

# Reputation Management in Higher Education in Japan: Challenges and Prospects

An Insider's (Highly Subjective) View



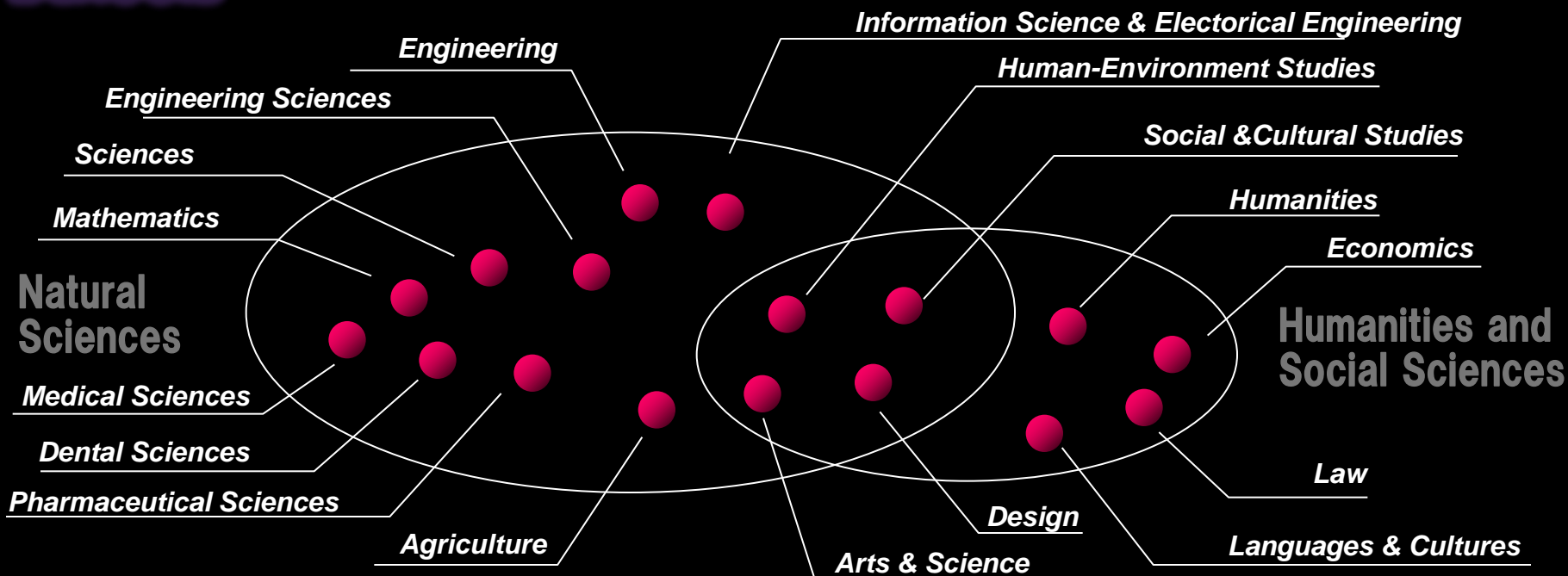
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# Schools



## Staff (4,118)

(as of May 1, 2011)

**Faculty: 2,099**

**Administration: 2,019**

Professors 679
Associate Professors 627
Lecturers 120
Assistant Professors 629
Research Associates 25

Administrative staff 849
Technical staff 1,170

## Students (18,925)

Undergraduates 11,793
Graduates 7,132



# Global 30 Project

With the introduction of the "Global 30" Project, the best universities in Japan are now offering degree programs in English.

SEARCH Inquiry Japanese

STUDY IN JAPAN ABOUT GLOBAL 30 UNIVERSITIES COURSES STUDENT LIFE SCHOLARSHIP ADMISSIONS ARCHIVES

*Japan is the Place for You.*

Home to 18 Nobel laureates and 3 Fields Medalists, Japan is internationally renowned for its high educational standards and cutting-edge research environment. Here are some reasons why you should consider studying in Japan.

