Co-creation Activities" advocated and promoted by the Student Union will be discussed again in Chapter 2.

Based on this approach to Academy co-creation, this document serves as a starting point for us to reflect together on the future of Ritsumeikan University and the nature of learning. Regarding the perspectives and directions outlined here, we hope to engage in dialogue with you, the students, to understand where you find common ground and where you feel there are shortcomings or areas of concern, based on your personal experiences and perspectives, so that we can share this understanding ahead of the Plenary Council meeting. We hope this will serve as an opportunity for each of you to reflect on these issues from your own perspective.

Chapter I: Significance and Positioning of the AY 2026 Plenary Council

To consider the future direction of Ritsumeikan University

1. Changes in the social and higher education environment surrounding universities

Today, the social and higher education environments surrounding universities are changing dramatically in ways that are directly linked to how each student learns and lives in the future. These changes are not distant concerns but have already become embedded in university learning and research in the form of questions such as, “Why is this kind of learning required today?” and “How can the abilities acquired at university be applied in society?”

First, the progress of a declining population against the backdrop of a declining birthrate has had a significant impact on Japanese universities as a whole. The number of 18-year-olds is expected to continue declining, making it difficult for universities to maintain the traditional teaching and research model based on students enrolling at age 18. This goes beyond talking about stiffer competition between universities to asking fundamental questions such as, “How can we explain to society the value of studying at university?” and “What learning is really needed by society going forward?” For students as well, it is more important than ever not to regard admission to university as the goal itself, but to consider what they will learn and what capabilities they will develop through their university education.

In addition, in recent years, the national higher education policy, in conjunction with science, technology, and innovation policies, has shifted significantly toward positioning universities’ individual development and research functions as central to social growth and the creation of new value. In addition to strengthening basic research, universities are expected to connect research outcomes to the resolution of social issues and the creation of innovation. These policy trends represent a move toward re-envisioning universities not merely as places for imparting knowledge, but as institutions that envision the future of society and advance talent development, research, and integrated collaboration with society to realize that vision.

Next, changes in the economic and industrial structure, coupled with rapid advances in digital technology, are significantly altering the skills society demands. As the use of generative AI through large-scale learning rapidly expands, the nature of expertise and knowledge itself continues to undergo significant changes. At the same time, there is a growing demand for the ability to confront fundamental questions underlying issues for which there is no single correct answer and to think and act creatively in collaboration with others. For example, the group work, project-based learning, and trial-and-error encountered in PBL courses are forms of learning deeply connected to these societal conditions.

This shift is affecting not only university education but also high school education. In national policy, there is growing discussion about moving away from the traditional practice of separating students into “humanities” and “science” at an early stage. Instead, there is a growing emphasis on the importance of equipping students, regardless of their academic track, with mathematical



and computational literacy, based on the premise that they will utilize AI and data science. This does not simply mean increasing the number of science and engineering professionals. Rather, it indicates that students in every field are now expected to understand data and technology, view societal issues from multiple perspectives, and create value through collaboration with others.

As complex issues such as global environmental problems, local challenges, and social divisions become increasingly apparent, there are growing instances where merely mastering a single field of expertise is insufficient to resolve them. Consequently, the approach of bridging expertise and perspectives across different fields, and building consensus through repeated dialogue with others who hold different values while maintaining mutual respect, has become essential regardless of the career path one chooses to pursue. This means that university learning is expected not only to deepen expertise but also to cultivate interdisciplinary perspectives and maintain points of contact with society through collaboration with others.

Furthermore, the environment surrounding science and technology and research is undergoing significant changes. Science and technology are regarded as important factors that not only generate new products and services but also influence economic growth, the resolution of social issues, international relations, and national security. For this reason, although recent trends in Japan have increasingly focused on research with direct social and industrial applications while reaffirming the importance of basic research, universities themselves must once again reassess and recognize its value. Also, for students as well, research and scholarship are being reinterpreted not as something that is completed solely within the university, but as something that holds meaning within the context of its relationship with society. The experience of working on graduation research, a master’s thesis, or a doctoral thesis is not just a matter of completing assignments, but an opportunity to reconsider the very questions that underlie

research and to establish one’s own perspective. And it is this ability to keep asking questions that is more important than the tangible value of research in society.

Ritsumeikan University does not take the stance of preparing easy answers to these questions and communicating them to students. Now, more than ever, when the very role of the university is being called into question, we believe it is our responsibility to share these questions with each and every student, to think through them together, and to continue addressing them in practice.

What does it mean to cultivate “individuals who can truly thrive” in a rapidly changing society, and what should universities provide and support, and what questions should ultimately be entrusted to students themselves? There is no predetermined correct answer to these questions. The university regards undergraduate and graduate students not merely as recipients of support, but as active participants who together reexamine the meaning of university learning, and will continue to explore its future direction through trial and error while remaining connected with society.

Amid these changes in the social and higher education landscape, Ritsumeikan University, as a private educational institution, is being asked what it should preserve, what it should change, and what role it should play as a university. The rapid progress of AI, demographic changes, instability in the international community, and fluctuations in values and social structures demand that universities not only improve their systems and measures as an extension of the past, but also question the nature of education and research itself.

What kind of place for learning and research should Ritsumeikan University become, and how should the University support each student in continuing to learn, take on challenges, and create new value in the society of the future? The answer is not predetermined. That is precisely why sharing this question with all of you, our students, bringing together your individual experiences and concerns, and reflecting on it together will serve as the starting point for the AY 2026 Plenary Council.

2. What changes in the social and university environment have asked about undergraduate and graduate student learning

The changes in society and the university environment described in the previous section directly raise questions not only about university systems and administration, but also about the very content of learning and the attitudes toward learning of each undergraduate and graduate student. University study has become an important period for building the foundation for a career in a rapidly changing society.

The first question being raised is not just “what to learn,” but also “how to learn.” As societal changes accelerate, many of the challenges students face after graduation can no longer be solved simply by applying the knowledge they acquired during their studies. Rather, in situations where problems themselves are not clearly defined, the ability to identify and formulate questions on their own, discern and select the knowledge and information required, and move forward through repeated trial and error has become more important than ever. These social demands are the reason why learning methods such as group work, project-based learning, practical training, and fieldwork are emphasized.

In particular, assuming a division between the humanities and sciences and confining learning solely within one’s own area of specialization will become increasingly difficult. As AI and data science are utilized across society, students learning in the humanities field are also expected to have a basic understanding of mathematics and information, while students in the science field likewise require an understanding of people, society, ethics, institutions, and culture. For undergraduate and graduate students, it is becoming increasingly important to adopt a learning approach that allows them to deepen their expertise while remaining open to knowledge and methodologies from other fields, thereby reframing the questions themselves.

Second, undergraduate and graduate students are now expected to view learning from the dual perspectives of “personal growth” and their “relationship with society.” University study is a process of deepening one’s expertise and cultivating one’s interests and strengths, while also providing opportunities to consider what kinds of social challenges and values that learning is connected to. In addition to deepening academic inquiry, the experience of conducting research and analysis increasingly entails considering how those questions and findings can be utilized within society. Perspectives such as “How does this research relate to specific challenges faced by whom?” and “How should the findings be communicated?” are increasingly being recognized in the process of learning and research.

Third, another important change is that the settings in which learning takes place are no longer confined to university classrooms. In addition to regular classes, the diverse experiences that extend both on and off campus, such as extracurricular activities, community and corporate collaboration projects, international exchange activities, volunteer activities, and entrepreneurship and

social practice, shape the learning of undergraduate and graduate students. These experiences are not merely a “list of activities,” but also serve to enhance the quality of learning itself by providing opportunities to think and act in collaboration with others and to reexamine one’s own values. Universities are expected to create environments that support students in giving meaning to these diverse learning experiences, reflecting on them, and building on them in the future.

Learning at university should not be viewed as a one-way process of applying knowledge acquired in the classroom to society. Rather, it also be seen as a reciprocal activity in which new questions are found in the contact with societal issues and those questions are brought back to study and research. Cross-disciplinary education and the consideration of double majors have the potential to provide institutional support for this broadening of learning. For undergraduate and graduate students, gaining experience in reexamining challenges from multiple perspectives, while remaining grounded in their own fields of specialization, and connecting with different fields and real-world settings is a key factor in enhancing the quality of their future learning.

For graduate students, in addition to deepening their expertise through research, it has become more important than ever to consider how their research outcomes can be connected to society and what roles they should fulfill as researchers or highly specialized professionals. While respecting the freedom and autonomy of research, adopting an attitude that considers the potential significance and value of research within society is closely linked to future career choices and professional development.

In this way, changes in society and the university environment have highlighted the importance of students not only acquiring knowledge, but

also identifying and formulating their questions on their own, structuring their own learning, and reflecting on the meaning of that learning within the context of relationships with society. At the same time, questions are also being raised regarding how universities should support such forms of learning and how they should be linked to students’ own initiative. Learning at a university is no longer simply about efficiently acquiring predefined answers; it is increasingly becoming a process of shaping one’s own questions and direction, one that involves uncertainty and trial and error.

It is also important to be aware of the values and ways of thinking that you rely on to think and act in your learning. The Ritsumeikan Charter, as amended at the end of AY 2025, is a guideline for the overall philosophy and direction of the academy for the future, and is the foundation for thinking about what the university values and where it will go. It is not enough to be stated as a philosophy, but it must be referenced repeatedly in daily learning, dialogue, and student life, and to have its meaning widely shared, leading to one’s own actions and practices.

Therefore, it is important for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff to think together about the nature of learning and growth and the enhancement of the research environment, and to share those understandings. In addition to improving its current initiatives, the university seeks to achieve these goals through implementing initiatives in the second half aimed at realizing the objectives set forth in R2030 Challenge Design, including becoming a next-generation research university and fostering creative individuals, as well as through discussions aimed at concretizing those goals. As part of this process, the AY 2026 Plenary Council occupies an important position.



3. The types of undergraduate and graduate students Ritsumeikan seeks to produce in light of changes in the social and university environment

In light of these changes in society and learning, the university regards as an important direction the development of students who go beyond the acquisition of knowledge, formulate their own questions, and move between reflection and practice through engagement with diverse others and connections with research and society, thereby generating new value. We would like to deepen discussions through the Plenary Council on how the university should support learning and growth, while reflecting on these issues in light of your own experiences and vision for the future.

In doing so, the emphasis is not on capacity building that is closed to a specific field, but rather the ability to deepen one's expertise while understanding knowledge and methods from different fields, and to address complex societal challenges from multiple perspectives. National policies have

also identified shortages of science, engineering, and digital talent, as well as the need to move beyond the traditional divide between the humanities and sciences. The university views this not merely as a matter of adjusting enrollment quotas by field, but as a challenge to cultivate human resources capable of generating new value through cross-disciplinary learning, interdisciplinary integration, and collaboration with society, making full use of the broad academic disciplines available at a comprehensive university.

This vision, while centered on fostering innovative and creative individuals, is not intended for only a select group of students. Rather, it is based on diverse students, from undergraduates to graduate students, exercising self-authorization according to their interests and objectives, and taking the initiative to shape their own way of life

and careers while making sense of their own learning and experiences. It is also seen as interrelated that from such a diverse learning and growth process, individuals with high expertise and inquisitive power to lead the next generation of research and innovation will be developed.

With these diverse possibilities for growth in mind, the university will create an environment in which each undergraduate and graduate student can deepen their own questions and continue learning through engagement with society, while connecting research and education, undergraduate and graduate studies, and various learning opportunities.

We view the current Plenary Council discussions as an opportunity to deepen our thinking together with students regarding this vision for undergraduate and graduate students.

4. As we enter the second half of R2030



AY 2026 marks a milestone academic year in which Ritsumeikan University will transition to the second half (AY 2026 to AY 2030) of the R2030 Challenge Design, a future concept that has been set forth, based on the goals and issues reached in the first half. In the previous half of the year, various initiatives based on future visions have been carried out, such as advancing research, expanding graduate education, developing creative individuals, promoting globalization, and advancing diversity. AY 2026 is positioned at a period when it is necessary to reexamine how these efforts are embodied in current teaching, research, and student support practices, and how they are connected to the learning and research experience of each undergraduate and graduate student.

In the R2030 second-half plan, the university's vision is to realize a "next-generation research university" and develop "innovative and creative individuals." To achieve this, five strategic objectives and the key policies and measures that support them are organized. The Operating Plan 2026 is the first annual plan to be formulated starting from the "main business strategies" set out in this second-half plan, and plays an important role in transitioning the direction for the second half to the implementation stage. In other words, AY 2026 marks the starting point for steadily implementing the policies and measures set out in the second-half plan as concrete activities across departments and operational units, and for carrying them forward into subsequent years while evaluating

their progress and outcomes.

In doing so, it is important to view national policy trends and various competitive funding programs not merely as opportunities to secure external funding, but also as policy tools for reviewing and accelerating the direction of education and research pursued by the university.

On the other hand, as opportunities for learning in education, research, student life, and extracurricular activities become more diverse and sophisticated, the overall picture and interconnectedness of these opportunities are becoming increasingly difficult for undergraduate and graduate students to see. The R2030 second-half plan emphasizes connections between research and education, curricular and extracurricular activities, and the university and society, and calls for the comprehensive design of an environment that supports the challenges and growth of undergraduate and graduate students. It is important for us, as a university, that we share with our students what we value as a university and what kind of growth and vision we seek to support through concrete initiatives based on our operating plan.

AY 2026 is an important academic year for us to check and reaffirm the relationship between the future vision of the university and the learning of undergraduate and graduate students, while being aware of the linkage between the R2030 second-half plan and the annual operating plan in this way, and to nurture a common understanding for the next development. Making the most of this academic year as an opportunity for the university and students to jointly consider the nature of learning, research, and student life and translate those discussions into practice will contribute to meaningfully strengthening the initiatives of the second half of R2030.

5. The Role of the AY 2026 Plenary Council

The Plenary Council, which will be held in AY 2026, is intended to serve as a forum for confirming the university’s fundamental principles and direction through dialogue with members of the university, including undergraduate and graduate students, and for sharing issues that require ongoing deliberation. The open sessions of the Plenary Council have been open to all members of the university and have served as a forum for addressing a wide range of issues. Although the purpose of the Council is not to reach immediate conclusions on every issue, all members are expected to recognize the understandings and areas of agreement that emerge through discussion as reflecting the university’s current state and to carry them forward into future initiatives.

Certain conclusions reached through the Council do not represent a one-sided presentation of the university’s plans or initiatives. Rather, they make visible the points confirmed through dialogue with undergraduate and graduate students regarding how the current learning and research environment is understood and how it should be improved going forward. At the same time, it is an effort to re-connect the “now” and “the future” of the university by responding to the sense of learn-

ing and the awareness of issues among undergraduate and graduate students.

In this sense, issues such as cross-disciplinary education, addressing growth fields, advancing the educational and research environments to realize a next-generation research university, and linking research with social practice cannot be addressed through institutional design by the university alone. These issues must be considered in connection with undergraduate and graduate students’ own experiences of how they make sense of their learning and research and what kinds of learning opportunities they need. At the AY 2026 Plenary Council, it is important to confirm the direction of such education and research reform in the second half of R2030 from the perspective of undergraduate and graduate students, and to form a common understanding for future concrete implementation.

The AY 2026 Plenary Council is not merely a forum for concluding discussions at the end of this academic year; rather, as part of Academy co-creation, it serves as a milestone opportunity for the university to demonstrate its commitment to continuing dialogue and deliberation with undergraduate and graduate students, using the issues and perspectives identified here as a starting point.

Together with certain conclusions and questions that should continue to be explored, we will further solidify the direction and breadth of our efforts for the second half of R2030.

The insights and direction established through the AY 2026 Plenary Council will serve as the foundation for the university’s planned R2030 second half initiatives, and will lead to thinking and shaping the university’s image with undergraduate and graduate students, which will support each and every undergraduate and graduate student to realize their own learning and growth and to take on the next challenge.

In this sense, the AY 2026 Plenary Council is also a forum in which the university and undergraduate and graduate students can together consider what value Ritsumeikan University should create as a next-generation research university in light of changing social conditions and how it should cultivate individuals equipped with expertise and practical capabilities, as well as innovative and creative talent, in the AI era. We will discuss current issues in learning and student life in conjunction with envisioning the future direction that Ritsumeikan University seeks to pursue.

6. List of key themes and annual schedule for AY 2026

At the AY 2026 Plenary Council, discussions are expected to proceed broadly along the following lines.

