Towards a National Qualification Framework (NQF)
Trends in Higher/Vocational Education in Japan

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Upper Secondary Education and Higher Education in Japan

- **Under 18**
  98% of lower secondary school graduates go on to some form of upper secondary education
  27% of these students go to specialized vocational schools or schools with integrated courses

- **18 and over**
  Distribution of tertiary students
    - University: 51.5%
    - Specialized Training College: 22.3%
    - Junior College: 5.2%
    - College of Technology: 0.9%
## Type and Number of Higher Education Institutions

### Number of Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Of those on the left: Universities with graduate schools</th>
<th>Junior colleges</th>
<th>Colleges of technology</th>
<th>Specialized training colleges (with specialized courses)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,190</td>
<td>781</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Number of Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Graduate schools</th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>Universities (Undergraduate)</th>
<th>Junior colleges</th>
<th>Colleges of technology</th>
<th>Specialized training colleges (specialized course)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,997,246</td>
<td>251,013</td>
<td>2,746,233</td>
<td>2,552,022</td>
<td>136,534</td>
<td>57,677</td>
<td>659,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>649,399</td>
<td>150,336</td>
<td>499,063</td>
<td>447,338</td>
<td></td>
<td>51,725</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>156,171</td>
<td>16,071</td>
<td>140,100</td>
<td>128,878</td>
<td>7,388</td>
<td>3,834</td>
<td>26,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>2,191,676</td>
<td>84,606</td>
<td>2,107,070</td>
<td>1,975,806</td>
<td>129,146</td>
<td>2,118</td>
<td>632,747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Quality Assurance in Japan

### Institutional Certified Accreditation Bodies

| National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE) | Mainly national and public universities |
| Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) | Private universities |
| Japan Institution for Higher Education Evaluation (JIHEE) | Private universities |

For more information, please visit the following URL
http://www.niad.ac.jp/english/unive/publications/information_package.htm
Credit Transfer System and Foreign Credential Evaluation (FCE)

Three main credit transfer systems in Asia
- UCTS by UMAP
- ACTS by AUN
- ACTFA (Academic Credit Transfer Framework in Asia) by GMS

Necessity of ENIC-NARIC in Japan
- Many flagship universities recognize the need for FCE, particularly those who offer English-medium degree programs
Why hasn’t a sophisticated FCE system been developed in Japan?

<Prospective Students>
1. Majority of international students come from China (60.4%) and Korea (11.3%)
2. Prior to the entrance examination, most of the applicants spend 1 or 2 years in Japan for language study

Most international students are still selected by paper-based examinations administered in Japan, in Japanese. (English-medium degree programs are only operated at a limited number of top flagship schools.)

This is a circular problem resulting in Japanese universities failing to attract students from diverse countries.
Prospective Students

I. Students from various countries and from diverse cultures

II. More flexible admission system, including transfer admission system and articulation arrangement from Asian universities

1. Establishment of English-medium degree programs
2. Admittance of students through document-based selection rather than one-shot entrance examination

Japanese universities need to have a sophisticated FCE system in order to achieve these goals
“Promotion of transverse vocational education in schools

We should build a learning system in which adults can learn easily, such as a system of learning unit accumulation through coordination with educational organizations and industry, in order to train core specialized personnel in growing fields. In addition, we should continue to link learning related to occupations and aim to build a learning and assessment system in which the results of linking to occupations in society can be evaluated properly.”
Vocational Skill Evaluation Standards
(Syokugyo noryoku hyouka kijyun)

- This assessment standard was developed by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare with input from industry and professional associations.

- Standards now exist in **53 industries** (ex. electric machinery and hotel industries), and in **9 cross-industry occupations** (ex. general administration, accounting, personnel management).
実際の各様式の例をご案内します。（例）事務系職種－人事・人材開発・労務管理職種－人事職務－人事企画ユニット）

様式1では、職種を「職務」×「レベル」のマトリックスとして体系化し、全体構成として一覧を示しています。

様式2では、職務構成や一人ひとりの職務内容の違いを能力ユニットの組み合わせにより反映できるように「職種別能力ユニット一覧」として示しています。

職務概要
Job Card System  （ジョブカードシステム）

Aims of the Job Card System
1) Lifelong career planning
2) Evaluation of professional qualifications, using Vocational Skill Evaluation Standards

Structure of the Job Card System
1) Career Plan Sheet
2) Work History Sheet
3) Certification of Competency

Target no. = 300 million registrants by 2020
Other Existing Schemes

- **Lifelong Learning Passport** (syogai gakusyu pasupoto)
  Some local governments and boards of education have introduced the Lifelong Learning Passport

- **Master of Regional Public Policy** (chiiki kokyo seisakushi)
  An example of a local qualification system in Japan, it was created by Ryukoku University and six other universities in Kyoto. University departments issue qualification certificates to students, in coordination with local governments, NPOs and businesses.
Practical career advancement strategies

Growth areas

- services for long-term care of the elderly
- services for reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gases
- food industry

Introduction of a “career grading” system, developed using the UK National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) system as a model
Example of “Career Grading”

Trends in care workers for the elderly

1. The labor force will decrease substantially in Japan.

2. The demand for long-term care workers for the elderly is expected to double in 15 years.

3. The turnover rate of long-term care workers is higher than that of all other industries. Therefore, improving stability of the work force is critical.
Example of “Career Grading”

The grading system started in 2012.  
Data as of March, 2015
Assessors: 7,814  
External Evaluators: 223
Certified Care Workers: 428
"Research on Functional Differentiation of Higher Education and Quality Assurance Frameworks in Career and Vocational Educations"

“Consortium and Occupational Field Projects on The FY2013 MEXT Strategic Promotional Project for Vocational Education for Middle-Level Professionals in Targeted Growth Fields"
4 Key Research Items (EQ Project)

1) Study the current situation and future needs in high growth industries. What is the desired HR portfolio and career path?

2) Curriculum map and expected learning outcomes in future vocational education and training

3) Learner-oriented curriculum reform
   a) model classroom
   b) joint efforts between industry and educational sectors

4) Development of training program with international compatibility
Possible Outcome of the EQ Project

Vocational Skill Evaluation in Japanese Hiring System

- Consistency between sector-specific qualifications and generic skills
- Consistency between assessment of learning outcomes, and training systems

Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement in Vocational Education and Training (VET)

- Quality assurance on VET: emphasis on learning outcomes
- We recognize that the concept of NQF has a positive impact on practical approaches in higher education in Japan
Potential Development of NQF in Japan

- Japan has been experimenting with qualification frameworks, although in limited capacities and in limited fields.

- Through the experience of the Career Grading System, Japanese society has recognized the importance of NQF in order to increase the following:

  1. Compatibility
  2. Transparency
  3. Accountability & Mutual Trust
Challenges of NQF in Japan

1. Coordination and establishment of NQF requires more international collaboration.

2. Government Initiative: A number of ministries are jointly responsible for NQF system. Consequently, it may take time to create a team project which integrates these agencies.

3. Cost: Administration of the grading system project for long-term care workers was transferred from the government to a private third party in April, 2015. The cost of maintaining the NQF system is an issue affecting the sustainability of the program. This issue is similar to the FCE program.
Thank you

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