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PROF. KOICHI TANAKA, NOBEL PRIZE IN CHEMISTRY, TOKYO UNIVERSITY  
PROF. TOSHIHIDE MASKAWA, NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSICS, NAGOYA UNIVERSITY  
PRESIDENT, TOSHIO HIRANO, THE CHANCEFORD PRIZE 2009, OSAKA UNIVERSITY  
PROF. SHIGEO AKIRA, CANADA GARDENIER INTERNATIONAL AWARD 2011, OSAKA UNIVERSITY  
PROF. TADAITSU KISHIMOTO, THE CHANCEFORD PRIZE 2009, OSAKA UNIVERSITY

HOME > Study in Japan

## Study in Japan

### Advanced Learning Environment

Japan has an excellent academic environment that allows students to be innovative, creative and think independently. You can study the latest technology and acquire the knowledge that enabled Japan's phenomenal postwar economic growth. The universities under the "Global 30" Project are well equipped with fine research, computer, and library facilities, enabling students to carry out their research in a state-of-the-art environment.



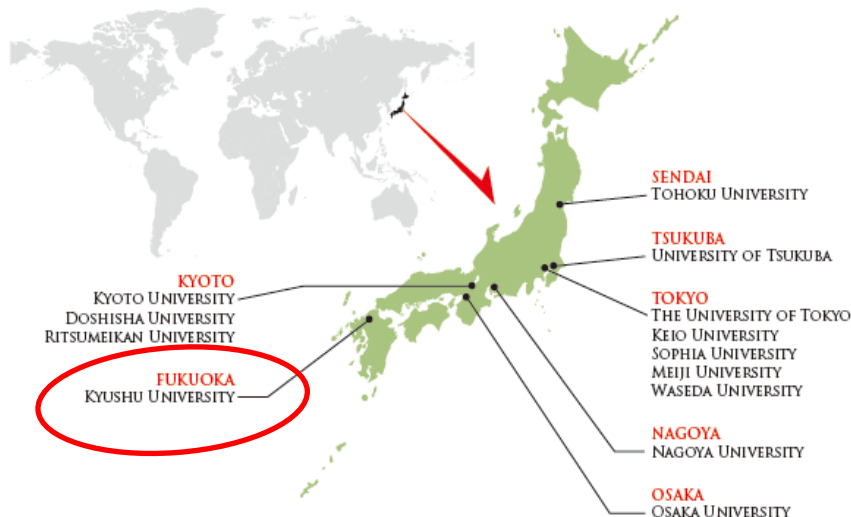
### Low Tuition and Fees, Generous Scholarships

Tuition and fees at Japanese universities are inexpensive compared to fees in many other countries. There are also many scholarship systems including government-sponsored scholarships and scholarships offered by the universities themselves. Currently many international students at the universities are receiving some kind of scholarship.

### Rich Culture: Mix of Tradition and Cutting-edge High Technology

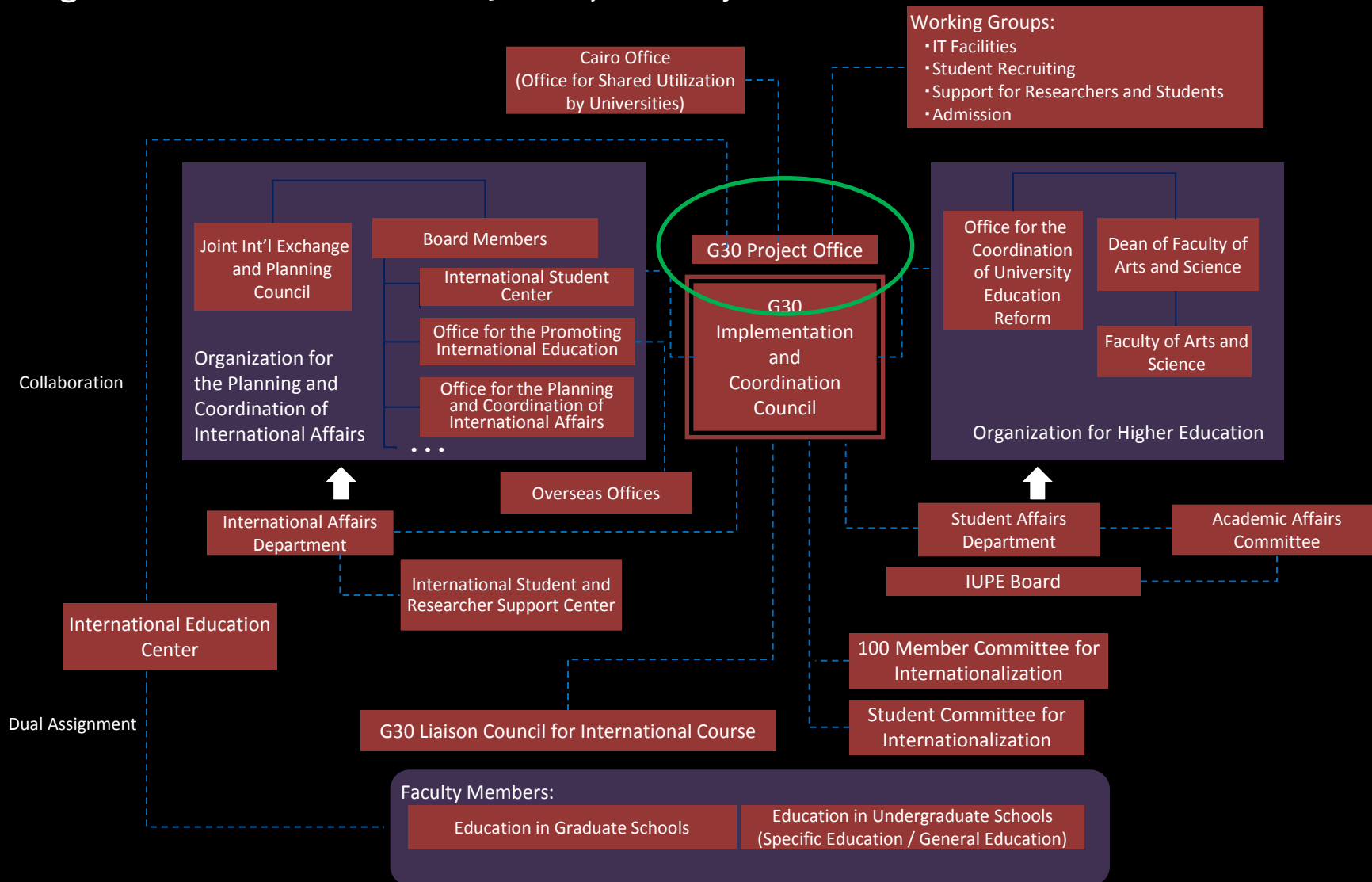
Modern Japanese culture and society consist of a diverse mix of the old and new, the East and West, and the natural and the artificial. Contradictory elements coexist in harmony in Japan, allowing students to experience a unique culture.