Discussions are expected to cover topics such as enhancing the education and research environment, student life, future pathways and careers, and the campus environment. In addition, the direction of education and research reform for the second half of R2030 will be discussed as necessary, including cross-disciplinary learning, fundamental knowledge required in the age of AI and data science, the connection between expertise and societal issues, and the way graduate schools should be advanced and highly specialized indi-

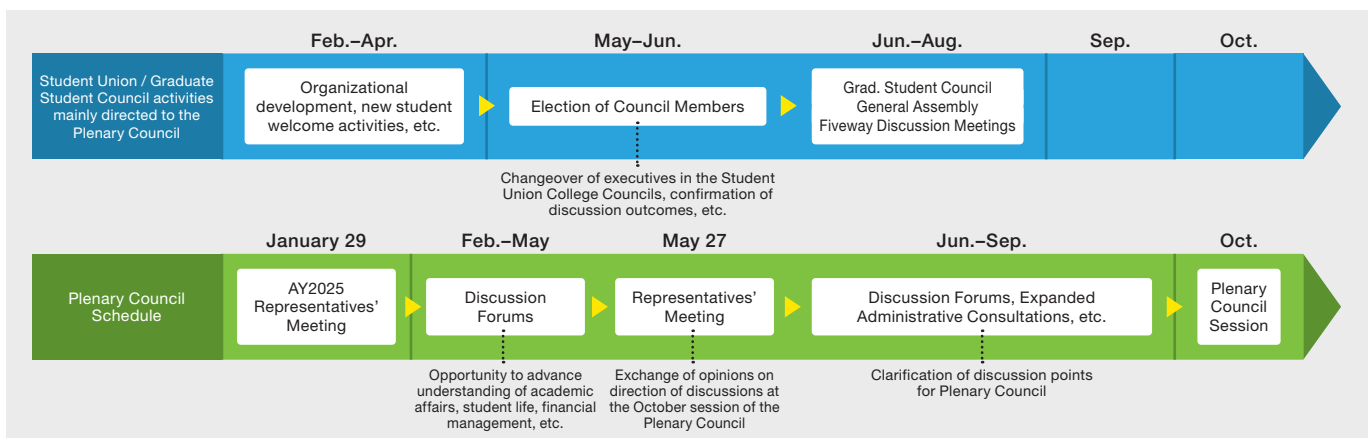
viduals should be developed.

As part of the annual schedule, key issues will be organized and views exchanged during the spring semester through meetings of representatives from the Plenary Council and discussions between the university and the Student Union and Graduate Student Council. An open session of the Plenary Council will then be held in the fall semester (October). After that, while reflecting on the discussions, we will share future directions and challenges by January of the following year. Through the accumulation of such dialogue throughout the year, we will work to build a university in which undergraduate and graduate students can participate with a

genuine sense of involvement.

In addition, the university must work together with undergraduate and graduate students to consider how student fees and financial resources should support these educational and research reforms, from the perspectives of providing education that reflects the significance of student fees and ensuring that students experience learning and personal growth commensurate with the student fees they pay. Ensuring that improvements in learning opportunities and research environments are experienced and felt by each undergraduate and graduate student is one of the key issues addressed by the Plenary Council.

AY2026 Plenary Council Schedule



Chapter II: The Plenary Council as a Process of Academy Co-creation — Building on Discussions Since AY 2022 —

Chapter 1 covered the significance and role of the Plenary Council in AY 2026 in light of changes in the social and higher education landscapes, the circumstances surrounding undergraduate and graduate learning, and the milestone marking the latter half of the R2030 period.

Building on discussions that have taken place since the open session of the Plenary Council in AY 2022, this chapter examines specifically how Academy co-creation has been implemented as a collaborative process in which undergraduate students, graduate students, and the University engage as equal partners in discussions on the University's present and future, while recognizing their respective positions and roles, to enhance academic affairs and further develop the University. The chapter then examines the respective roles of the Plenary Council, Plenary Council Representatives' Meeting, five-way discussion meetings, and various other forums, as well as how they have functioned in coordination with one another.

Before turning to the main discussion of this chapter, the following clarifies the relationship between the term "Academy co-creation" as used here and the "Academy co-creation activities" advocated and promoted by the Student Union. The term "Academy co-creation" as used here refers to an approach in which the University advances improvements and reforms in education and research, student life, and student-led extracurricular activities through dialogue and collaboration with students. In contrast, the "Academy co-creation activities" advocated and promoted by the Student Union are means through which the Student Union has gathered feedback from students and contributed to enhancing academic affairs and developing the University through consultations and discussions with the University. The relationship between the two is outlined below in light of discussions that have taken place since AY 2022.

At the Plenary Council in AY 2022, discussions on student fees and finance policy identified the question of how undergraduate and graduate students should participate in enhancing academic affairs and developing the University as a central issue. The Student Union argued that discussions should extend beyond merely the appropriateness of student fee amounts, and called for the ongoing establishment of forums where information could be shared and discussions held on policies and measures related to enhancing academic affairs and developing the University—the purposes for which tuition is used—not to obtain consent for decisions but rather to provide opportunities for the Student Union to participate in the decision-making process. In response, the University announced that, in addition to establishing forums for discussing student fees and finance policy with the Student Union, it would also create opportunities for multilevel discussions with undergraduate and graduate students on enhancing academic affairs and developing the University.

Dialogue on this topic moved beyond the traditional relationship in which students, as those who bear the fees, simply present their demands to the University. Instead, it encompassed discussions on a model in which students themselves, as active participants in shaping the University, consider how student fee revenue should be used to

improve academic conditions and the student living environment, and how the University should be developed to benefit both current and future students. A significant outcome of the AY 2022 discussions was recognition of the need for a process in which the University and students exchange ideas and perspectives on a more equal footing when determining and implementing policies, rather than the University presenting predetermined solutions for the students to consider.

Building on this, at the first Plenary Council Representatives' Meeting in AY 2023, the Student Union announced a shift in the focus of its activities from traditional efforts to meet student demands to Academy co-creation activities. The Student Union also expressed its intention to evolve beyond discussions on the appropriateness of student fee amounts and engage in dialogue on how student fee revenue should be used to support education and other initiatives, as well as on the nature of its involvement in education and research.

The Academy co-creation activities referred to here are means through which the Student Union has gathered feedback from students and contributed to enhancing academic affairs and developing the University through consultations and discussions with the University. The great significance of these activities lies in the fact that the issues to be addressed are identified by the students based on their concerns—encompassing not only immediate issues affecting their lives but also approaches to learning, student life, student-led extracurricular activities, the campus environment, and even the enhancement of academic affairs and development of the University in consideration of future students—as well as in the fact that the Student Union has continually presented the University with student feedback through ongoing dialogue.

In AY 2024, it was confirmed that the Student Union's Academy co-creation activities had expanded to cover both specific, individual issues as well as longer-term challenges through five-party discussion meetings with the student associations of each college, campus discussion meetings, and discussions with the Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Student Affairs, Office of Finance and Accounting, and other administrative offices. The University has expressed its high regard for the Student Union's efforts and recognizes that putting the R2030 Challenge Design into practice will require increasing the impact of student participation, including in Academy co-creation activities, through collaboration with the Student Union and the Graduate Student Council from the earliest stages and discussions on how issues identified by students relate to the University's policies and plans.

In addition, the Graduate Student Council has continued to poll graduate students to identify their views on issues such as the research and learning environment, financial support, and post-graduation career development in order to make further improvements through dialogue with the University. Since AY 2024, the Graduate Student Council has strengthened the foundation for identifying the actual circumstances and challenges facing grad-



uate students and for considering improvement measures together with the University through efforts such as bolstering its organizational structure, enhancing collaboration with the councils of individual graduate schools, holding campus exchange events, and conducting university-wide surveys of graduate students.

While the Graduate Student Council's efforts are not identical to the Student Union's Academy co-creation activities, they nevertheless represent important practices that embody the concept of "Academy co-creation activities" as used here. Graduate students themselves have worked to identify issues related to their research environment and career development, seeking to bring about improvements through dialogue with the University, and their participation is particularly impactful in the course of realizing a next-generation research university.

Conceptually, the term "Academy co-creation activities" as used here is broader in scope, encompassing not only the Student Union's Academy co-creation activities but also the Graduate Student Council's efforts to gather feedback from graduate students and work with the University to address issues related to the research environment, financial support, career development, and other matters. The independent activities of the Student Union and the Graduate Student Council should, however, not be regarded as measures set forth by the University itself. The Student Union's Academy co-creation activities and the Graduate Student Council's efforts to promote graduate student self-governance and participation are both independently and autonomously led by their respective members. While they are closely related to the University's concept of Academy co-creation, they are not one and the same.

Accordingly, this chapter distinguishes between the Student Union's Academy co-creation activities and the Graduate Student Council's efforts to gather feedback from graduate students and to engage in discussions and propose improvements regarding the research environment, financial support, and career development, with the recognition that all such activities are autonomously led by their respective organization. At the same time, the University recognizes that these initiatives comprise an important foundation for Academy co-creation activities, through which improvements and reforms in education, research, student life, student-led extracurricular activities, and other areas are advanced through dialogue and collaboration with undergraduate and graduate students.

Going forward, it will be necessary to periodi-

cally review and refine the usage and shared understanding of the terms “Academy co-creation” and “Academy co-creation activities” through discussions between the Student Union, the Graduate Student Council, the University, and other stakeholders, as well as through future deliberations by the Plenary Council. The framework presented here should therefore be understood as a representation of the current stage of that ongoing

discussion.

In light of that, this chapter presents Academy co-creation as a process of dialogue and collaboration through which undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff each leverage their own perspectives and experiences to create opportunities to consider the University’s present and future. Building on the progress made through the Plenary Council, the Plenary Council

Representatives’ Meeting, five-party discussion meetings, discussions focused on specific topics, campus discussion meetings, and dialogue at the graduate school level, this chapter reviews the achievements of these efforts as well as the remaining challenges, and clarifies the role that the AY 2026 Plenary Council should fill.

1. Progress Made in Academy Co-creation and the Expanding Dialogue

Ever since the open session of the Plenary Council in AY 2022, opportunities for dialogue have been steadily expanding on multiple levels, including the Plenary Council Representatives’ meeting as well as five-party discussion meetings within each college, consultations at the departmental and campus levels involving the Student Union and student associations, discussions focused on specific topics with various University offices, and dialogue between the Graduate Student Council and the University.

Within these frameworks, the Student Union and student associations have gathered feedback from students, and brought up issues related to education, research, student life, student-led extracurricular activities, the campus environment,



and other matters during consultations and discussions with the University. In addition, the Graduate Student Council has identified issues relating to the research and learning environment, financial support, career development, and other matters for graduate students in order to make further improvements through dialogue with the University.

These efforts have provided opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in developing the University, and have formed a foundation for the University to pursue improvements and pilot new initiatives related to the learning environment, student life, and the research environment while taking student feedback and their actual circumstances into account.

A similarly diverse and multilayered process of dialogue and collaboration also took place while revising the Ritsumeikan Charter, which sets out the philosophy and future direction of the Academy and is closely connected to students’ daily learning and campus life. Beginning from the earliest stages of the review process, discussions were repeatedly held with the Student Union and the Graduate Student Council, including meetings on the drafting of the proposed revisions and explanations of the underlying policy. Even after the proposed revisions had been submitted, discussions were held with the Student Union and

Graduate Student Council, along with additional explanations (both in person and via video streaming). Thereafter, the review process continued in a collaborative manner, drawing on the results of multiple rounds of collecting feedback from across the University. In addition to revising the content of the Ritsumeikan Charter, this process also served as an opportunity to reexamine its significance together with undergraduate and graduate students.

At the same time, however, it would not be appropriate to claim that all undergraduate and graduate students are adequately aware of the achievements and challenges arising from these initiatives. There is a need to work together with undergraduate and graduate students to identify what information is not reaching them and determine how to communicate issues in a way that makes them feel more personally relevant.

It is also true that perceptions of and responses to these changes vary across colleges, graduate schools, and campuses. To make Academy co-creation efforts more impactful, it is important not only to provide opportunities for dialogue but also to make it easier to understand what was discussed, what issues were shared, and to what specific improvements or considerations the dialogue has led.

2. Division of Roles and Coordination Between the Plenary Council and Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting

In recent years, the Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting, as a body established under the Plenary Council, has served to identify topics for discussion and clarify disputes, drawing upon feedback and concerns expressed by undergraduate and graduate students through five-party discussion meetings, departmental and campus-level discussion meetings, discussions focused on specific topics, and various surveys (conducted by the Student Union, the Graduate Student Council, and the University among others).

Depending on the topic, the Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting has also functioned as a forum for sharing and outlining any underlying assumptions, disputes, and approaches to the review process, prior to the University coming to a decision.

The open session of the Plenary Council in AY 2022 served as a milestone, providing an opportunity for the University as a whole to reaffirm the assumptions and key issues that the University should share, as well as the nature of undergraduate and graduate student participation. Subsequently, the Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting has been responsible for sustaining and further developing these key points by organizing the issues presented at five-party discussion meetings and other discussion forums, and reflecting them in subsequent deliberations and instances of implementation.

Within this division of responsibilities, the open session of the Plenary Council and the Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting have functioned in close coordination. Each fulfills a distinct role, with the former serving as a forum for milestone

deliberations and the latter for the ongoing organization of key issues—thereby supporting a process of dialogue and collaboration in alignment with the concept of Academy co-creation.

For instance, the Student Union and student associations gathered feedback from undergraduate and graduate students on the impact of the academic calendar from AY 2025 onward on their studies and student life, and shared their feedback with the University through five-party discussion meetings and consultations with the Office of Academic Affairs. Building on views of student participation expressed at the open session of the Plenary Council in AY 2022, the Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting and other discussion forums have continued to organize and review these issues since AY 2023.

3. Specific Examples of Advancements in Academy Co-creation

Based on feedback from undergraduate and graduate students collected through surveys and meetings conducted by the Student Union and student associations, key issues relating to the renewal and use of the Learning Management System (LMS) were identified through the Plenary Council Representatives' Meeting and discussions with the Office of Academic Affairs, leading to further consideration and pilot initiatives by the University.

Similarly, with regard to the research environment, financial support, and career development for graduate students, considerations have continued to progress firmly grounded in the actual circumstances based on feedback and survey results compiled by the Graduate Student Council, including sharing issues through the Plenary Council Representatives' Meeting and in discussions with the Research Office and other administrative divisions.

In recent years, various improvements and pilot initiatives have been advanced through five-party

discussion meetings and further discussions at the faculty, graduate school, and campus levels. Sharing the outcomes of these efforts with the undergraduate and graduate students concerned has led to tangible changes in the environments surrounding learning, research, and student life. A central principle of Academy co-creation is that the University does not simply reply or present conclusions unilaterally. Instead, drawing on feedback and concerns from undergraduate and graduate students, the University and various stakeholder groups reaffirm their respective responsibilities and roles, and share information on their deliberative processes, achievements, and remaining challenges in order to lead to further pilot initiatives and improvements.

The University also sees the Kinugasa Art Village Festival (a new initiative launched by Ritsumeikan University in AY 2025) as a means of integrating student-led activities with support and cooperation provided by the University. Initiatives such

as these involve more than simply staging events. Through the processes of planning, coordination, experimentation, and refinement, they also provide students with opportunities to incorporate their interests and concerns in tangible ways.

In addition, the Ritsumeikan University Graduate School All-Campus Joint Research Exchange Meeting (a new initiative launched by the Ritsumeikan Graduate Student Council in AY 2025) was developed as a means for graduate students to interact with members of other graduate schools and campuses, expanding their research and career development networks.

While these initiatives are in line with the University's concept of Academy co-creation, it is essential to reexamine how they relate to the Academy co-creation activities promoted by the Student Union through ongoing dialogue, taking into account the operators and objectives of each.

4. Less Visible Issues and the Expected Role of Five-Party Discussion Meetings

In light of these developments, the first step of AY 2026 should be to draw attention to the initiatives developed since the open session of the Plenary Council in AY 2022, once again highlighting their position within the context of the University as a means of reaffirming the substantive progress made. Alongside university-wide discussions, it is also important to consider where issues emerging within individual colleges, graduate schools, and campuses stand within the broader framework of

Academy co-creation.

In particular, the five-party discussion meetings held within each college play an important role by providing opportunities to carefully discuss specific issues related to education, research and student life in each college. They also serve an important function in connecting issues that cannot readily be resolved at the college level with university-wide discussions, enabling them to be addressed during the Plenary Council Representa-

tives' Meeting and discussions focused on specific topics.

Similarly, with regard to graduate schools, discussions within each graduate school and consultations with the Graduate Student Council should serve to identify issues related to the research environment, financial support, career development, and other matters, and to promote improvements in line with the diverse circumstances of graduate students.