## THE UNIVERSITIES UNDER THE "GLOBAL 30" PROJECT





## Organizational Structure of G30 Project at Kyushu





Reputation Management is **all the rage**



# Reputation

Reputation is ‘formed over time; based on what the organization has done and how it has behaved’ (Balmer and Greyser 2003).

“A corporate reputation is perceptual representation of a company’s past actions and future prospects that describes the firm’s overall appeal to all of its key constituents when compared with other leading rivals” (Fombrun 1996).

‘Reputation is a perceptual collective construct – or a socially shared impression – that relies on an individual’s perception of a public consensus about how the firm will behave in any given situation’ (Helm 2011: 7).





# Reputation is:

- Perception
- Formed of past actions
- Indicative of future prospects
- Institutional Asset
- Brand Equity
- Power
- Social Capital



# Reputation Management

Is even **more critical to HEIs** than to private firms.

Why?





## How comes it that RM matters more to universities?

- Mutually **undifferentiated**
- Their services are **expensive**, but **cannot be sampled** before consumption
- Of critical importance to **student choice**
- Absence of something like investor relations reports



# Reputation

National  
and  
International



‘Rankings are proxies for university reputation’.

(Louise Simpson, World 100 Reputation Network)



# G30 Universities in WURs (2012-2013)



		THE Overall	QS Overall	THE Reputation	QS Asia
<b>National</b>	Tohoku	137	75	51-60	14
	Tsukuba	301-350	203	n/a	32
	Tokyo	27	30	8	8
	Nagoya	201-225	86	n/a	18
	Kyoto	54	35	20	10
	Osaka	147	50	51-60	11
	Kyushu	301-350	128	n/a	22
<b>Private</b>	Keio	351-400	200	n/a	30
	Sophia	n/a	n/a	n/a	161-170
	Meiji	n/a	n/a	n/a	251-300
	Waseda	351-400	198	n/a	42
	Doshisha	n/a	601+	n/a	201-250
	Ritsumeikan	n/a	601+	n/a	161-170



# Size of PR Office in UK HEIs: University of Sheffield

## Office of Corporate Affairs (Formally External Relations)

Senior Managers (4)	Marketing (13)
Director of Corporate Affairs	PA to Head of Brand and Marketing and Projects Officer
Head of Public Engagement	Marketing Planning Manager
Public Engagement Manager	Strategic Marketing Manager
Research and Evaluation Manager	Creative Manager (2)
Communications (6)	Senior Marketing Officer (Planning)
Head of Corporate Communications	Marketing Officer (2)
Internal Communications Manager	Senior Copywriter
Projects and Communications Officer	Digital Editor
Research Officer	Creative Web Developer
Office Administrator	Digital Content Editor
Communications Assistant	Marketing Intern
Media Team (6)	
Media Relations Manager	
Media Relations Officer (3)	
Media Relations Assistant	
Social and Digital Media Officer	

**Total # of staff = 29**

**Basic Facts (2011)**  
 Students (total): 25,805  
 Students (International): 5,410  
 Staff (total): 5,500



# PR Offices in G30 Sites (AY2012)

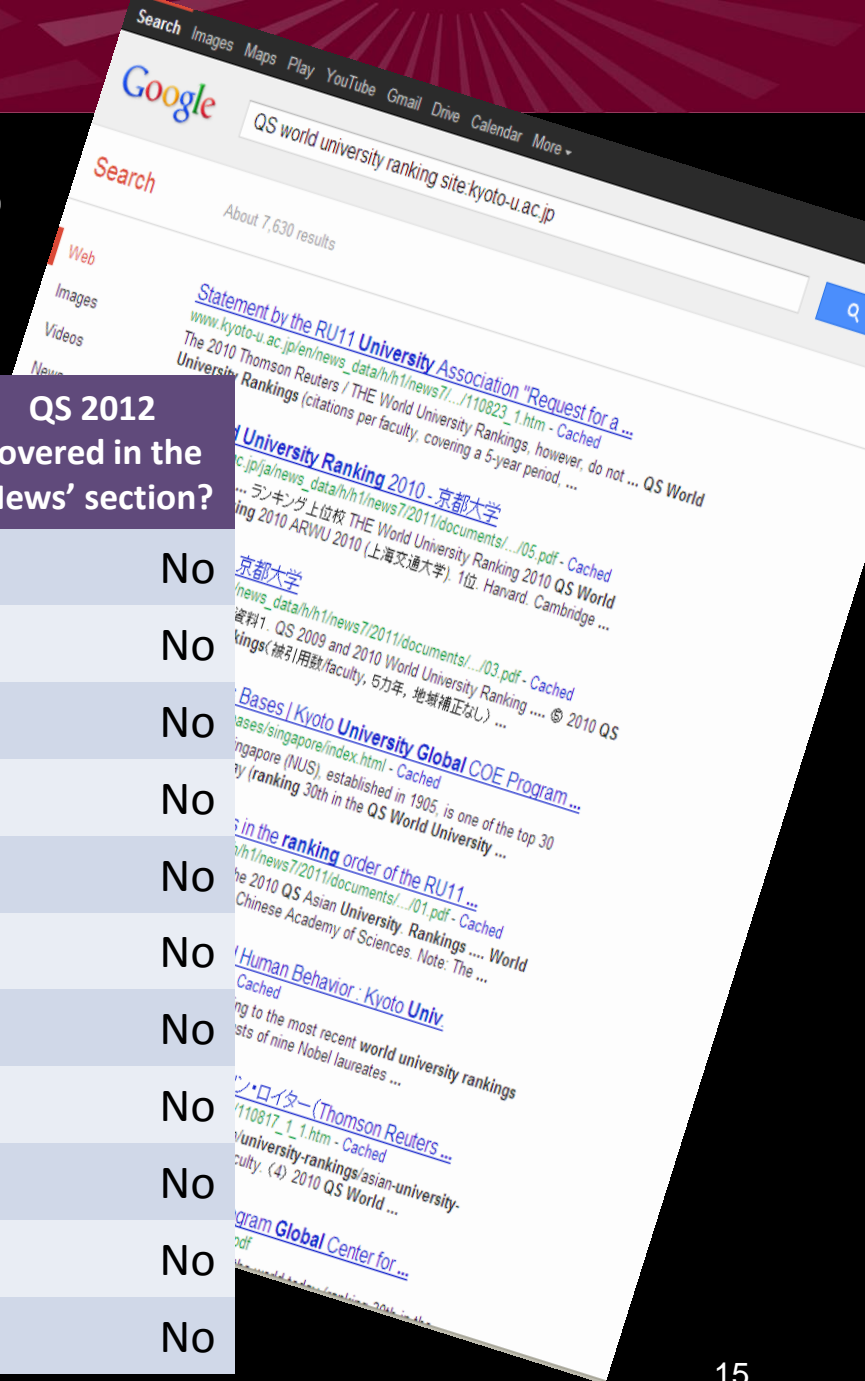
Based on e-mail interviews

	Size of PR office	Whether PR office is involved in international recruitment	Whether there is a VP exclusively devoted in PR (marketing/ external relations/ corporate affairs)	Whether there is a corporate policy or strategy on WURs
A	14 (All full time)	Yes. There is a section chief in charge of international PR (English website, international media, etc).	No	No
B	8	The main responsibility for international recruitment lies with a different department (i.e., the International Department).	No	Don't know
C	10 (Full time 8)	The main responsibility for international recruitment lies with a different department (i.e., the International Department).	No	Don't know
D	5 (All full time)	The main responsibility for international recruitment lies with a different department (i.e., the International Department).	No	Aims to make the top 100, but no detail provided.
E	9 (Full time 6)	The main responsibility for international recruitment lies with a different department (i.e., the International Department).	No	No
F	12 (Full time 10)	Yes. But the division of labour between the PR office and the International division is not clearcut.	Yes	No
G	10 (Full time 8)	The main responsibility for international recruitment lies with the international admissions office.	No	No
H	15 (Full time 7)	The main responsibility for international recruitment lies with a different department (i.e., the International Department).	No	No



# Do G30 Universities refer to WURs at all?

School Name	QS ranking	'QS WUR' Search Hits	QS 2012 covered in the 'News' section?
University of Tokyo	30	29	No
Kyoto University	35	7340	No