5. Context Leading Up the AY 2026 Plenary Council

The AY 2026 Plenary Council builds on the discussions with undergraduate and graduate students and initiatives undertaken since AY 2022, and serves as a milestone forum for confirming the progress achieved across the University and identifying issues that should remain under examination going forward.

At this stage, the point is not to unilaterally present the University's approach or policy direction. Rather, it is important to reaffirm—together with undergraduate and graduate students—the shared achievements and issues that remain under discussion, based on the Student Union's Academy co-creation activities and the Graduate Student Council's efforts to gather feedback from graduate students and propose improvements, as well as other issues shared through five-party discussion meetings, discussions focused on specific topics, campus discussion meetings, and other forums.

In addition, enhancing the substantive quality of Academy co-creation requires more than simply providing opportunities for dialogue. It is also nec-

essary to show how the matters discussed have been organized, how they have influenced policies and improvements, and what challenges remain to be addressed. The AY 2026 Plenary Council is an opportunity for the University as a whole to reaffirm this process of dialogue and collaboration for reflection in improvements and reforms in education, research, student life, student-led extracurricular activities, and other areas during the latter half of the R2030 period.

This chapter outlined the process of dialogue and collaboration with undergraduate and graduate students that has been ongoing since AY 2022, the Student Union's Academy co-creation activities, the Graduate Student Council's efforts to consolidate feedback from graduate students and propose improvements, and the University's approach to Academy co-creation in response to these initiatives.

Next, Chapter 3 reviews the major initiatives undertaken by Ritsumeikan University from AY 2022 through AY 2025, including those that have taken

shape through this ongoing process of dialogue and collaboration. In addition, Chapter 4 presents issues requiring further discussion with undergraduate and graduate students as the University enters the latter half of the R2030 period. These are provided as topics to be addressed through ongoing dialogue with undergraduate and graduate students, in line with the concept of Academy co-creation, to identify the challenges faced and consider the specifics of implementation.



Chapter III: Ritsumeikan University's Initiatives from AY 2022 to AY 2025 —Progress in the First Half of R2030 Toward Enriching Education, Research, and Student Life—

The four-year period from AY 2022, when the last Plenary Council was held, through AY 2025, has been a period in which Ritsumeikan University has made full-scale progress in its efforts to realize its vision of becoming a “next-generation research university” and “cultivating innovative and creative talent,” in accordance with the plan for the first half of the R2030 Challenge Design.

During this time, Ritsumeikan University has been pursuing mutually reinforcing initiatives in areas such as academic reform, the advancement of research, the expansion of graduate education, globalization, student support, career development support, and campus development. Furthermore, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, ways of learning, student life, and interpersonal interac-

tions have undergone significant changes, making the university experiences of both undergraduate and graduate students more diverse than ever.

This chapter will summarize the achievements and challenges of the major initiatives undertaken since AY 2022, focusing on how the environment has been developed to support the education, research, and student life of undergraduate and graduate students.

It should be noted that the initiatives discussed here include those that have led to concrete results and improvements through the Student Union's Academy Co-creation Activities, the collection of feedback by student associations, consultations at five-party discussion meetings, and the Graduate Student Council's efforts to collect graduate

students' opinions and engage in discussions with the university. These are closely related to the idea of “Academy Co-creation” as a university — that is, efforts to promote improvement and reform of education and research, student life, and extracurricular voluntary activities through dialogue and collaboration with students and graduate students.

As such, this chapter is organized so as not merely to review the university's achievements and milestones, but also to examine how these connect to the day-to-day education, research, and student life of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as to identify areas where our efforts have not yet reached them, serving as a foundation for future discussions.

1. Development of the Learning Environment and Academic Reform

In order to become a “next-generation research university” and cultivate “innovative and creative talent,” as outlined in the R2030 Challenge Design, the university has been advancing academic reforms and improving the learning environment by incorporating feedback from undergraduate and graduate students through discussions with the Student Union and the Graduate Student Council, as well as through five-party discussion meetings held at each college and graduate school.

First, to improve the learning environment, a new academic calendar was introduced in AY 2025, transitioning to a semester structure based on “95-minute classes × 14 weeks + 20 minutes of VOD, etc.” By eliminating Saturday classes and creating some breathing room in the schedule, this change has fostered an environment that facilitates a wide range of learning opportunities, including extracurricular activities, study abroad programs, and community and social engagement initiatives, in addition to the regular curriculum. In addition, in conjunction with the introduction of a student portal in AY 2026, the international standard Learning Management System “Moodle+R” was fully launched, establishing a platform to support learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Meanwhile, in terms of university-wide education reform, an emphasis has been placed on learning that integrates with specialized education, and to this end, we have been promoting English language education reform and the Mathematics, Data Science, and AI Education Program. This English education reform, building on discussions at the Plenary Council in AY 2022, confirmed a policy to gradually implement research- and discipline-integrated English education through to 2030. As part of the AY 2026 curriculum reform, the College of Letters, the College of Science and Engineering, the College of Gastronomy Management, and the College of Comprehensive Psychology will strengthen collaboration with specialized courses and expand English language education for students in their upper years of study. In addition, the College of Arts and Design, which was established in AY 2026, will also provide English language education that bridges research and specialization. As a result of these efforts, the number of undergrad-



uate students meeting the standard of B1 or higher in the CEFR, the international language proficiency framework, is projected to reach 18,632 (54.2%) in AY 2025, continuing to meet the ultimate SGU goal of 50% or higher.

In the liberal arts curriculum, the “Data Science + R Program (Fundamentals)” received certification under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's certification system for mathematics, data science, and AI education programs, in AY 2023, with the “Data Science + R Program (Applied Fundamentals)” receiving certification in AY 2024. These programs offer multiple courses via distance learning, creating an environment where students can study regardless of their department or campus. Students can begin taking these courses as early as their first year, and the curriculum is designed to allow for step-by-step learning regardless of academic background or prior knowledge. Upon completion, students are issued an Open Badge as a micro-credential. Furthermore, the fall semester of AY 2024 saw the launch of an inquiry-based course titled “Inquiry

and Research for Creating the Future” as part of the Liberal Arts Seminar, developing learning experiences that bridge inquiry-based learning in high school with research at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

In conjunction with these initiatives in undergraduate education, we have also been working to expand both the quality and quantity of our graduate education programs with the aim of establishing a next-generation research university. In the last eight years, the number of graduate students has increased by approximately 1,000, with 144 doctoral degrees awarded in AY 2025. In the first half of the year, we strengthened career support for graduate students and expanded educational and research opportunities in collaboration with research organizations, including the active participation of many graduate students in projects at research institutes and centers. In addition, the Teaching Fellow (TF) program has been offered as a full-time graduate course since AY 2025, allowing more graduate students to take part in pre-FD programs.

2. Advancing Research and Supporting Graduate Students and Early-Career Researchers

With a view to realizing a next-generation research university, Ritsumeikan University has formulated and implemented its Fourth Medium-Term Plan for Research Advancement (AY 2021–AY 2025), setting as its fundamental goal the “realization of a next-generation research university that generates new values for social coexistence and fosters creative talent.” With this goal in mind, we have established three visions for the university and have been working to advance research accordingly: (1) A university that enhances individual research capabilities through support tailored to researchers’ career stages; (2) A university that serves as a “hub of knowledge” by building global research networks and strengthening the international dissemination of research findings; and (3) A university that promotes interdisciplinary collaborative research and societal implementation to create and utilize “comprehensive knowledge.”

To realize these visions, we have implemented new research support measures, including the establishment of the Ritsumeikan Advanced Research Academy (RARA), the promotion of international collaborative research based on the Ritsumeikan Knowledge Nodes (RKN) initiative, and support for publishing in high-impact journals. As a result of these efforts, research has made steady progress, with the number of papers published in 2024 reaching 1,391 — an increase of approximately 1.5 times from ten years ago. The amount of external funding reached 5 billion yen in AY 2024, and 669 KAKENHI grants totaling 1.6 billion yen were received, ranking 20th nationally and 4th among private universities. Furthermore, through multiple successful applications for competitive grants totaling several billion yen—such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology’s “Program for Forming Japan’s Peak Research Universities” (J-PEAKS) and JAXA’s “Space Strategy Fund” (SX R&D Hub), our initiatives aimed at becoming a next-generation research university are gaining

recognition from external institutions as well.

In conjunction with these measures to advance research, we have also been providing support tailored to the career stages of doctoral students and other early-career researchers. In the realm of graduate education, building on the establishment of the Doctoral Career Path Promotion Office in 2010, we reorganized the office into the Graduate School Career Path Promotion Office in AY 2013, thereby establishing a system that provides integrated support for education, research, and career development. Through ongoing discussions with the Graduate Student Council, we are working to improve the research environment based on the needs of the parties involved.

In order to improve the research capabilities of graduate students, we have certified doctoral students as RARA Student Fellows and established a system of guidance by RARA Fellows, who serve as core researchers, as well as a system for them to participate in on-campus research institutes and centers as well as international collaborative research projects. This is expanding the environment for graduate students to take on the challenge of international-level research and deepen their expertise while collaborating with a diverse range of researchers.

In terms of financial support, in addition to student-fee waivers and support for research achievements through the university’s own scholarship programs, we have strengthened our efforts to utilize the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology’s “Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING)” program and to assist students in securing external funding, such as JSPS Research Fellowships and grants from private foundations. In this way, we place a high priority on expanding the foundation that allows graduate students to focus on their research without relying solely on internal funding.

In terms of career path support, we have also



promoted diverse career development through initiatives such as the “Young Researchers Development Program,” which hires PhD graduates as research fellows, and advanced professional internships conducted in collaboration with companies. As a result, more doctoral graduates, not only in science and engineering but also in the humanities and social sciences, are finding employment in the private sector, and there are now instances where companies are introducing new compensation systems that reflect the value of a PhD.

Furthermore, rather than confining research to graduate schools and researchers alone, the university has been working to create opportunities for students, from elementary, junior high, and high school levels, to experience the appeal and potential of research through collaboration with undergraduate students and our affiliated schools. Through initiatives such as the Rice Ball Seminars organized by research departments, doctoral students are given the opportunity to present their research to undergraduate students in different fields and students at affiliated schools. These experiences of cross-disciplinary dialogue and collaboration foster the ability to reexamine one’s research within the context of relationships with others and society, while remaining grounded in one’s specialized field.

3. Expansion of International Learning and Multicultural Collaborative Learning

Since AY 2022, Ritsumeikan University’s globalization efforts have shifted from the stage of launching new systems and initiatives to the stage of integrating them into the learning and daily lives of each and every student. With travel and international exchange — which had been restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic — now back to normal, many students are now able to study abroad and participate in learning experiences in multicultural environments.

During this time, the university has advanced initiatives such as study abroad programs, overseas internships, PBL, fieldwork, and multicultural joint courses. In addition to long-term study abroad and exchange programs, a wide range of options, including short-term programs, is now available, creating an environment where students can experience studying abroad in a way that suits them,

depending on the duration and content of the program.

There is also a growing range of international learning opportunities on campus. Centered around Beyond Borders Plaza (BBP), a global commons, we have organized events and other activities that provide opportunities for multicultural learning, thereby increasing the chances for Japanese and international students to meet, interact, and learn together on a daily basis. In this way, we are steadily creating an environment where students can learn while engaging with different cultures and values, both inside and outside the classroom. These everyday interactions not only deepen mutual understanding but also provide opportunities for learning that encourage students to reflect on their own ideas and explore questions more deeply.

In addition, as part of our framework to support

students in pursuing opportunities abroad, we have been developing overseas bases and working to create an environment where students can deepen multicultural exchange, including international dormitories on campus. As a result, the campus has become steadily more international, with greater opportunities to study abroad and to engage with the global community right on campus.

In this way, the university’s globalization is evolving from “international experiences as special opportunities” to “experiences of engaging with the world as part of everyday learning.” However, questions such as how to effectively integrate opportunities like study abroad, classes, exchanges through the BBP program, international dormitories, and multicultural joint study into students’ own learning and personal growth remain issues requiring further consideration.

4. Enhancing Student Support Services to Support Student Life and Extracurricular Activities

In the first half of the R2030 academic year, Ritsumeikan University has worked to enhance its student support systems and opportunities in various areas, including career development, international exchange and study abroad, and support for extracurricular activities. The fact that more students are utilizing these resources to gain diverse experiences and to learn and grow represents a significant achievement. However, challenges remain in terms of fully demonstrating how these initiatives have transformed students' own experiences of university life.

This stems from the fact that the very nature of student life has undergone significant changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent societal transformations. The ways in which students engage with academic studies and extracurricular activities have become more diverse; in addition to the traditional model of student life based on membership and sustained participation, forms of engagement centered on specific themes or limited timeframes are also becoming more widespread. Furthermore, while the widespread adoption of online tools has increased convenience, it has also reduced opportunities for spontaneous encounters and relationship-building among students and with faculty and staff, creating a situation where it is difficult to feel a sense of belonging or connection to the university.

These changes are also reflected in specific behavioral indicators. The participation rate in extracurricular activities and the rate of membership in groups such as clubs, circles, and peer support groups, which had remained in the 60–70% range from AY 2015 to AY 2019, dropped to the 50% range from AY 2020, reaching 55.4% in AY 2025. The decline in participation rates has been most pronounced among third-year students. On the other hand, the number of students taking on new challenges that extend beyond traditional areas of activity, such as entrepreneurship and social co-creation through initiatives like RIMIX and SEEDS, has been increasing year by year.

As such, the scope of student activities has expanded beyond ongoing membership-based activities such as clubs and circles to include a wide range of initiatives, including entrepreneurship, social co-creation, and project-based learning. These activities are not mutually exclusive; rather, they coexist in accordance with students' interests, developmental stages, and lifestyles. On the other hand, it is difficult to say that there is sufficient connection between traditional activities and those in new domains. This has created a situation where it is hard to foresee how students will relate these various activities to one another, give them meaning as part of their own learning, and move forward from there.

Meanwhile, the university has been reevaluating the educational value of extracurricular activities. As part of its efforts to realize the educational value of these activities, it has been advancing a Priority Club Development Policy.

Under this policy, clubs that “engage in activities at the top national level, inspire the entire academy, and contribute to the cultivation of identity” are

designated as Priority Clubs. The policy aims to contribute to students' learning and growth through sports and cultural and artistic activities, thereby embodying the ideal of human development that the university strives to achieve. Furthermore, in addition to achieving top-level national performance and success at international competitions, the Priority Club Development Policy requires Priority Clubs to maintain high standards in both academic and extracurricular activities, contribute to the local community and society, integrate with the university's integrated education system, promote internationalization, and operate independently.

Through these initiatives, the Priority Clubs have generated a wide range of value that goes beyond simply achieving results in competitions and activities, including balancing academic and extracurricular commitments, collaborating with affiliated schools, working together with the local community and society, and engaging in international exchange and challenges. In addition, it provides opportunities for students to think independently and grow in collaboration with peers, and new initiatives based on collaboration with research and education are expanding. These results demonstrate that extracurricular voluntary activities are an important learning platform that supports student growth.

In addition, activities based on interdisciplinary collaboration are gaining momentum, with graduate students' research activities and extracurricular initiatives becoming increasingly interconnected, leading to the emergence of new platforms for learning. These initiatives not only provide opportunities to enhance learning through engagement with others from various backgrounds and fields of expertise, but also hold the potential to translate extracurricular activities into the creation of new knowledge and social value.

Regarding changes in student life and the nature of student support, at the university-wide council meeting for the AY 2022 Plenary Council, the Student Union pointed out several issues, including a lack of a “sense of growth” in university studies

and student life, the complexity of student support systems and mechanisms, the lack of transparency regarding the relationship between the value of education and student fees and financial aid, and the fact that students are not sufficiently involved in discussions regarding university development and student support.

With these issues in mind, in AY 2023, the Career Center, the International Affairs Office, and the Student Affairs Office — the three departments responsible for student support — joined forces to launch the “Student Support Operations Reform Project.” During the deliberations, it was concluded that rather than simply increasing the number of individual initiatives, a shared perspective that takes into account the entire process of student growth and development was necessary, leading to a focus on the concept of “self-authorship.”

Self-authorship is the ability to continually shape for oneself what one values, how one thinks, and how one acts, rather than simply following the “correct answers” or assessments dictated by others. This perspective serves as a framework for reorganizing student support, which has tended to be broken up across different fields, in a way that aligns with students' growth processes. It is also positioned as a foundation for the development of emergent human resources, as set forth in the R2030 Challenge Design.