Osaka University	50	31	No
Tohoku University	75	10	No
Nagoya University	86	2	No
Kyushu University	128	11	No
Waseda University	198	2	No
Keio University	200	0	No
University of Tsukuba	203	8	No
Doshisha University	601+	0	No
Ritsumeikan University	601+	0	No







Japanese HEIs appear to lack a **university-wide policy on WURs** – the closest approximation we have of international reputation.



**Why** do Japanese HEIs fail to take WURs/  
international RM seriously?

**Because**....

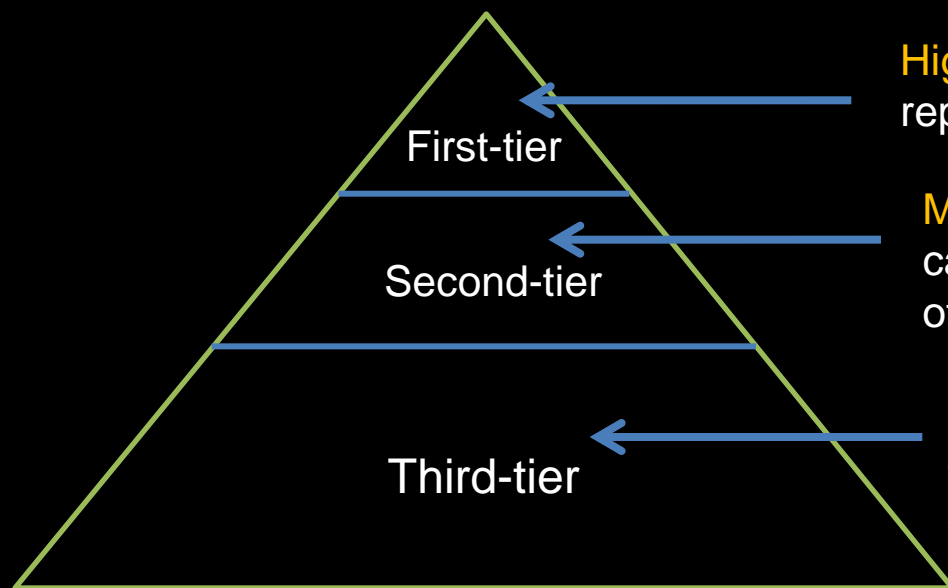
Challenges of **Internationalisation** themselves  
are not taken seriously???



# Some Background Information bearing on International Recruitment

1. International students not outside the quota
2. Tuition fees for international students: not higher than local students
3. International students not necessarily fluent in Japanese
4. English-speaking staff are small in numbers

Japanese HEIs' attitudes to internationalisation depend in part on their positions in **reputational hierarchy**.



**Highly competitive** universities with good reputation; usually research-intensive

**Moderately competitive** universities capable of recruiting sufficient number of local students

**Least competitive** universities not capable of attracting sufficient number of local students



## First-tier Universities

- **No financial incentive** to admit greater number of international students
  - No increase in revenue
  - Less # of places for local students
- **Increase in workload**
  - International students as high-maintenance
  - Problem of language



## Third-tier Universities

- Usually private universities with less subsidies from the government.
- Some are increasingly dependent on international students for **revenue** and **quota-filling**.
- Still, their reputation building exercises are national in focus.



# Inhibitions to Taking International Reputation Management Seriously (1)

Under-appreciation of the need to internationalise

Lack of economic incentive →

International students don't bring revenue

Size of the national market →

Just about big enough to encourage complacency  
among already established schools





## Inhibitions to taking International Reputation Management seriously (2)

- Lack of budget
- Absence of strategic thinking
- Inflexible hiring system
- Divide between Academic Affairs Dept. and International Dept.
- Widespread view that conscientious commitment to education and research is enough to bring about reputation



# Has G30 Project made positive impacts?

THE WUR suggests that one reason for lowly rankings of Japanese HEIs has to do with lack of international diversity.

## Has the G30 been successful in int'l recruitment?

**36 % rise**

in G30 sites in less than two years!



# Number of International Students in G30 Sites

		# of int'l students (2009)	# of int'l students (2012)	Projected # of Int'l students (2020)
<b>National</b>	Tohoku	1,346 (7.28%)	1,431 (7.93%)	3,211 (17.38%)
	Tsukuba	1,756 (9.93%)	2,304 (13.72%)*	4,500 (25.44%)
	Tokyo	2,522 (8.79%)	2,936 (10.41%)	3,500 (12.20%)
	Nagoya	1,344 (8.20%)	1,799 (10.89%)	3,000 (18.30%)
	Kyoto	1,407 (6.09%)	1,707 (7.49%)	3,200 (13.85%)
	Osaka	1,456 (5.86%)	1,924 (8.17%)	3,000 (12.06%)
	Kyushu	1,509 (7.89%)	1,931 (10.20%)	3,900 (20.40%)
<b>Private</b>	Keio	1,053 (3.19%)	1,554 (4.64%)	4,000 (11.99%)
	Sophia	673 (5.37%)	1,148 (10.55%)	2,600 (20.74%)
	Meiji	845 (2.66%)	1,545 (4.82%)	4,000 (12.61%)
	Waseda	3,125 (5.84%)	4,331 (8.00%)	8,000 (14.95%)
	Doshisha	678 (1.27%)	1,387 (4.95%)*	3,500 (12.95%)
	Ritsumeikan	1,224 (3.22%)	1,823 (5.44%)*	4,005 (10.53%)

(Compiled from various sources)

Total: 18,938

Total: 25,820

Total: 50,516

\*# of int'l students in AY2011



To (come to) enjoy good reputation and be globally competitive,

- We need a corporate policy on international reputation management, and a system to institute that policy successfully.
- For that, we need a strong corporate affairs/marketing department with an experienced marketing/corporate affairs manager, assisted by a group of professionals (copy-writers, photographers, web designers, etc.)



# What is to be done

Blatantly commonplace, but

Take an **incremental** approach!

The **day of reckoning** shall come.

But till then, a kind of incrementalism is perhaps the  
only position available.





# Southwest Japan (Kyushu, Yamaguchi, Okinawa): Regional Branding Project

## A World Away

Studying in Southwest Japan

Raise  
the international profile of  
Southwest Japan as a whole





## Cultural Crossroads

Kyushu's international character finds delightful expression in its cuisine, which has more exotic leanings than the fare in other parts of the country. It was in Kyushu that tempura was first served. Though many people think of tempura as a standard Japanese dish, it was in fact introduced by Europeans to the people of Kyushu in the seventeenth century.

The international nature of Kyushu's cuisine is richly displayed in Nagasaki's **shuppuke ryori**—a fascinating fusion of Japanese and Chinese cuisines with some European influences thrown in for good measure. The Kyushu city of Fukuoka is home to Hakata ramen, one of the most highly regarded kinds of ramen (a Japanese version of Chinese-style noodles) in the country.

Wonderful though it is, there is more to the culture of Kyushu than food. Kyushu also happens to be one of the world's foremost ceramic centers, and the history of Japanese porcelain begins here. The area of Arita in Saga Prefecture has for centuries produced its perfectly exquisite Kakiemon and Nabeshima ware. A number of foreign potters consider the techniques used in Kyushu for making ceramics to be the best anywhere and so choose to come here to refine their craft.