Through our efforts to date, we have steadily developed systems and opportunities for student support, giving students a wider range of options to choose from based on their individual circumstances. However, only a small number of students are aware of these support services and actually utilize them. Consequently, a key challenge has emerged: how to establish meaningful connections with students who are just beginning their university experience and with those who find it difficult to voice their concerns. Taking these achievements and challenges into account, Chapter 4 outlines how universities can engage with students at different stages of their development in order to support their growth.



5. Career Development Support to Foster Independent Career Choices

In recent years, the range of information and opportunities available to students has expanded significantly due to earlier recruitment cycles, an increase in internships, and the expansion of job-hunting support services both on and off campus. On the other hand, with so many options available, it is not uncommon for students to feel unsure of where to start or anxious about moving forward on their own. In light of these circumstances, Ritsumeikan University has been reviewing its support systems to ensure that students can choose the support that best suits their needs and use it as a stepping stone to their next course of action.

Specifically, since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been offering a range of services, including career and job placement guidance, company information sessions, mock interviews, and assistance with application forms, based on a hybrid model that combines in-person and online formats. We have also established a system to monitor the progress of each student through regular check-ins via phone or other means, ensuring they receive the necessary support. During general orientation sessions, we present an overview of the job-hunting process, and through subsequent individual consultations and video content, we

support students in identifying the preparations they need and taking the next steps.

For students who are anxious about their job search or whose efforts are not going as planned, we have been assessing their situations early on and providing individual counseling as well as connecting them with relevant organizations both on and off campus. We have also provided opportunities for students to consider their career paths from the early stages of their university studies, and through classes and guidance sessions, we have shown them how to engage with society and the wide range of career options available. We also provide tailored support to international students, graduate students, and students with special needs, utilizing a system where alumni and students who have received job offers support their younger peers to provide a wider range of opportunities for receiving advice based on real-world experience.

In recent years, as students' needs have become increasingly diverse and individualized, we have streamlined our lineup of support services and established an environment that makes it easier for students to access the information and support they need through the "Job Hunting Guide Portal." We are also stepping up our support for

the actual selection process, including interviews and application forms.

We have also expanded our support services for students aiming for highly competitive fields such as the national civil service general career track, the Certified Public Accountant exam, and the bar exam, ensuring they can effectively prepare for their goals by keeping a close eye on changes in examination systems and hiring trends. This has produced steady results, including 84 students passing the final round of the AY 2024 national civil service general career track spring exam, placing us third nationwide, and 55 students passing the Certified Public Accountant exam in 2025, placing us sixth nationwide.

Through these initiatives, we have created an environment where students can make well-informed career choices by taking advantage of guidance and individual counseling tailored to their specific circumstances. As a result, the university has maintained a job placement rate of over 95%. Career development support has been provided not only to assist students in deciding where to work, but also to help them develop the ability to think about their future, make choices, and take action on their own.

6. Developing the Infrastructure to Support the Visualization of Learning and Growth

As opportunities in learning and student life become increasingly diverse, it is becoming more and more important for undergraduate and graduate students to reflect on their own experiences and reevaluate their significance. Every student's university experience is unique, encompassing regular classes, extracurricular activities, study abroad, international exchange, community and social engagement, research, and career development initiatives. However, viewing such experiences not merely as a list of activities but as a process of personal growth, and using them to inform future learning and actions, requires a common framework for visualizing learning and growth.

In accordance with this perspective, in 2023,

Ritsumeikan Academy established a competency framework to help elementary, middle, and high school students, as well as undergraduate and graduate students, discover their own value through a process of self-reflection and self-directed learning. By conceptualizing various forms of growth through core competencies and eight specific competencies, and by visualizing the learner's educational journey, this framework aims to promote self-reflection and self-directed learning. Ritsumeikan University, APU, and our affiliated schools are collaborating to advance these initiatives across the academy as a whole.

This framework serves as a guide for undergraduate and graduate students to articulate their

learning and experiences, and to view their academic studies, extracurricular activities, international experiences, research activities, and career choices as interconnected. The academic reforms, student support, career development support, participation in research activities, and globalization initiatives described in Chapter 3 also lead to greater growth as undergraduate and graduate students themselves reflect on their experiences and take on the next challenge.

This foundation will also serve as a basis for considering students' life planning, career development, digital transformation in education and research, and learning support in the latter half of R2030.



7. Campus Development and Initiatives to Support Education, Research, and Student Life

During the first half of the R2030 Challenge Design, spanning AY 2022 through AY 2025, we have been advancing campus development initiatives at each campus in conjunction with academic reform, the advancement of research, social co-creation, and the enrichment of student life. The campus is more than just a place to attend classes; it is also the foundation where undergraduate and graduate students conduct research, interact with others, engage in extracurricular activities and community outreach, and go about their daily lives.

This section outlines the distinctive facilities at the OIC, Kinugasa, and BKC campuses, as well as the common infrastructure that supports student life. It should be noted that from AY 2024 through AY 2025, the circumstances under which campus development and facility and equipment upgrades are carried out have changed significantly due to rising material and labor costs, as well as longer construction and delivery times. Despite this high level of uncertainty, we have continued to develop environments that support learning, research, and student life by carefully adjusting the scope and priorities of our projects, while taking into account academic needs, research environments, and student life needs at each campus.

Campus Development Centered on Social Co-creation (OIC) 1

Taking the relocation of the College and Graduate School of Information Science and Engineering and the College and Graduate School of Image Arts and Sciences in AY 2024 as an opportunity, we have advanced campus development and initiatives at OIC. These efforts, carried out in tandem with academic reforms, aim to realize the R2030 goals of “becoming a next-generation research university” and “cultivating innovative and creative talent.”

Central to this effort is the creation of an environment centered on “social co-creation” as a “Try Field.” To this end, we have established facilities such as the Co-Creation Hub, SP Lab, KOBO, LIST, JIZAI HALL, and TERRACE GATE, expanding the spaces where undergraduate and graduate

students, faculty and staff, and a diverse range of external stakeholders, including businesses and local governments, can meet, learn from one another, and take on new challenges.

In addition, we have gradually rolled out initiatives such as digital transformation (DX) and startup support through the establishment of a Microsoft Base; creative skills development through our membership in Adobe Creative Campus; addressing local issues via the Social Co-creation Desk; and fostering collaboration between companies, local governments, and students through the RINC membership system. These initiatives, which began at OIC, are now expanding beyond the boundaries of individual campuses to include Kinugasa, BKC, APU, and affiliated schools.

Initiatives Linking the Humanities and Social Sciences with Creativity (Kinugasa) 2

At the Kinugasa Campus, we have been developing an environment that integrates peace, culture, art, design, and social co-creation, while building on the university's academic philosophy and studies in the humanities and social sciences.

In AY 2023, we completely renovated Academia Ritsumeikan 21 and reopened the Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University. Guided by the principles of “sharing memories of war,” “serving as a space for building peace,” and “providing a research hub that supports peace-building,” the museum has enhanced its role as a hub for communicating the university's academic philosophy both on and off campus by renovating its permanent exhibitions and the Mugonkan, and by establishing the Peace Commons.

In addition, in April 2026, the Kinugasa Campus opened the College of Art and Design and the Graduate School of Science in Arts and Design, marking the first new college established there since the College of Image Arts and Sciences. In conjunction with this, the Jukokan Hall will undergo a complete renovation, and in AY 2027, we plan to open a new wing and establish a Fab Lab as a university-wide facility. Through these efforts, we

are working to create an environment where learning and creativity in the humanities and social sciences can stimulate each other and lead to social co-creation.

At the same time, we have been working to improve the learning environment across the entire Kinugasa Campus, including a comprehensive renovation plan for the Igakukan Hall.

Initiatives Supporting Cutting-Edge Research and Science and Engineering Education (BKC) 3

At the Biwako-Kusatsu Campus, we have been building upon our accumulated expertise in education and research, particularly in the fields of science and engineering, to create an environment that supports cutting-edge research, interdisciplinary collaboration, entrepreneurship, and societal implementation.

In AY 2025, we opened the Ritsumeikan Advanced Cross-verse Innovation Commons (CVIC) and the Grassroots Innovation Center (GIC), significantly expanding our Fab Lab and entrepreneurship-related facilities. Even after the relocation of the College and Graduate School of Information Science and Engineering to OIC, BKC continues to make steady progress toward realizing a next-generation research university.

Specifically, we have been advancing infrastructure development to enhance education and research, including the planned establishment of the Graduate School of Frontier Exploration in Earth and Space (provisional name) in AY 2028; the development of educational and research environments to support academic reforms in the College and Graduate School of Life Sciences and the College and Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences; and the completion in AY 2026 of a facility to house the “Kenshoku Collection,” one of Japan's largest collections of historical materials related to Japanese cuisine.

Development of a Common Infrastructure to Support Student Life 4

In addition to the distinctive development initiatives for each campus described above, we have also been working to establish the infrastructure necessary to support students' learning, research, extracurricular activities, and daily life. Specifically, these include the renovation of restrooms, the installation of automatic doors at entrances, the renovation of the Shigakukan Hall, a feasibility study for expanding the basement cafeteria in the Zonshinkan Hall, a complete renovation of Union Square, the replacement of the artificial turf at Green Field, the construction of the Bio Frontier, and the installation of solar power systems.

Of these campus improvements, discussions



regarding the new OIC development, the Union Square renovation, the Igakukan renovation, and the study of improvements to the dining environment were conducted through multiple workshops with students, ensuring that planning was based on student feedback and actual usage patterns. The university views this process as an initiative where students' proactive expression of opinions intersects with the university's facility development and environmental improvements. The development of facilities and infrastructure goes beyond mere physical improvements; it serves as a vital foundation that shapes how undergraduate and graduate students learn, engage in activities, and go about their daily lives. Efforts to improve campus access have also been ongoing. In particular, the university has repeatedly lobbied local authorities regarding the commuting challenges faced by undergraduate and graduate students at BKC. As

a result, measures to improve commuting convenience, such as enhancing the bus waiting areas around Minami-Kusatsu Station, are currently being implemented.

These efforts represent a key milestone in our ongoing work to create a campus environment that supports students' education, research, and daily lives, based on feedback and actual usage patterns.

As described above, from AY 2022 through AY 2025, Ritsumeikan University has been advancing initiatives in academic reform, research advancement, globalization, student support, career development support, the visualization of learning and growth, and campus development, while ensuring that these efforts are mutually reinforcing. We believe that these initiatives have expanded the systems and opportunities available to support the education, research, and student life of both

undergraduate and graduate students.

At the same time, we still need to carefully assess how these initiatives are reaching each and every undergraduate and graduate student, and how they are translating into a sense of learning and growth, or a heightened awareness of challenges. In addition, it is also important to continue exploring how undergraduate and graduate students themselves can make sense of their wide-ranging experiences, such as coursework, extracurricular activities, research, international exchange, and career development, and apply them to their future learning and actions.

In the next chapter, taking these achievements and challenges into account, we will outline key initiatives for education, research, and student life in the latter half of R2030, as well as topics we would like to discuss further with our undergraduate and graduate students.



KIC Theme Hubs in Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University



BKC Grassroots Innovation Center/Ritsumeikan University Opens Advanced Crossverse Innovation Commons



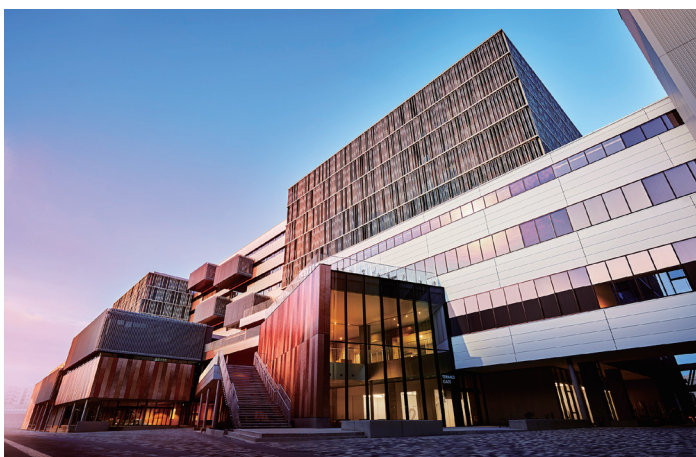
KIC "The Studio of Life" Kyoto Annex to the Mugonkan



BKC Startup Lounge (GIC)



BKC Crossverse Arena (CVIC)



OIC Building H



OIC Co-Creation Hub(Bldg. H)



OIC Autonomous security patrol robot(Bldg. H)



OIC TERRACE GATE(Bldg. H)



OIC LIST(Bldg. H)

Chapter IV: Key Educational, Research, and Student Life Initiatives for the Second Half of R2030

Building on Dialogue with Undergraduate and Graduate Students to Enrich the Present While Envisioning Future Developments

Chapter 3 outlined the achievements and challenges of the initiatives undertaken between AY 2022 and AY 2025, including academic reform, the advancement of research, globalization, student support, career development support, the visualization of learning and growth, and campus development. Through these initiatives, the environment supporting the learning, research, and student life of undergraduate and graduate students has expanded. However, important challenges remain, including how to connect the systems and opportunities that have been established to each individual's sense of growth and how to link diverse experiences in meaningful ways.

Based on these achievements and challenges, this chapter presents key directions for education, research, and student life in the second half of R2030. Accordingly, we hope that the directions presented in this chapter will be viewed as material

for discussion leading up to the Plenary Council, and that they will be considered in light of your own experiences and awareness of the issues involved. The directions presented in this chapter are also issues that should be examined together with undergraduate and graduate students when considering the role that Ritsumeikan University should play amid changes in society and higher education.

The nature of learning and student life at the university differs from one individual to another. Students who have just entered the university, upper-year students deepening their expertise, graduate students engaged in research, and working adult graduate students balancing their studies with work and family responsibilities all face different challenges and have different aspirations. With these diverse circumstances as its premise, this chapter outlines how the university will develop its

environment and continue its dialogue with students.

It should be noted that the key initiatives presented in this chapter are not intended to simply list individual systems or programs. Rather, they are presented as points for discussion to help undergraduate and graduate students consider what kind of university Ritsumeikan University should become in the future through such efforts as advancing toward becoming a next-generation research university, fostering expertise and practical competencies in the age of AI, developing innovative and creative talent, promoting the globalization of education and research, increasing the number of students who challenge themselves abroad, creating multipurpose learning spaces, and redefining extracurricular and other non-curricular activities, including student-led extracurricular activities.

1. Directions for Academic Reform in the Second Half of R2030

To realize the “next-generation research university” and foster “innovative and creative talent” as set forth in the R2030 Challenge Design, academic reform in the second half of R2030 will emphasize enabling undergraduate and graduate students to formulate their own questions, deepen their expertise, and expand their learning through engagement with different fields and society.

To this end, the university will promote a series of interconnected initiatives, including the seamless connection of learning from primary and secondary education through university, graduate school, and society; the development of university-wide education that encompasses interdisciplinary learning across the humanities and sciences, interdisciplinary integration, and collaboration with society; the internationalization of education; and educational DX that supports the visualization of learning and personalized learning support.

These efforts cannot be completed simply by the university unilaterally establishing systems and frameworks. It is important to further develop these initiatives through the process of co-creation across the Ritsumeikan Academy while confirming what kinds of learning undergraduate and graduate students actually need and through what kinds of experiences they can feel their own growth.

Articulating Integrated Education and Connecting Inquiry to Research 1

In the second half of R2030, it will be important to leverage the framework of integrated education spanning from elementary school through graduate school and connect inquiry-based learning to specialized study and research at the university and graduate-school levels. Rather than separating the inquiry-based learning that is expanding at the high school level from learning after university enrollment, it is necessary to view it as a continuous process of learning in which students formu-

late their own questions, think based on materials and data, and deepen their understanding through dialogue with diverse others.

To support this, the university will consider introducing a Life & Career Review system that utilizes the Ritsumeikan Academy Competency Framework, enabling pupils, students, undergraduate students, and graduate students to reflect on their learning and growth over the long term. In addition, the university will enhance educational programs in collaboration with research laboratories and research centers, expanding opportunities for undergraduate students to engage with the appeal and methods of research at an early stage and to develop a concrete vision of research activities in graduate school.

Through these initiatives, the strengths of integrated education will be developed beyond simply connecting different stages of schooling and will be realized as a growth process that links inquiry to research and learning to careers.

Reform of University-Wide Education and the Development of Learning that Connects with Society 2

In the academic reforms of the second half of R2030, the role of university-wide education that supports student learning across colleges and disciplines will become even more important, in addition to specialized education. As social issues become increasingly complex and the use of AI and data science continues to expand, students are expected not only to deepen their own expertise but also to engage with knowledge and methodologies from different fields and develop the ability to reexamine questions through their interactions with society.

To this end, in preparation for Liberal Arts Education Reform 2028, the university will renew liberal arts education in undergraduate programs

and enhance programs that enable students to learn through engagement with society, including service learning, career education, international education and research, and project-based learning (PBL) conducted in collaboration with companies and international partners. These forms of learning are intended not merely to broaden students' knowledge, but also to provide experiences through which they can relativize their own fields of specialization and address challenges collaboratively with others.

Furthermore, the ability to formulate questions, think logically, and collaborate with others, cultivated through undergraduate education, provides a foundation for research in graduate school and for a wide range of career paths after graduation. The development of transferable skills in graduate programs will be further examined in conjunction with graduate school policy.

Internationalization of Education and the Development of Multicultural Collaborative Learning 3

The internationalization of education should not be limited to students who study abroad. Rather, it is important that all students have opportunities to engage with diverse languages, cultures, and values through both their academic disciplines and their daily student life. As discussed in Chapter 3, opportunities such as study abroad programs, the BBP, multicultural collaborative learning, and international dormitories have expanded. In the second half of R2030, however, a key challenge will be how to connect these opportunities with the curriculum and specialized learning.

In conjunction with curriculum reforms in each college and graduate school, the university will further expand its research- and discipline-bridging English education programs and consider developing an environment in which students can

engage in advanced study in their fields of specialization in English. In addition, the university will further develop plans for new degree programs based on English-language standards and expand opportunities for students from Japan and abroad to learn, discuss, and collaborate together.

At the same time, it is important to connect learning inside and outside the classroom through new developments in the BBP and the creation of international collaborative community hubs, ensuring that international experiences do not remain one-time events but instead contribute to students' expertise and career development.

Educational DX and the Visualization of Learning

4

As learning opportunities become increasingly diverse, it is important to enable undergraduate and graduate students to understand their own learning progress and growth processes and to access information that connects them with the

support and future learning opportunities they need. Digital transformation in education is positioned not merely as the digitalization of procedures, but as a foundation for visualizing student learning and connecting it to academic improvement and learning support.

To this end, the university will comprehensively promote educational DX centered on the Education AI Platform, including the deployment of AI-powered learning support and Institutional Research (IR) for education and research, the introduction of digital student IDs, the development of Learning Pathway Management (LPM), and course development utilizing LinkedIn Learning and VR technologies. By integrating, accumulating, and visualizing learning data, the university will create an environment in which undergraduate and graduate students can reflect on their own learning and connect with the learning opportunities and support they need.

At the same time, when utilizing learning data and AI, it is important to consider not only convenience for students but also the handling of data, accountability, and systems that can be used with confidence and peace of mind. Questions regard-

ing what information should be used, for what purposes it should be used, and how it should be returned to support student learning must be carefully considered through dialogue with undergraduate and graduate students.

The academic reforms described above are intended not only to enrich learning in undergraduate programs but also to contribute to research in graduate school and to students' development as highly skilled professionals. The next section outlines the directions for graduate education, the research environment, career paths, and financial support in the second half of R2030.



2. Enhancing Graduate Education, the Research Environment, and Career Support

To realize the “next-generation research university” envisioned in the R2030 Challenge Design, it is important to advance the enhancement of graduate education, the advancement of the research environment, career development support for graduate students, and financial support in an integrated manner. This does not mean strengthening graduate schools in isolation. Rather, it is an initiative that connects undergraduate learning, graduate-level research, and practice in society, and supports the growth of each undergraduate and graduate student and their contributions to society through a higher level of reintegration between research and education.

This section outlines the direction of graduate school policy from four perspectives: articulating undergraduate and graduate education, diversifying career paths for doctoral talent, enhancing the research environment, and strengthening financial support and support for research activities.

Another issue that we would like to discuss with undergraduate and graduate students as we move into the second half of R2030 is whether these initiatives should be viewed not as separate support measures considered in parallel, but rather as interrelated conditions for making learning and research in graduate school more enriching and fulfilling. For example, improving the research environment contributes to enhancing the quality of research, while financial support provides the time and conditions necessary for students to devote themselves to research. In addition, research communities and opportunities for exchange provide students with opportunities to broaden their perspectives and deepen their understanding of the significance of their own research. Career development support, meanwhile, plays a role in connecting the competencies acquired through

research to a wide range of settings, including academia, industry, government, local communities, and international society.

From this perspective, we would also like to identify, as one of the points for discussion leading up to the Plenary Council, how strengthening the interconnections among the research environment, financial support, research communities, and career development support can further enhance both the research capabilities of a next-generation research university and the foundation that enables undergraduate and graduate students to grow through research and apply their abilities in diverse areas of society.

Strengthening the Connection Between Undergraduate and Graduate Education

1

When considering progression to graduate school, it is important for students to gain a concrete understanding at an early stage of how undergraduate learning connects to graduate-level research and how pursuing graduate studies can expand their expertise and career possibilities. To this end, the university will expand opportunities for students to engage with graduate-level research activities during their undergraduate studies, as well as opportunities for interaction between undergraduate and graduate students, thereby creating an environment in which students can seriously consider graduate school as a future option.

As a mechanism for creating a smoother transition from undergraduate to graduate education,

the university will consider introducing “4+1 Programs” and “3+2 Programs,” which integrate undergraduate and graduate education into a unified framework. These programs combine four years of undergraduate study with one year of a master's program, or three years of undergraduate study with two years of a master's program, enabling students to transition seamlessly from undergraduate learning to graduate-level research without interruption. Such programs may offer advantages in both time and cost for students who wish to pursue research more deeply or further develop their expertise.

In addition, depending on the future plans of individual graduate schools, consideration is being given to establishing new interdisciplinary academic programs utilizing cooperative degree programs among graduate schools. These would take the form of interdisciplinary doctoral degree programs that transcend the boundaries of individual graduate schools. This will expand opportunities for students to pursue degree programs and research activities in emerging fields of study that have been difficult to accommodate within the framework of traditional graduate schools.

Career Development That Connects Research Experience to Society

2

Providing a concrete picture of the career paths available after progressing to graduate school and earning a master's or doctoral degree is important both for students considering graduate studies and for graduate students currently engaged in research. Opportunities for doctoral talent extend

beyond universities and research institutions to include industry, government, international organizations, and local communities. In the second half of R2030, support will be needed to help undergraduate and graduate students gain a concrete understanding of these diverse career paths and consider how they can apply their research and expertise in society.

The University's Graduate School Career Path Promotion Office is advancing initiatives aimed at diversifying the career paths of graduate school graduates. Through individual visits and exchanges with leading domestic and international companies, as well as national research institutions such as the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), the office has worked to understand the qualities and capabilities sought by industry and society. Among these initiatives, the Corporate-Sponsored Doctoral Internship Program with Kampo Life Insurance is a pioneering example. Based on proposals from the university, the company also established a new salary system for doctoral degree holders.

In collaboration with government agencies, a roundtable discussion was held in AY 2025 with the cooperation of the Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, bringing together companies from the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe region and helping to build momentum for supporting the active participation of doctoral talent. In addition, the Kyoto Qualia Forum (KQF), which consists of leading Kyoto-based companies and universities, holds the Doctoral Career Fair twice a year, where doctoral students interact with corporate human resources personnel and research and development staff. In AY 2025, a doctoral student from the university received the Horiba Award, demonstrating tangible outcomes from these efforts.

Furthermore, initiatives such as the KQF Doctoral Training Camp, where corporate researchers holding doctoral degrees and doctoral students engage in intensive discussions in a retreat-style setting, are also conducted at corporate training centers. By expanding these points of contact with industry, government, and research institutions, institutionalizing individual career consultations beginning at the time of graduate school enrollment, and increasing opportunities for engagement with companies, the university will support the development of diverse career paths for doctoral talent.

Creating an Environment That Enables Graduate Students to Focus on Research

3

Conducting high-quality research in graduate school requires a range of conditions to be in place, including sufficient research time, research funding, research space, supervisory support, and opportunities for interaction among researchers. In particular, at a time when interdisciplinary perspectives and connections to social issues are increasingly important, it is essential to provide an environment in which graduate students can engage with and exchange ideas with diverse researchers and graduate students beyond the boundaries of their own graduate schools.

Research communities and opportunities for exchange are not merely occasions for people to meet. They also provide opportunities to engage with different fields of research and research methodologies, to relativize the position of one's own research, and to consider how research outcomes can be communicated and connected to society and other disciplines. When graduate students engage in discussion with diverse researchers and fellow graduate students beyond the boundaries of their own graduate schools, it not only enhances the quality of their research but also helps them place the competencies gained through research within a broader context.

At the university, opportunities for graduate students to actively participate in projects conducted by on-campus research laboratories and research centers are being expanded. In AY 2023, approximately 260 doctoral students participated in a variety of research projects. Shared laboratories and research hubs also serve as spaces where graduate students from different graduate schools and disciplines come together, fostering interdisciplinary knowledge exchange and international networks.

In the second half of R2030, the university will further strengthen these research environments by expanding employment opportunities for RAs (Research Assistants) and considering the introduction of a Doctoral Assistant system, alongside continued improvements to research facilities. It is important to create an environment in which graduate students can concentrate on research, deepen their expertise, and expand the possibilities of their research through engagement with knowledge from other disciplines and connections with society.

Enhancing Financial Support and Support for Research Activities

4

Research life in graduate school requires sustained concentration and continuous effort over an extended period. For this reason, mechanisms that reduce financial concerns and support the costs and opportunities necessary for research serve as an important foundation for graduate students to deepen their research.

At the university, through the Ritsumeikan Advanced Research Academy Student Fellowship Program (RARA × SPRING), a university-specific initiative based on the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING) program, doctoral students receive a monthly research incentive grant and living allowance equivalent of 185,000 yen, in addition to annual research funding of 340,000 yen.

For doctoral students engaged in research in next-generation AI fields, the Ritsumeikan Advanced Research Academy Student Fellowship Program for Next-Generation AI Fields (RARA × BOOST) provides a monthly research incentive grant of 200,000 yen and annual research funding of 1.5 million yen. In AY 2025, 125 doctoral students benefited from support through these two programs. In addition, the university has intro-

duced support funded through industry-academia collaboration with companies and grants from private foundations. Going forward, it will further expand financial support utilizing such external funding sources in order to create an environment in which graduate students can devote themselves to research.

The Doctoral Student Research Support Scholarship is another program designed to reduce the financial burden on doctoral students with outstanding research plans and to support the early completion of their doctoral dissertations. To support conference presentations, the university also provides grant programs that encourage master's and doctoral students to present their research at academic conferences in Japan and abroad, thereby offering financial support for the active dissemination of research results. By making use of support programs for publishing papers in foreign languages and for research group activities, graduate students can further enhance their international research activities.

Information on these support programs will be consolidated and made available, together with annual schedules, through the website of the Graduate School Career Path Promotion Office and other channels, making it easier for graduate students to access the support they need at the appropriate time.

In this way, it is important to enhance graduate education, the research environment, and career support by advancing them in an integrated manner while strengthening the connections among the research environment, financial support, research communities, and career development support. By reinforcing these interconnections, the university aims not only to increase the number of graduate students quantitatively, but also to strengthen both the research capabilities of a next-generation research university and the foundation that enables undergraduate and graduate students to grow through research and apply their abilities in diverse areas of society.

Enhancing graduate education, the research environment, and career support is important not only for graduate students but also for helping undergraduate students develop a concrete vision of their future learning and research opportunities. The next section broadens the focus to student life as a whole, including both undergraduate and graduate students, and examines early experiences after enrollment, student-led extracurricular activities, international learning opportunities, and the foundations that enable students to take on challenges with confidence and security.



3. Creating an Environment That Supports Student Life, Extracurricular Activities, and International Learning

The learning and growth of undergraduate and graduate students are shaped not only through classes and research, but also through a wide range of experiences, including student-led extracurricular activities, international exchange, collaboration with local communities and society, peer support, entrepreneurship, and social co-creation. As discussed in Chapter 3, during the first half of R2030, the university expanded systems and opportunities related to student support, student-led extracurricular activities, international learning, and career development support. At the same time, challenges remain regarding which students become aware of these opportunities, at what stage they learn about them, how they participate in them, and how they connect them to their own learning.

In the second half of R2030, it will be important to create an environment in which students are exposed to diverse experiences from the early stages of university life and are able to take on challenges based on their own interests and awareness of social issues. At the same time, it is essential to establish a foundation that allows students to learn, engage in activities, and experience failure and trial and error with confidence and security. This section outlines directions for the second half of R2030 from the perspectives of helping students develop a clear outlook on university life from the time of enrollment, creating a foundation for student life that enables them to take on challenges with confidence, and strengthening the connections among student-led extracurricular activities, social co-creation, and international learning.

Supporting Students in Envisioning University Life from the Time of Enrollment

1

The initial stage after enrollment is a critical period during which students form the foundation for how they perceive university life and how they approach their studies and activities. Until now, support provided during the initial stage after enrollment has focused primarily on “orientation” and “adjustment,” helping students understand university systems and course registration procedures. Going forward, however, it is important to position this stage not only as a period of adjustment but also as a starting point for students to begin considering what they want to experience at university, how they want to learn, and how those experiences and learning opportunities may connect to their future.

To this end, the university will consider introducing sessions during new student orientation and first-year education programs that encourage students to think about how university learning, student-led extracurricular activities, encounters with diverse people, collaboration with local communities and society, and study abroad and international exchange opportunities can be connected to their future way of life and roles in society. At the same time, consideration may be given to providing opportunities for simple self-reflection through which students can articulate their interests and values and organize their thoughts about what they would like to pursue during their university years.

The university will also review how information is pro-

vided so that students can gain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse growth opportunities available on campus, including curricular education, co-curricular programs, student-led extracurricular activities, study abroad, peer support, entrepreneurship, and social co-creation. Rather than introducing a limited number of new special programs, this initiative seeks to make use of existing first-year opportunities and broaden the focus of initial enrollment support from simply helping students “adjust to university life” to helping them “begin to envision their own university experience.”

A Foundation for Learning and Taking on Challenges with Confidence

2

For students to engage proactively in learning and take on challenges through student-led extracurricular activities, international learning opportunities, social co-creation, and other endeavors, a foundation for student life that provides psychological and day-to-day security is essential. In addition to ensuring that students can access the support they need when facing difficulties or concerns, it is important to create an environment in which students can share challenges and anxieties at an early stage through their everyday relationships with fellow students, faculty, and staff.

To this end, the university will review whether existing support resources, including student counseling services, student support offices, and community spaces, are connected in ways that are clear and accessible to students, and will develop systems that make it easier for students to find the information and support services they need. At the same time, it is important to move beyond support measures aimed only at specific groups of students and create a campus environment in which all students can approach their studies and activities with a sense of security.

This represents a shift in perspective from simply “providing support when problems arise” to creating an environment in which students “can take on challenges without fear of failure because they feel secure and supported.” As noted in Chapter 3, systems and opportunities for support have expanded. Going forward, however, an important issue will be how to establish points of connection with students who are in the early stages of university life or who may find it difficult to express their concerns and seek help on their own.

Connecting Student-Led Extracurricular Activities, Social Co-Creation, and International Learning

3

Experiences in student life extend beyond ongoing membership-based activities such as clubs, circles, and peer support programs to include entrepreneurship, social co-creation, project-based learning, collaboration with local communities, study abroad, and multicultural collaborative learning. In the second half of R2030, it will be important not merely to present these as separate opportunities, but to create an environment in which

students can move among them and build upon their experiences according to their interests and stages of growth.

With regard to student-led extracurricular activities, the university will consider how to expand opportunities for a greater number of students to encounter, participate in, and take on challenges based on their own interests, while continuing to value the traditions of autonomy and continuity that clubs and circles have cultivated. In doing so, one issue that we would like to consider together with undergraduate and graduate students is how to connect the values of autonomy, continuity, and community building that have traditionally characterized extracurricular activities with the growing range of social co-creation and project-based activities. By connecting entrepreneurship and social co-creation initiatives such as RIMIX and SEEDS, collaboration with local communities and companies, graduate student research activities, and independent activities undertaken by undergraduate students, the range of experiences available to students can be expanded even further.

In the second half of R2030, student-led extracurricular activities must be redefined not only as spaces that foster student initiative and community building, but also as learning environments connected to curricular learning, research, collaboration with local communities and society, and international experiences. Under the Fourth Priority Club Enhancement Policy, priority clubs are expected to achieve a high level of balance between curricular and extracurricular activities, build organizations that both support others and are supported by others, contribute to local communities and society, promote integrated education, advance internationalization, maintain autonomous management and integrity, and return their achievements and knowledge to society and the Ritsumeikan Academy. These perspectives provide important guidance not only for priority clubs but also for reconsidering student-led extracurricular activities as opportunities for learning and growth more broadly.