## The Spell of Okinawa

Japan comprises regions all their own distinctive characteristics, but Okinawa is the most exotic part of the country. This long island chain between the Pacific Ocean and the East China Sea stretches down from the Japanese mainland almost to Taiwan. The islands are characterized by stunning coral reefs, pristine white-sand beaches, lush semitropical vegetation, colorful marine life and intriguing foreign influences. Okinawa is home to its own unique musical culture. They can be traced back to the days when the islands formed the independent Ryukyu Kingdom, which as a result of centuries foreign trade combined influences from China, Japan and Southeast Asia to forge its own entrancing identity. That cultural identity is ever present on the islands today. Okinawans are known as warm, friendly, fun-loving people, and their positive attitude towards life finds expression in the fact that Okinawa is home to the longest-lived people in the world.



## Atmospheric Yamaguchi

At the western tip of Japan's biggest island of Honshu is situated the prefecture of Yamaguchi. Separated from the island of Kyushu by a narrow strait, Yamaguchi Prefecture acts as a gateway to both Kyushu and nearby Korea. With the Sea of Japan to the north and Inland Sea to the south, Yamaguchi Prefecture has a rocky, indented coastline that is one of its more attractive features. Likewise attractive with its old-world character is the prefectural capital, also called Yamaguchi, which at one time because of its flourishing culture gained through trade with China and Korea became known as the "Mecca of the West." Education has long been stressed in Yamaguchi Prefecture, as evident in the fact that some of the men of talent it produced were a driving force in shaping the modern nation of Japan towards the end of the nineteenth century.



## The What and Where of Kyushu

For Japanese, the significance of Kyushu goes back beyond the dawn of history. Kyushu is a center of myth and legend. It is the place where the fabled ancestors of the Japanese people are said to have touched down after descending from heaven. This part of the country can be regarded as the cradle of Japanese culture and civilization.

Geography has done much to shape the character of Kyushu. The proximity of this island to Korea and China meant that until the twentieth century, Kyushu was the most international part of Japan. Since very ancient times, it was through this part of Japan that the products and ideas of the outside world entered the country. Kyushu encouraged foreign trade and was a pioneer in accepting technologies, artifacts and residents from the West.

That international character has certainly extended into the modern era. Kyushu today utilizes its prime geographic position to support a burgeoning trade with mainland Asia. And that helps Kyushu account for almost 10% of Japan's GDP. Kyushu boasts the fourth-largest economic zone in the country after the metropolitan areas of Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya, and the size of Kyushu's gross regional product puts its economy at about the same level as Belgium's, which ranks 20th in the world.

## Kyushu Personality

Kyushu is Japan's third-largest island, and a strait just 400 meters across at its narrowest point separates Kyushu from the largest island of Honshu. But that has been sufficient to allow Kyushu to mold its individual character.

Kyushu is different from the rest of Japan: it's older, warmer, more authentic. It is an area of spectacular active volcanoes and mountains soaring to 1,700 meters. It is a land rich in deep forests, beautiful coastlines and abundant hot-spring resorts. The beautiful seas surrounding Kyushu are scattered with smaller islands, each bearing a distinctive nature all of its own.

Kyushu enjoys a balmy subtropical climate. And some might argue that the warmth of this southern locale has spread to the warmth of its people. The Kyushu city of Kagoshima is often called the "Naples of the East"—not just because it is a port whose skyline is dominated by the cone of a brooding volcano. As its Italian counterpart, Kagoshima, like other parts of Kyushu, has a more Mediterranean temperament than other regions of the country.

The influence of the climate on the local character might be disputed, but beyond question is the fact that the people of Kyushu have been used to accommodating visitors from distant lands since ancient times.







## International Students in Japan

Over the past 20 years, but particularly in the last decade, the number of international students studying in Japan has undergone an incredible leap. And that number is on the rise. There are now close to 140,000 students from different countries around the world currently undertaking courses in Japan at various institutions.

For the majority of these students taking undergraduate courses, the tuition language is Japanese. Typically, those students come to Japan and spend one to two years learning the Japanese language before entering an undergraduate program (see page 14). However, in recent years, there has been great growth in the number of programs for students without advanced level Japanese, and now English-speaking students have considerable access to academic life in Japan. The number of first-class schools and colleges offering a diversity of courses to meet the needs of non-Japanese students is expanding. Exciting options are available in the range of degree-granting programs that are taught entirely in English.

Among all the regions in the country, southwest Japan has a great deal to offer in the field of education. In recent years, such institutions as Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU), which is in the Kyushu city of Beppu, have introduced dramatic changes to the programs and courses they run for international students. Notable in this region is Kyushu University, located in Fukuoka and one of Japan's most prestigious seats of higher education. The Japanese government has selected the 13 best universities in the country to participate in the Global 30 Project, offering a range of courses in a great variety of fields in English. Kyushu University is one of those 13 institutions, and it is in fact the third most popular choice for foreign students—and the most popular university outside Tokyo.