In the field of sports, consideration is also being given to a HIGH-PERFORMANCE CORE System (tentative name), under which clubs with particularly high growth potential would be selected through an application and review process and provided with focused support. This system is not intended solely to improve competitive performance. Rather, it will be developed through future discussions as a new form of support aimed at further enhancing the educational and social value of extracurricular activities, encompassing student growth, club governance, collaboration with research, the promotion of diversity, and the dissemination of activity outcomes.

International learning should likewise not be viewed as something only for students who participate in study abroad programs. It should be understood as an opportunity for students to engage regularly with different cultures and values through multicultural collaborative learning on campus, interactions through the BBP, international dormitories, and internationally collaborative project-based learning (PBL). Going forward, the university will work to connect student-led extracurricular activities, social co-creation, and international learning, creating an environment in which students can take their first steps into a wide range of experiences based on their own interests.

4. Connecting Experiences to Meaning-Making and Career Development

The experiences that undergraduate and graduate students gain at university cannot be measured solely by the activities in which they participate, the credits they earn, or the outcomes of their job searches. What is important is how they reflect on experiences such as coursework, research, student-led extracurricular activities, international exchange, collaboration with local communities and society, peer support, part-time work, and internships, and how they connect those experiences to their own interests, values, and future choices.

From the perspective of self-authorship discussed in Chapter 3, university support should be understood not as a means of guiding students toward a particular “correct” answer or career path, but rather as support that fosters their ability to think, choose, and act for themselves. This section examines the reflection and visualization of diverse experiences, the reorganization of career development support, and key issues for discussion with undergraduate and graduate students.

Supporting Reflection on and Articulation of Diverse Experiences

1

Diverse experiences do not automatically lead to growth on their own. It is through reflecting on those experiences and articulating what they have learned, as well as what abilities and interests they have developed, that undergraduate and graduate students can connect those experiences to future learning and action.

The Competency Framework discussed in Chapter 3 serves as a common foundation for supporting this process of reflection. It is important to advance the visualization of learning and growth so that students themselves can understand and connect experiences related to curricular education, student-led extracurricular activities, international learning, research activities, and career development.

Going forward, the university will consider how to incorporate opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences, articulate what they have learned, and connect those insights to future challenges in settings such as first-year education, seminars, career education, student-led extracurricular activities, study abroad and international

exchange programs, and research activities. Through these efforts, the university will support undergraduate and graduate students in understanding the trajectory of their own learning and in taking an active role in shaping their future career paths and ways of life.

Reorganizing Career Development Support

2

As discussed in Chapter 3, the university has established an environment that supports students in making career and educational pathway decisions through initiatives such as career and employment guidance programs, individual consultations, the Comprehensive Job-Hunting Portal, and support for highly competitive career fields. In the second half of R2030, it will be important to reorganize these forms of support not as services limited to the job-search period, but as career development support connected to learning and experiences from the time of enrollment, as well as to graduate school progression, study abroad, student-led extracurricular activities, social co-creation, and research activities.

The university will consider how to provide support tailored to the circumstances of undergraduate and graduate students, including enabling lower-year students to engage with society and explore diverse career possibilities at an early stage, supporting graduate students in envisioning their futures through an ongoing interplay between research and career development, and ensuring that international students and students requiring individualized support can access assistance appropriate to their situations.

Career development support is not merely intended to help students secure employment. Rather, it supports the process through which undergraduate and graduate students make meaning of their experiences and choose career paths and ways of life that they find personally meaningful and fulfilling. For this reason, it is essential that the Career Center, academic affairs divisions, student support divisions, international affairs divisions, graduate schools, and colleges work collaboratively to provide support throughout the entirety of student life.

Key Issues for Discussion with Undergraduate and Graduate Students

3

To put the directions outlined above into practice, it is essential not only for the university to establish systems and support mechanisms, but also for undergraduate and graduate students to share the situations in which they need support and information, the experiences that contribute to their sense of growth, and the barriers that may discourage them from taking on challenges or par-

ticipating in opportunities.

In preparation for the AY 2026 Plenary Council, we would particularly like to deepen discussions with undergraduate and graduate students on the following issues. These are not questions for which the university has already prepared answers. Rather, they are intended to help us jointly identify what the challenges are and what directions may be desirable based on the experiences and perspectives of undergraduate and graduate students.

• Supporting Life Design Formation from the First Year

How should universities provide opportunities and create environments that enable students, from the early stages of enrollment, to gain an overall perspective on their university life, make meaning of their learning and experiences, and proactively consider their post-graduation pathways and future aspirations?

• Mentoring and Advisory Support for Student Challenges

How can an environment be created in which students can receive appropriate support and guidance, enabling them to learn and take on challenges with confidence?

• Connecting Diverse Learning Opportunities to Expand Student Challenges

How can curricular studies, extracurricular self-directed activities, social co-creation activities, international exchange and study abroad programs, and research activities be connected, not as separate experiences, but as an integrated learning process that fosters student growth?

• Promoting Multicultural Coexistence and Mutual Growth

How can students develop the abilities needed to contribute to a multicultural society through experiences of learning, engaging in dialogue, and collaborating with both international and domestic students?

• Creating an Environment that Supports International Exchange and Multicultural Coexistence

Through BBP, international dormitories, multicultural collaborative learning, study abroad programs, and other initiatives, how can universities create an environment in which students can learn and grow while regularly engaging in international exchange and cross-cultural understanding?

• Developing an Environment that Supports Extracurricular Self-Directed Activities

How can universities enhance facilities, equipment, and activity environments that support diverse extracurricular self-directed activities, including club and circle activities, peer support, community and social engagement, entrepreneurship, and social co-creation initiatives?

• Reflection and Visualization of Growth

How can universities establish mechanisms that enable students to reflect on and make meaning of their diverse experiences, recognize their own growth, and connect that growth to future challenges?

These issues are not limited to student life and career development. They are also closely connected to academic reform, graduate education, internationalization, and educational DX. Starting from the lived experiences of undergraduate and graduate students, the university will further develop initiatives for the second half of R2030 through the process of co-creation across the Ritsumeikan Academy.



Chapter V: Financial Management during the R2030 Period and Ritsumeikan University's Student Fees and Finance Policy for AY 2027 and Beyond

1. Financial Structure of Private Universities and Ritsumeikan University's Basic Approach

Private universities in Japan operate under a two-fold structural disparity: public spending on higher education is low by international standards, and national financial support is minimal compared with the support provided to national universities. Public spending on higher education in Japan remains at only 0.7% of GDP, compared with an OECD member-country average of 1.3%. In addition, public spending per student is 2.11 million yen for students at national universities and 190,000 yen for students at private universities, a gap of approximately 11-fold. Against this background, Ritsumeikan University's basic financial structure is built around tuition and fees. These fees cover personnel costs for faculty and staff, the costs of classes and research, scholarships, and other expenses that support a wide range of learning opportunities. The University also sets aside funds for the future replacement and renewal of facilities, which helps sustain both its academic activities and its financial management over the long term.

Ritsumeikan University operates within this basic structure in its academic and financial management. For this reason, Ritsumeikan University has

positioned student fees and its student-fee policy as the comprehensive point of connection between the conditions for learning and Academy finances, and has emphasized the concepts of education that responds to the weight of student fees and a tangible sense of learning and growth commensurate with student fees. The Plenary Council of the University has engaged in ongoing discussions to deepen understanding of the current status and issues of Academy finances and to consider whether education and research initiatives implemented and developed primarily through tuition and fees are contributing to the learning and growth of undergraduate and graduate students. In particular, since the first half of R2030, the University, the Student Union, and the Graduate Student Council have held more frequent regular meetings and consultations, deepening mutual understanding of education and research issues and financial management. Through discussions on the academic calendar, educational reform, research exchange, student fees and finance, and other matters, Academy co-creation activities have begun to expand. Going forward, it will be important to give these initiatives greater

substance, make their content and outcomes more visible, and connect them more clearly to business plans and the formation of systems and policies. Since R2020, Ritsumeikan University has established a practice of formulating business plans in two five-year phases: a first half and a second half. In line with this, the University has also established five-year basic policies for financial management corresponding to the business plan periods and has conducted its financial management in accordance with those policies. This framework plays an important role in balancing academics and finance in the medium term. In recent years, the outlook for social conditions has become increasingly uncertain. To ensure the sustainability of the Academy's various activities, it will be essential to steadily implement its business plans and basic financial management policies in the second half of R2030—enhancing the value created by Ritsumeikan University's education and research initiatives and strengthening communication of their social significance. It will also be important to further deepen their connection with the key systems and policies that give concrete form to those initiatives.

2. Financial Management from R2020 Through the First Half of R2030 and Achievements to Date

Initiatives During the R2020 Period

1

During the R2020 period from AY 2011 to AY 2020, Ritsumeikan University pursued planned improvements to education and research conditions, with the enhancement of educational quality and the learning environment as its basic objective. Specifically, the University has worked to improve the learning environment for each student by enhancing its educational framework through a steady increase in the number of full-time faculty members, developing and renewing campuses and education/research facilities, and expanding scholarship and learning support systems. A major feature of this period was that the University promoted learner-centered education and globalization without revising standard tuition.

At the same time, the University faced a series of external changes that were difficult to address on its own, including a decline in student numbers due to stricter enrollment-capacity management, an increase in the consumption tax rate, and higher social insurance costs. In addition, in AY 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic intensified, an urgent need arose to take measures to sustain students' learning and daily lives. Drawing on the financial base it had built up to that point, Ritsumeikan University was able to act quickly to continue its educational activities even during an emergency. However, as

these multiple factors converged, the operating balance for educational activities turned negative in AY 2020. Through this experience, the need for stable financial management from a long-term perspective was once again strongly recognized.

Initiatives and Achievements in the First Half of R2030

2

During the first half of R2030, from AY 2021 to AY 2025, Ritsumeikan University worked under the R2030 Challenge Design, based on its recognition of issues from the R2020 period, with the basic policy of advancing ambitious education and research measures for the future while also strengthening its financial base. Aiming to develop into a next-generation research university, the University has continued to implement initiatives, including giving concrete form to the Ritsumeikan Advanced Research Academy (RARA) Initiative, which promotes priority research, and the Grassroots Practice Support System, which supports faculty and staff in voluntarily engaging in co-creation across job categories and organizational boundaries. These measures have been implemented so as not to increase reliance on tuition and fees, using budgets funded by interest and dividends rather than student fees.

In addition, during the first half of R2030, the University participated in Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai,

Japan and held events such as the Kinugasa Art Village Festival, BKC Welcome Day—Biwako-Kusatsu Well-being Festival, and Ibaritsu (Ibaraki × Ritsumeikan DAY), as part of initiatives to broaden its relationships with society and local communities. These initiatives create opportunities for students to deepen their learning through exchanges with local residents, local governments, and other stakeholders, while also providing opportunities to communicate the University's education and research activities and student initiatives to society. These practices can be positioned as one important achievement in the first half of R2030, as initiatives that promote mutual understanding between the University and local communities and society, and strengthen partnerships based on relationships of trust.

In addition, to improve the underlying operating balance, the Executive Board of Trustees, after multiple rounds of rigorous discussion, proposed a tuition revision method that incorporates the Academic Maintenance and Improvement Fee, intended to sustainably maintain and improve education and research conditions. Under this method, the recovery in student numbers and the increase in revenue from tuition and fees resulting from the tuition revision have played an important role in improving the soundness of the University's financial and operating balance. In addition, by stabilizing interest and dividend income through stronger asset management, strengthening donation policies, and securing large-scale external research funding such as the Program for Forming Japan's Peak

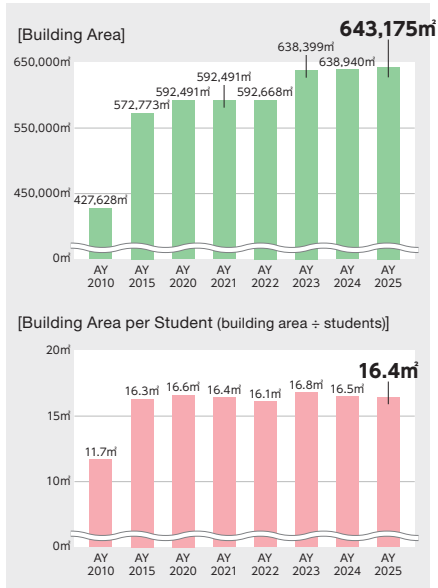
Research Universities (J-PEAKS) and the Space Strategy Fund (SX), which serve as benchmarks for becoming a next-generation research university, the University has been gradually building a foundation for sustainable academic and financial

management while curbing excessive reliance on student fees.

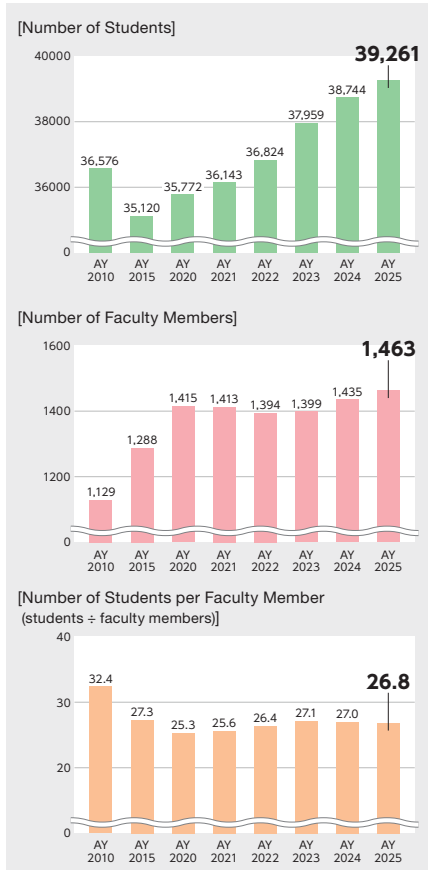
On the expenditure side, amid continued strong upward pressure from factors such as improvements in compensation for faculty and staff, infla-

tion and rising raw material costs, the weakening yen, and measures taken toward an increasingly sophisticated IT environment, the University is also working to reduce costs by reviewing operations and promoting DX.

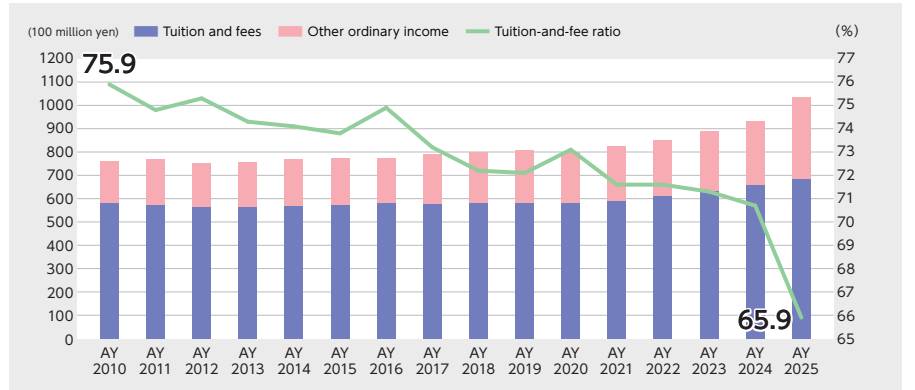
Changes in Campus Area per Student



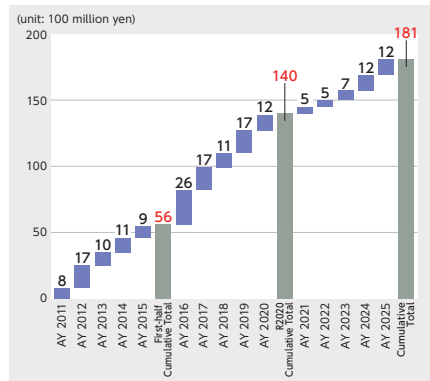
Trends in the Number of Students per Faculty Member



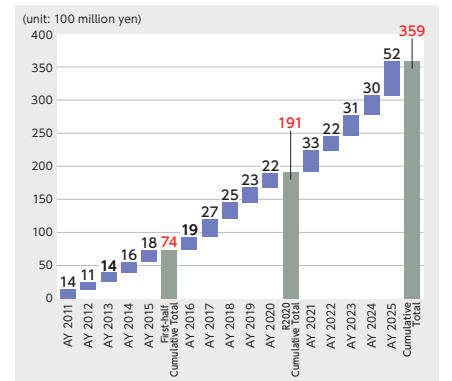
Trends in the Tuition-and-Fee Ratio



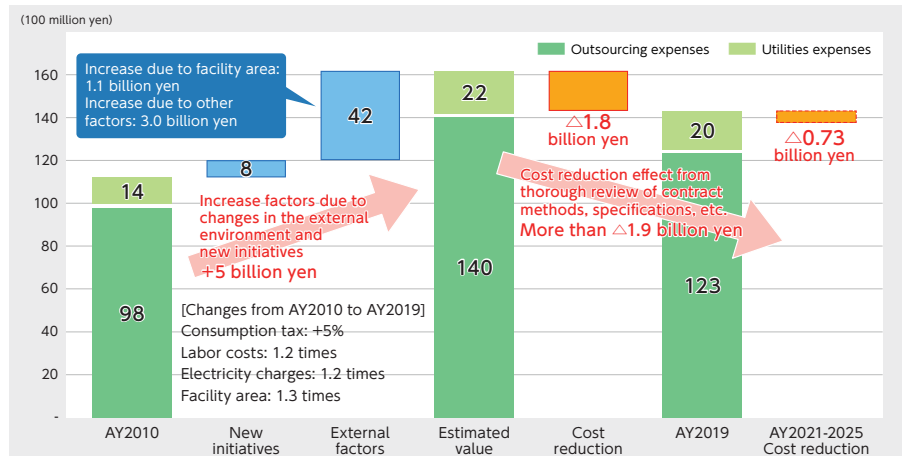
Trends in Donations



Trends in Interest and Dividend Income



Expense reduction initiatives: Accumulation of cost reduction efforts over time amid strong spending pressures due to changes in social conditions, etc.



Since AY2020 as well, the University has continued expense reduction initiatives by discussing labor-saving and automation measures using DX and other means, and by reviewing operations themselves.

AY2021: △270 million yen / AY2022: △60 million yen / AY2023: △50 million yen / AY2024: △150 million yen / AY2025: △200 million yen

(1) Trends in outsourcing expenses and utilities expenses, which are the main targets of cost reduction. Figures for AY2010 and AY2019 are actual results.
 (2) Labor costs are based on the minimum wage (national weighted average) (https://jbrc.recruit.co.jp/data/data20250912_3929.html).
 (3) Electricity charges are based on the average unit price for industrial use (https://www.enecho.meti.go.jp/about/pamphlet/energy2025/03.html#section2).

3. Financial Management in the Second Half of R2030

Japanese society and the international community as a whole are now undergoing a major transition. While Japan's population decline is accelerating, national university policy is advancing efforts to strengthen research capabilities and make priority investments in growth fields, and the competitive environment among universities is rapidly intensifying. In an uncertain era in which it is difficult to foresee the future, the role universities should play is also being discussed. Under these circumstances, for Ritsumeikan University to continue to be trusted by society into the future and remain a center of intellectual creation and a place of learning for many people, it is essential both to continue enhancing the quality of education and research and to stably maintain the financial base

that supports them. In the business plan for the second half of R2030, the University aims to extend its value to society by deepening collaboration among industry, government, academia, and local communities, returning research outcomes to society, and expanding graduate education.

At the same time, to make new challenges possible, the underlying operating balance that supports regular education and research activities must be sound. If this foundation remains unstable, the University cannot ensure sustainable learning and research. At the same time, an important medium-term issue will be to explore in greater depth how the University can shift away from its current financial structure, which relies on tuition and fees. In the second half of R2030, the University (Execu-

tive Board of Trustees), together with the colleges and graduate schools, will work responsibly and in an integrated manner to carry out business strategies and other initiatives, further enhance and visualize the value of Ritsumeikan University's and each college's and graduate school's education and research activities, and fundamentally strengthen donations and other revenue by communicating the social significance of those activities. At the same time, the University will move forward with consideration of student-fee policies, financial- and operating-balance structures and conditions, approaches to financial management, and related matters that can provide a path toward further reducing reliance on student fees, that is, students' burden of educational expenses.

4. Student-Fee Policy for AY 2027 and Beyond and AY 2027 Tuition and Other Fees

Notes

- The student-fee policy for AY 2027 and beyond is as follows.
- At the same time, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has requested private universities to consider matters such as the treatment of entrance fees from the standpoint of reducing students' financial burden. Ritsumeikan University is also actively considering this issue, taking into account the significance of entrance fees, the importance of tuition and fees in the Academy finances of private universities, and students' overall student-fee responsibility.
- If, during the period covered by the student-fee policy now being proposed, it becomes necessary to review the treatment of entrance fees or other matters, or to change tuition as a result, the University will make a separate proposal on the details and reflect them in student fees thereafter.

In formulating student-fee policy, in response to a request from the Student Union, the University has ensured opportunities for the Student Union and the Graduate Student Council to participate in the process leading up to decisions on student-fee policy from AY 2023 onward. In formulating the current student-fee policy as well, the University has deepened understanding of the approach to Academy finances and current issues, held repeated discussions that take into account opinions and issues raised from students' perspectives, and gone through the Plenary Council representatives' meeting. This process forms an important premise for considering the University's student-fee policy.

The student-fee policy proposed here will be linked to the business plan and basic policies for financial management for the second half of R2030, cover a five-year period applicable to students entering from AY 2027 to AY 2031, and continue the current student-fee policy, in principle. In addition, for graduate school tuition in master's programs, doctoral programs in the first two-year phase, and other programs, standard tuition will be revised by 40,000 yen in order to maintain and enhance university-wide systems and other measures.

This student-fee policy, including the continued application of the tuition revision method linked to fluctuations in the price index, is an important premise for ensuring the current learning environment and opportunities and for maintaining a

sound financial base essential to the sustainable improvement of the quality of education and research into the future.

At the same time, the University recognizes the need to sincerely address the situation surrounding tuition revisions over the past several years. In addition, amid increasing uncertainty and volatility, the price index used in the tuition revision method may fluctuate significantly from year to year. However, Ritsumeikan University's academic and financial management emphasizes continuity across the past, present, and future, and, from that standpoint, attention must be paid to leveling the student-fee responsibility across enrollment years. From this perspective, when applying the tuition revision method, the amount of revision based on the price index increase rate under the revision method will be subject to an upper limit relative to the tuition of students who enrolled the previous year, with the new cap set at 30,000 yen.

Furthermore, in continuing to apply the tuition revision method, in light of the progress made in improving the operating balance for educational activities, which was an issue in financial management during the first half of R2030, it will be important to steadily carry out and realize priorities in education, research, and student life, including expanding career path support programs and making permanent the support for participation in overseas dispatch programs that had been implemented as a temporary measure under a special

budget. The specific details will be considered going forward in cooperation with the relevant divisions, including through consultations and discussion meetings with the Student Union and Graduate Student Council and others. The University will address them in budgets for AY 2027 and beyond, while taking into account issues under the basic policies for financial management for the second half of R2030, such as strengthening revenue from donations and other sources, as well as financial indicators and other factors.

In the current proposal, it will be an important issue to continue the existing student-fee policy without making it permanent and to explore at a deeper level how the University can shift away from its current financial structure, which relies on tuition and fees, without compromising the financial stability and flexibility needed to enable the sustainable enhancement and qualitative improvement of education and research amid changing social conditions. As medium-term issues for the second half of R2030, the Academy and Ritsumeikan University will move forward with consideration of student-fee policy, financial- and operating-balance structures and conditions, approaches to financial management, and related matters that can enable a further reduction in reliance on tuition and fees, in conjunction with the implementation of business strategies and other initiatives.

[1] Entrance Fee

The entrance fees shall be as follows, unchanged from the current amounts:

Category	Amount
Admission, transfer (university level and other educational levels), second Bachelor's degree admission	200,000 yen
Re-admission	10,000 yen

However, the entrance fee will not be collected in the following cases:

- 1) Students admitted to the American University–Ritsumeikan University Joint Degree Program in the College of International Relations who begin their studies at American University, and students admitted to the College of Global Liberal Arts who begin their studies at the Australian National University
- 2) Cases in which a person who has graduated from an undergraduate college of this University or APU enters this University's graduate school
- 3) Cases in which a student continues on to this University's graduate school from an undergraduate college of this University or APU
- 4) Cases in which a person enters this University's graduate school after completing a graduate school of this University or APU, or after withdrawing from a doctoral program without obtaining a doctoral degree despite having been enrolled for at least the standard period of study and having satisfied the course requirements stipulated in the University Regulations

[2] Tuition Revision Method Applicable to Students Entering from AY 2027 to AY 2031

1) Tuition Revision Method Applicable to Undergraduate Entrants

Tuition for the New Academic Year = Standard Tuition × (1 + Price Index Increase Rate) + Academic Maintenance and Improvement Fee

- "Standard Tuition" refers to the tuition for students entering in AY 2026. For the Department of Pharmacy, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences, tuition shall mean tuition excluding the special reduction for new students.
- The "Price Index Increase Rate" shall be the rate of increase in the average value for the most recent year, using the AY 2024 average value of the Consumer Price Index (All Japan, Overall) as the base. However, this shall not apply if the rate of increase is less than 1.0 percentage points. In addition, the amount of revision based on the price index increase rate shall not exceed 30,000 yen relative to the tuition of students who enrolled in the previous academic year.
- If the calculated tuition for the new academic year is lower than the tuition for the previous academic year, it shall be the same amount as the tuition for the previous academic year.
- One-half of the calculated tuition for the new academic year, rounded to the nearest 100 yen, shall be applied to entrants in the relevant academic year as semester tuition.

*Academic Maintenance and Improvement Fee

This fee may be applied based on the status of the operating balance associated with educational activities, in order to sustainably maintain and improve education and research conditions while responding to changes in society.

If the Academic Maintenance and Improvement Fee is applied, it shall not exceed 50,000 yen. From the year in which it is first applied during the AY 2027–AY 2031 period onward, the Academic Maintenance and Improvement Fee shall remain the same amount.

○ The individual treatment of specific colleges and other units shall be as follows, as currently applied:

- For the Department of Pharmacy, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences, in light of the circumstances considered when the department was established and the student-fee levels at other universities, the price index increase rate under the tuition revision method shall not be applied, and the special reduction for new students shall be 200,000 yen.
- For the College of Global Liberal Arts, tuition shall be based on the agreement with ANU (the Australian National University).

2) Tuition Revision Method Applicable to Entrants to Master's Programs, Doctoral Programs in the First Two-Year Phase, Integrated Doctoral Programs (Years 1 and 2), and Professional Degree Programs

Tuition for the New Academic Year = Standard Tuition × (1 + Price Index Increase Rate)

- For master's programs, doctoral programs in the first two-year phase, and integrated doctoral programs (Years 1 and 2), "Standard Tuition" shall be the tuition for students entering in AY 2026 plus 40,000 yen.
- For professional degree programs, "Standard Tuition" shall be the tuition for students entering in AY 2026.
- The "Price Index Increase Rate" shall be the rate of increase in the average value for the most recent year, using the AY 2024 average value of the Consumer Price Index (All Japan, Overall) as the base. However, this shall not apply if the rate of increase is less than 1.0 percentage points. In addition, the amount of revision based on the price index increase rate shall not exceed 30,000 yen relative to the tuition of students who enrolled in the previous year. However, the one-year Graduate School of Science in Arts and Design is excluded from this application.
- If the calculated tuition for the new academic year is lower than the tuition for the previous academic year, it shall be the same amount as the tuition for the previous academic year.
- One-half of the calculated tuition for the new academic year, rounded to the nearest 100 yen, shall be applied to entrants in the relevant academic year as semester tuition.

3) For doctoral programs in the latter three-year phase, integrated doctoral programs from Year 3 onward, and four-year doctoral programs, the current tuition of 250,000 yen per semester will continue to apply.

[3] Financial Support Scholarships for Graduate Students in Master's and Other Programs

The University will establish a new university-wide system to expand financial support for graduate students in master's and other programs, for whom national grant scholarships are limited compared with those available to undergraduate students and graduate students in the latter phases of doctoral programs. This system is intended to further encourage advancement to and study in graduate school. The details of the new system will be proposed separately.

[4] Setting Tuition in Connection with the Establishment of New Colleges and Graduate Schools, the Realization of Future Plans, and Other Developments (AY 2028 and Beyond)

- When establishing or reorganizing colleges and other units, undertaking curriculum reforms, and similar measures, tuition will be determined based on factors such as faculty structure and the development of facilities and equipment specific to each college or unit.
- In advancing the expansion of graduate schools, it will be important to respond not only through university-wide systems and policies, but also to the individual circumstances of each graduate school, including its current issues, the direction of its future plans, and the timing for giving those plans concrete form. Going forward, as each graduate school's future plans are given concrete form, it will be possible to set tuition individually after carefully considering the details, necessity, and other relevant factors.

[5] Tuition Applicable to Students Entering in AY 2027

- Under the tuition revision method, the "Price Index Increase Rate" applied to tuition for students entering in AY 2027 will be 2.6%.
- Because the operating balance for educational activities, excluding temporary budgets, was positive in the most recent year-end settlement, AY 2025, the Academic Maintenance and Improvement Fee will not be applied to undergraduate students entering in AY 2027.
- After applying the calculation under the tuition revision method and the cap amount, tuition for students entering in AY 2027 shall be as shown in the attached table.

[6] Clear Statement of Tuition for the Period of Enrollment

The method will be to clearly state, at the time of enrollment, the tuition for the period of enrollment. However, if a sudden and substantial price increase or similar development occurs due to social factors, and student-fee revisions, including for current students, become unavoidable as a response to its impact, the University will propose such revisions as an emergency measure.

[7] Tuition Applicable to Students Entering in AY 2026 or Earlier (Undergraduate and Graduate Students)

For students entering in AY 2026 or earlier, the tuition already clearly stated at the time of enrollment will apply.

■ Ritsumeikan University Tuition for AY 2027 Undergraduate (College) Enrollees

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.		Year level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
College of Law	Department of Law	Spring	573,600	573,600	573,600	573,600
		Fall	573,600	573,600	573,600	573,600
		Total	1,147,200	1,147,200	1,147,200	1,147,200
College of Economics	Department of Economics	Spring	592,900	592,900	592,900	592,900
		Fall	592,900	592,900	592,900	592,900
		Total	1,185,800	1,185,800	1,185,800	1,185,800
College of Business Administration	Department of Business Administration	Spring	573,600	573,600	573,600	573,600
		Fall	573,600	573,600	573,600	573,600
		Total	1,147,200	1,147,200	1,147,200	1,147,200
	Department of International Business Administration	Spring	643,300	643,300	643,300	643,300
		Fall	643,300	643,300	643,300	643,300
		Total	1,286,600	1,286,600	1,286,600	1,286,600
College of Social Sciences Department of Social Sciences	Social Sciences Major, Media and Society Major, Sports and Society Major, Human Welfare Major	Spring	670,500	670,500	670,500	670,500
		Fall	670,500	670,500	670,500	670,500
		Total	1,341,000	1,341,000	1,341,000	1,341,000
	Children and Society Major	Spring	708,000	708,000	708,000	708,000
		Fall	708,000	708,000	708,000	708,000
		Total	1,416,000	1,416,000	1,416,000	1,416,000
College of Letters Department of Humanities	Area Studies Program	Spring	666,600	666,600	666,600	666,600
		Fall	666,600	666,600	666,600	666,600
		Total	1,333,200	1,333,200	1,333,200	1,333,200
	Human Studies Program Education and Human Studies Major; Japanese History Program Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Major	Spring	654,700	666,600	666,600	666,600
		Fall	654,700	666,600	666,600	666,600
		Total	1,309,400	1,333,200	1,333,200	1,333,200
	Human Studies Program Philosophy and Ethics Major, Japanese Literature Program, Japanese History Program Japanese History Major, East Asian Studies Program, Global Studies Program, Global Communication Program, Language Communication Program	Spring	654,700	654,700	654,700	654,700
		Fall	654,700	654,700	654,700	654,700
		Total	1,309,400	1,309,400	1,309,400	1,309,400