## Old Meets New

Kyushu is a place where fine aspects of the past live quite happily in the present. The Japanese have a great love for festivals, and some of the most famous festivals in the country take place in Kyushu. Notable among them is the exuberant Hakata Dontaku, which dates back over 800 years and sees the whole of Fukuoka join in the street party fun of its parades; there is the Dai Jimmoryaki fire festival on volcanic Mt. Aso, in which part of a mountainside is set ablaze in the form of a giant Chinese character; there is the spectacular 400-year-old Karatsu Kunchi Festival in Saga, where the gigantic festival floats are hauled along the beach to the festive sound of flutes and drums.

But there is of course far more to Kyushu than its older culture. Kyushu is also home to the thoroughly energetic city of Fukuoka—a place distinguished by its superb modern architecture, tremendous vitality and vibrant nightlife. Fukuoka

is Japan's seventh-largest metropolis and it is one of the country's most cosmopolitan and internationalized urban areas. Having the rest of Asia on its doorstep, Fukuoka is very keen to encourage global exchange and use its position as the major cultural center and international gateway in southwest Japan.

This strikingly modern city has the atmosphere of Tokyo or Osaka though it achieves this with much more manageable proportions, and Fukuoka has an attractive foreign flavor. In recent years, Fukuoka has carved out a name for itself as a hub for contemporary world-class architecture. The city is now one of the best places in the world to view works by outstanding architects side by side. But as well, with its easy proximity to both the sea and the mountains, Fukuoka is a green, spacious and very safe city. In addition, Fukuoka and other parts of Kyushu have the advantage of not being as prone to the earthquakes that strike other parts of Japan.

## Japanese-Language Schools

Japanese ranks as one of the most important languages in the world, and studying it has grown enormously in recent years. Because of Japan's high international profile, being able to communicate in the language clearly gives an individual tremendous work potential among a diversity of companies.

As might be expected, there is a great range of institutions offering courses in the Japanese language—from small private language schools to prestigious universities. Clearly, great care has to be taken when choosing a school. In the selection, it is necessary to consider one's objectives with the language. Students intending to enter an undergraduate program at a Japanese university need a school with a course that includes preparation for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test or the Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students (see page 14). At such schools, the four basic linguistic skills—speaking, listening, reading and writing—are taught. Other students may set their goal at achieving effective communication in spoken Japanese because they feel that they don't have the need or the time to acquire reading and writing skills, and there are schools that cater to such needs.

In selecting an institute, a good way of proceeding would be for the prospective student to narrow the choice down to perhaps half a dozen schools, obtain information about them and thoroughly examine and compare their various merits. After making a final decision, the student then sends the appropriate application documentation to the school where they wish to study. It should be noted that a number of Japanese language institutes charge a non-refundable application fee upon receipt of each application.

A useful site that contains information about Japanese-language schools and includes a database (though certainly not exhaustive) of such institutions that covers the whole country can be found here <http://jfu-guide.com/english/index.html>





## The Living Experience

Beyond the academic aspects, the great appeal in studying in Japan is of course the experience of Japan itself—spending the time in a country and a culture that are somehow both familiar and completely unknown, a place in many ways rather near yet also somehow so remote.

Japan has its own beguiling charm: so many people from overseas come here intending to stay for only a short time, but they end up finding themselves unable to leave. For many young people who studied in Japan, the initial interest may have been something as casual as being intrigued by the dazzling pop culture that Japan has unleashed on the world—but then they find that the country has so much more to offer.

A frequently heard comment from both short-term and long-term foreign residents of Japan is that it is a very, very easy country to live in. The Japanese people have a reputation for being inordinately polite. All customers, Japanese or otherwise, very quickly learn to expect first-rate service in every situation—yet tipping is practically unheard of. Trains run fastidiously on schedule. Even the biggest cities in Japan have a level of safety and security with respect to crime that is arguably unmatched by anywhere else of a similar size in the world.

For the student, the time spent studying in Japan can offer enormous benefits beyond those gained directly in the class or lecture room. As well as building new friendships, enjoying life in a wholly different environment and getting to grips with a new culture, the student who becomes conversant with that Japanese culture will find that their experience helps them see things with a wholly different perspective. And in addition to the gains in personal development, they will also find that they have now become a much more attractive commodity on the job market.







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Thank you!