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.		Year level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
College of Science and Engineering	Department of Mathematics	Spring	869,700	869,700	869,700	869,700
		Fall	869,700	869,700	869,700	869,700
		Total	1,739,400	1,739,400	1,739,400	1,739,400
	Department of Physics, Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Department of Robotics, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Department of Architecture and Urban Design	Spring	900,800	900,800	900,800	900,800
		Fall	900,800	900,800	900,800	900,800
		Total	1,801,600	1,801,600	1,801,600	1,801,600
College of International Relations	Department of International Relations; American University-Ritsumeikan University Joint Degree Program	Spring	734,600	734,600	734,600	734,600
		Fall	734,600	734,600	734,600	734,600
		Total	1,469,200	1,469,200	1,469,200	1,469,200
College of Policy Science	Department of Policy Science	Spring	680,800	680,800	680,800	680,800
		Fall	680,800	680,800	680,800	680,800
		Total	1,361,600	1,361,600	1,361,600	1,361,600
College of Information Science and Engineering	Department of Information Science and Engineering	Spring	900,800	900,800	900,800	900,800
		Fall	900,800	900,800	900,800	900,800
		Total	1,801,600	1,801,600	1,801,600	1,801,600
College of Image Arts and Sciences	Department of Image Arts and Sciences	Spring	1,060,200	1,060,200	1,060,200	1,060,200
		Fall	1,060,200	1,060,200	1,060,200	1,060,200
		Total	2,120,400	2,120,400	2,120,400	2,120,400
College of Life Sciences	Department of Applied Chemistry, Department of Biotechnology, Department of Bioinformatics, Department of Biomedical Sciences	Spring	917,800	917,800	917,800	917,800
		Fall	917,800	917,800	917,800	917,800
		Total	1,835,600	1,835,600	1,835,600	1,835,600
College of Sport and Health Science	Department of Sport and Health Science	Spring	723,000	723,000	723,000	723,000
		Fall	723,000	723,000	723,000	723,000
		Total	1,446,000	1,446,000	1,446,000	1,446,000
College of Comprehensive Psychology	Department of Comprehensive Psychology	Spring	701,200	701,200	701,200	701,200
		Fall	701,200	701,200	701,200	701,200
		Total	1,402,400	1,402,400	1,402,400	1,402,400
College of Gastronomy Management	Department of Gastronomy Management	Spring	706,600	706,600	706,600	706,600
		Fall	706,600	706,600	706,600	706,600
		Total	1,413,200	1,413,200	1,413,200	1,413,200
College of Global Liberal Arts	RU-ANU Major	Spring	1,200,000	1,434,000	1,434,000	1,434,000
		Fall	1,200,000	1,434,000	1,434,000	1,434,000
		Total	2,400,000	2,868,000	2,868,000	2,868,000
	RU Major	Spring		1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
		Fall		1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
		Total		2,400,000	2,400,000	2,400,000
College of Arts and Design	Department of Arts and Design	Spring	865,000	865,000	865,000	865,000
		Fall	865,000	865,000	865,000	865,000
		Total	1,730,000	1,730,000	1,730,000	1,730,000
College of Pharmaceutical Sciences	Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences	Spring	1,032,300	1,032,300	1,032,300	1,032,300
		Fall	1,032,300	1,032,300	1,032,300	1,032,300
		Total	2,064,600	2,064,600	2,064,600	2,064,600
	Department of Pharmacy	Spring	998,400	1,198,400	1,198,400	1,198,400
		Fall	1,198,400	1,198,400	1,198,400	1,198,400
		Total	2,196,800	2,396,800	2,396,800	2,396,800
		Year level	Year 5	Year 6		
		Spring	1,198,400	1,198,400		
		Fall	1,198,400	1,198,400		
Total	2,396,800	2,396,800				

*1 From Year 5 onward (Year 7 onward for the Department of Pharmacy, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences), tuition is the same amount as for Year 4 (Year 6 for the Department of Pharmacy, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences).

*2 In the American University-Ritsumeikan University Joint Degree Program in the College of International Relations, from Year 2 onward, the same student fees as the Department of International Relations apply during periods of study at Ritsumeikan University (Year 2 Spring Semester and Year 4 Fall Semester). During the period of study at American University (Year 2 Fall Semester to Year 4 Spring Semester), students pay the prescribed student fees set by American University to American University. American University student fees vary each year. For details, check the admissions guidelines.

*3 In the College of Global Liberal Arts, all students belong to the RU-ANU Major at the time of enrollment. After enrollment, students may be transferred to the RU Major based on their own preferences, the English-language and academic-record application requirements of the Australian National University (ANU), and the results of admission screening.

*4 Notwithstanding *1, for students enrolled in excess of the standard period of study, tuition for any semester in which the total number of registered credits for courses subject to grade evaluation in that semester and credits recognized as required for graduation under Article 37, Paragraph 2 of the Ritsumeikan University Regulations is eight credits or fewer shall be one half of the amount shown above.

Ritsumeikan University Tuition for AY 2027 Graduate School Enrollees

[Ritsumeikan University Graduate School Master's Programs]

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.		Year level	Year 1	Year 2	College, etc.		Year level	Year 1	Year 2
Graduate School of Law		Spring	449,400	449,400	Graduate School of Language Education and Information Science		Spring	478,000	478,000
		Fall	449,400	449,400			Fall	478,000	478,000
		Total	898,800	898,800			Total	956,000	956,000
Graduate School of Economics	Other than Master's Program in Economic Development	Spring	449,400	449,400	Graduate School of Technology Management		Spring	684,800	684,800
		Fall	449,400	449,400			Fall	684,800	684,800
		Total	898,800	898,800			Total	1,369,600	1,369,600
	Master's Program in Economic Development	Spring	535,200	535,200	Graduate School of Sport and Health Science		Spring	521,900	521,900
		Fall	535,200	535,200			Fall	521,900	521,900
		Total	1,070,400	1,070,400			Total	1,043,800	1,043,800
Graduate School of Business Administration		Spring	449,400	449,400	Graduate School of Image Arts		Spring	706,400	706,400
		Fall	449,400	449,400			Fall	706,400	706,400
		Total	898,800	898,800			Total	1,412,800	1,412,800
Graduate School of Sociology		Spring	449,400	449,400	Graduate School of Information Science and Engineering		Spring	668,800	668,800
		Fall	449,400	449,400			Fall	668,800	668,800
		Total	898,800	898,800			Total	1,337,600	1,337,600
Graduate School of Letters	Humanities	Spring	449,400	449,400	Graduate School of Life Sciences		Spring	668,800	668,800
		Fall	449,400	449,400			Fall	668,800	668,800
		Total	898,800	898,800			Total	1,337,600	1,337,600
	Informatics of Behavior and Culture	Spring	461,600	461,600	Graduate School of Human Science		Spring	506,500	506,500
		Fall	461,600	461,600			Fall	506,500	506,500
		Total	923,200	923,200			Total	1,013,000	1,013,000
Graduate School of Science and Engineering	Other than Advanced Mathematics & Physics Program	Spring	675,900	675,900	Graduate School of Pharmacy		Spring	668,800	668,800
		Fall	675,900	675,900			Fall	668,800	668,800
		Total	1,351,800	1,351,800			Total	1,337,600	1,337,600
	Advanced Mathematics & Physics Program	Spring	634,100	634,100	Graduate School of Gastronomy Management		Spring	472,400	472,400
		Fall	634,100	634,100			Fall	472,400	472,400
		Total	1,268,200	1,268,200			Total	944,800	944,800
Graduate School of International Relations	International Relations Program	Spring	449,400	449,400	Graduate School of Science in Arts and Design		Spring	500,700	500,700
		Fall	449,400	449,400			Fall	500,700	500,700
		Total	898,800	898,800			Total	1,001,400	1,001,400
	Global International Relations Program	Spring	535,200	535,200	Arts and Design (excluding one-year program)		Spring	950,100	
		Fall	535,200	535,200			Fall	950,100	
		Total	1,070,400	1,070,400			Total	1,900,200	
Graduate School of Policy Science		Spring	449,400	449,400	Arts and Design (one-year program)		Spring		
		Fall	449,400	449,400			Fall		
		Total	898,800	898,800			Total		

*1 From Year 3 onward, tuition is the same amount as for Year 2.

*2 Notwithstanding *1, tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion is one half of the amount for the applicable year level.

However, in the Graduate School of Science in Arts and Design (one-year Master's Program in Arts and Design), tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion is one half of the tuition amount for Year 2 in the Graduate School of Science in Arts and Design (excluding the one-year Master's Program in Arts and Design).

[Ritsumeikan University Graduate School Doctoral Programs]

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.	Year level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
All Graduate Schools	Spring	250,000	250,000	250,000
	Fall	250,000	250,000	250,000
	Total	500,000	500,000	500,000

*1 From Year 4 onward, tuition is the same amount as for Year 3.

*2 Notwithstanding *1, tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion is one half of the amount shown above.

*3 Notwithstanding *2, tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion who have completed all requirements stipulated in the Graduate School Regulations for each graduate school other than the doctoral dissertation shall be 100,000 yen per semester.

[Ritsumeikan University Graduate School Four-Year Doctoral Programs]

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.	Year level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Graduate School of Pharmacy	Spring	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
	Fall	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
	Total	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000

*1 From Year 5 onward, tuition is the same amount as for Year 4.

*2 Notwithstanding *1, tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion is one half of the amount shown above.

*3 Notwithstanding *2, tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion who have completed all requirements stipulated in the Graduate School Regulations for each graduate school other than the doctoral dissertation shall be 100,000 yen per semester.

[Ritsumeikan University Graduate School Integrated Master's/Doctoral Programs]

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.	Year level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Graduate School of Core Ethics and Frontier Sciences	Spring	478,000	478,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
	Fall	478,000	478,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
	Total	956,000	956,000	500,000	500,000	500,000

*1 From Year 6 onward, tuition is the same amount as for Year 5.

*2 Notwithstanding *1, tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion is one half of the amount for the applicable year level.

*3 Notwithstanding *2, tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion who have completed all requirements stipulated in the Graduate School Regulations for each graduate school other than the doctoral dissertation shall be 100,000 yen per semester.

[Ritsumeikan University Graduate School Professional Graduate Degree Programs]

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.	Year level	Year 1	Year 2	3回生
School of Law	Spring	743,600	743,600	743,600
	Fall	743,600	743,600	743,600
	Total	1,487,200	1,487,200	1,487,200

College, etc.	Year level	Year 1	Year 2
Graduate School of Management	Spring	710,200	710,200
	Fall	710,200	710,200
	Total	1,420,400	1,420,400
Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education	Spring	514,600	514,600
	Fall	514,600	514,600
	Total	1,029,200	1,029,200

*1 Tuition for students enrolled in excess of the standard period for completion (two years for the two-year program and three years for the three-year program in the School of Law) is one half of the amount shown above.

[Tuition per Semester for Long-Term Completion Program Students]

(Unit: yen)

College, etc.	Number of semesters allowed for Long-Term Completion	Tuition	
Graduate School of Economics	5 semesters	359,600 (per semester)	
	6 semesters	299,600 (per semester)	
	7 semesters	256,800 (per semester)	
	8 semesters	224,700 (per semester)	
Graduate School of Letters	Humanities	5 semesters	359,600 (per semester)
		6 semesters	299,600 (per semester)
		7 semesters	256,800 (per semester)
		8 semesters	224,700 (per semester)
Graduate School of Letters	Informatics of Behavior and Culture	5 semesters	369,300 (per semester)
		6 semesters	307,800 (per semester)
		7 semesters	263,800 (per semester)
		8 semesters	230,800 (per semester)
Graduate School of Policy Science	5 semesters	359,600 (per semester)	
	6 semesters	299,600 (per semester)	
	7 semesters	256,800 (per semester)	
	8 semesters	224,700 (per semester)	
Graduate School of Language Education and Information Science	5 semesters	382,400 (per semester)	
	6 semesters	318,700 (per semester)	
	7 semesters	273,200 (per semester)	
	8 semesters	239,000 (per semester)	
Graduate School of Sport and Health Science	5 semesters	417,600 (per semester)	
	6 semesters	348,000 (per semester)	
	7 semesters	298,300 (per semester)	
	8 semesters	261,000 (per semester)	

College, etc.	Number of semesters allowed for Long-Term Completion	Tuition
Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education	5 semesters	411,700 (per semester)
	6 semesters	343,100 (per semester)
	7 semesters	294,100 (per semester)
	8 semesters	257,300 (per semester)
Graduate School of Human Science	5 semesters	405,200 (per semester)
	6 semesters	337,700 (per semester)
	7 semesters	289,500 (per semester)
	8 semesters	253,300 (per semester)
Graduate School of Gastronomy Management	5 semesters	378,000 (per semester)
	6 semesters	315,000 (per semester)
	7 semesters	270,000 (per semester)
	8 semesters	236,200 (per semester)
Graduate School of Management	5 semesters	568,200 (per semester)
	6 semesters	473,500 (per semester)
	7 semesters	405,900 (per semester)
	8 semesters	355,100 (per semester)
Graduate School of Science in Arts and Design (excluding one-year program)	5 semesters	400,600 (per semester)
	6 semesters	333,800 (per semester)
	7 semesters	286,200 (per semester)
	8 semesters	250,400 (per semester)

Conclusion: Toward the open session of the Plenary Council to Be Held in October 2026

The first Plenary Council Representatives' meeting of AY 2026 was held on Wednesday, May 27, 2026. The Plenary Council Representatives' meeting is a forum where the Student Union, Graduate Student Council, Faculty/Staff Union, the University (Executive Board of Trustees), and the Ritsumeikan Co-operative (observer) share issues to be discussed going forward and the underlying understandings for those discussions, in preparation for the open session of the Plenary Council scheduled for October. At this meeting, participants reviewed achievements in education, research, student life, and Academy co-creation during the first half of R2030 and shared issues that should be further deepened in the second half of R2030.

At the opening of the meeting, in light of changes in society and industrial structures, the declining birthrate and aging population, and technological innovation including AI, questions were raised regarding what role Ritsumeikan University should play as an education and research institution in the society of the future, and how to develop an environment in which undergraduate and graduate students can formulate their own questions, engage in inquiry, and take on challenges. In the discussions, participants shared an understanding of the importance of viewing education, research, student life, graduate education, and the financial base as integrated points of discussion that support the learning and growth of undergraduate and graduate students, rather than as separate issues.

1. Achievements in Academy Co-Creation and Future Directions

With regard to Academy co-creation, participants emphasized that it should not be viewed merely as practical cooperation in the operation of events and similar activities, but as an endeavor in which undergraduate and graduate students participate as active agents in decision-making and policy formation related to the foundations of the Academy. In addition, participants identified future issues related to communicating the background and necessity of these measures to undergraduate and graduate students, and to connecting Academy co-creation initiatives to a university-wide understanding and a tangible sense of their significance.

2. Learning That Connects Curricular Learning, Self-Directed Extracurricular Activities, and Career Development

Participants shared the need to view curricular learning, self-directed extracurricular activities, job-hunting activities, and career development as opportunities for learning and growth throughout university life, rather than as separate matters. Self-directed extracurricular activities were positioned as an important arena for learning in which students cultivate agency and collaboration, moving back and forth between identifying and solving issues. In addition to developing environments that include activity spaces, places where students can feel they belong, and campus amenities, the framework for support itself was also positioned as an issue for future discussion.

3. Enhancing Mutual Learning among International Students, Working Adult Graduate Students, and Others

Participants also shared, as an important issue for future discussion, how undergraduate and graduate students with differing cultural backgrounds, learning experiences, living situations, interests, and individual characteristics—including international students and working adult graduate students—encounter one another and learn from one another in university life. In future discussions, participants will confirm their tangible sense of how to connect exchanges inside and outside the classroom, multicultural collaborative learning, BBP, research activities, self-directed extracurricular activities, and other experiences to the learning and growth of each undergraduate and graduate student.

4. Developing Education and Research Environments to Enhance Graduate Schools

With regard to initiatives to enhance graduate schools, participants shared an understanding of the need to strengthen the connection between learning and research from undergraduate colleges to graduate schools, while also developing research environments, financial support, and career support in an integrated manner—creating an environment in which graduate students can engage in research with peace of mind. Participants also identified, as an issue for future discussion, how to communicate the value of learning and research in graduate schools to undergraduate students and society, while connecting that value to graduate students' tangible sense of it.

5. Student Fees and Finance, and Returns That Undergraduate and Graduate Students Can Tangibly Experience

Participants also discussed the positioning of financial management and student fees as the foundation for sustainably supporting these initiatives. Participants shared an understanding that discussions of student fees and finance are not only about burdens or amounts, but are inseparable from discussions on how, as a private university, Ritsumeikan can take into account the weight of student fees, enhance the value of undergraduate and graduate students' learning, research, and student life, and return that value in forms they can tangibly experience. Going forward, through representatives' meetings, five-party discussion meetings, graduate school discussion meetings, and various other consultation opportunities, the University will continue to consider the forms of education, research, and student support that respond to the weight of student fees together with undergraduate and graduate students.

Going forward, the issues shared at this meeting will be further organized through representatives' meetings, five-party discussion meetings, various consultation opportunities, and other forums, and will be deepened as issues for discussion leading up to the public Plenary Council in AY 2026. The University also hopes that undergraduate and graduate students will take up these issues from their respective standpoints, reflect on them, and participate in dialogue.