VII. Educational and Research Environment

1. Description of Current Conditions

(1) Are policies concerning development of the academic and research environment clearly stipulated?

<University Plans Related to School Grounds, Buildings and Facilities>

In November 1996, APU formulated the "Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Basic Establishment Plan" in preparation for its inauguration in April, 2000. This plan included the following in "4. Campus Plan Basic Ideas".

The Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University facilities will aim to create a campus with an international and innovative feel suited to the educational and research objectives of the university.

Basic Perspective for Establishing Campus Facilities

[1] An international campus that Beppu City and Oita Prefecture can be proud of showing to the rest of the world.

[2] A campus open to local residents that has a wealth of amenities in tune with nature and the environment.

[3] International research hub

[4] Multimedia campus

[5] Creates rich and developed communication between students and faculty

[6] Out of town, live-in campus

[7] Community-based campus

[8] Facilities that are flexible and can keep up with future demands

[9] 24-hour campus life style

"Precondition in Campus Planning at time of Inauguration" (campus population)

The total campus population of undergraduate students at the time when there is a complete cycle of students, and taking into consideration the establishment of a graduate school, faculty and staff numbers and the fact the university will be open to the public, is set at 4,000.

In line with trying to develop new and enriching academia and increase student intake capacity, APU has carried out the following campus development since its inauguration:

● Construction of H Building to accommodate the establishment of the Graduate School in 2003.

● Construction of B II Building, E II Building and F II Building in 2006, in line with the 2006 New Challenge Plan that included increasing student intake capacities.

● Construction of AP House II (international student dormitory) in 2007, in line with the 2007 New Challenge Plan that included increasing student intake capacities.

VII. Educational and Research Environment

- Establishment of Learning Commons at the Library in March, 2011, in line with the AY2011 Academic Reforms. Learning Commons provide students with a space to carry out group study and receive academic advice.
- Relocation of the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) in August, 2011, to a more central location on campus, in line with the AY2011 Academic Reforms.

In addition, a report by the Green Campus Promotion and Review Committee, a committee that organizes people to deal with environmental problems, such as energy saving on campus, proposed the establishment of a Global Environment Committee. This was established and has been working effectively in collaboration with the Campus Development and Review Committee since 2010.

<Clarification of policies pertaining to the development of student study and faculty educational and research environments>
With the objective of developing an educational environment that promotes increased quality in student learning, discussions about the educational and research environments at APU are held prior to the year academic reforms are set to be implemented. In particular, the "APU Phase Three Plan", which was formulated in light of the APU 2020 Vision discussions, and to give an overall view of how APU should look by the year 2020, reflected what APU should be doing between the years 2011 and 2014 to remain on the path to achieve the APU 2020 Vision. Academic policies for the APU Phase Three Plan were deliberated on and passed as the "AY2011 Academic Reforms". In addition, the development of research policies and research environment etc. are outlined in the "The R2020 New Mid-Term Plan Research Policy at APU", showing that policies in this area are indeed clearly stipulated.
Learning Commons, which aim to enhance learning support functionality, were established in direct response to the AY2011 Academic Reforms' outline to improve library and academic information services. A working group was set up, headed by the Director of the Media Resource Center, which manages the library and all academic information services. The basic policies and concept outline for the learning commons, which is worthy of the development of the educational and research environment, were compiled into the following five points. Then along with the points, the new learning commons started in AY2011 (Document 7-1),

- We will aim to give students a sense of satisfaction and achievement and encourage continuous self-directed study and student growth. To achieve this we will let students refeel the library as a venue for "learning, exchange and growth", and will strengthen its roles and functions.
- We will introduce the Learning Commons concept to create a active library with

additional functions of students learning support and other support.

● We will respond comprehensively to student needs and create a friendly atmosphere that encourages students to study and use the library as second nature.

● From a pedagogical point of view, merely 1) reading and 2) listening (to lectures) will not produce sufficient results. By experiencing the process of 3) observing (i.e. recording lectures and re-watching them) and 4) acting (i.e., group work), students can achieve far better results, and it is the APU Library that will provide steps 3) and 4) (reinforced multimode learning).

● We will install active space in the library where students can conduct group work and hold discussions. We will also incorporate new learning and student support services, including student staff. Additionally, we will create silent areas where students can concentrate on their studies.

(2) Are enough land, buildings and facilities being developed?
<Status of university grounds, buildings and establishment of campus amenities>
[1] Development Status of University Land and Buildings
The total area of land owned by APU is 423,419.41 ㎡, of which 65,008 ㎡ makes up total building area, extensively more land area than required by Standards for Establishment of Universities (Document 7-2).

[2] Establishment of Campus Amenities

● In order to fit in with the surrounding environment, the buildings on campus are all earth tones, but with roads and sidewalks being a distinct separate color for safety reasons. The maintenance of all campus facilities is overseen by the Administration Office and specialist service providers in conjunction with the Trust's Office of Facilities Management.

● APU's campus is very remote, making it difficult for restaurants and other facilities that students can use to be built nearby. For this reason, APU has had cafeterias and other student-aimed recreational facilities on campus since the time it opened. The current cafeteria seats 905, and with the consecutive timetabling system (no set lunchtime for all students) in place, the cafeteria doesn't get a rush of students all at once and instead students take their lunch breaks spread out over several hours. In addition, a take-out style Pacific Café, that can seat 120 students, was built in March, 2007, to accommodate the growing number of students and resulting in a broader purchasing area.

● So that students can have a more comfortable life on campus, shrubbery, benches and

a fountain were built and a rubbish separation system set up that sees rubbish taken away from the campus directly. APU also strives for a smoke-free campus, aiming to bring the smoking rate down to 6% from the 12% in 2012.

● When establishing the university talks were held with local residents to discuss students transport getting to and from APU. It was decided that for safety reasons and so that local residents wouldn't be disadvantaged by large numbers of students driving to school, students would not be permitted to drive to and from APU. There is a very busy highway service rest area located close to APU which APU patrols every day to make sure students aren't parking their cars there and getting in the way of people wanting to access the service area.

● E building (Student Union), housing a cafeteria and student activity space, and E II building (Student Union II), with a shop and student activity space, were built adjacent to each other as facilities to support student life on campus. In addition, APU's international education dormitory, AP House, has a capacity of 1310 students. Here international students learn about Japanese culture and rules of everyday life for one year after enrolling at APU. The AP House Office was established to support students growth while living at AP House. In addition to the faculty and staff placed at AP House to support students, Resident Assistants (RA – senior students), live at AP House with the first years to provide support for dormitory life and promote exchange between students.

<Management and Maintenance of School Land, Buildings and Facilities, Including Ensuring a Safe and Hygienic Environment>
[1] Management and Maintenance of School Land, Buildings and Facilities
APU is carrying out energy efficiency measures in accordance with the Act on the Rational Use of Energy (Energy Saving Act) and the Act on Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures (Global Warming Prevention Act). In 2010 the Trust formed a Global Environment Committee to become the focus of environmental policies at APU and throughout the Trust, and this committee has been implementing various initiatives ever since. Regarding specific energy saving measures at APU, heating facility dealing with partial usage, movement and light sensors installed for lighting, and development of central monitoring facility have been done.
All facility repair and maintenance and general campus management falls under the control of the Administration Office, who works closely with the Trust's Office of Facilities Management.
With regards to IT devices and equipment, the visual projection equipment (projectors and flat screen displays etc.), microphones and audio visual devices installed and/or located in

each of the classrooms are, in general, replaced when 1) equipment gets old (and at least eight years has passed since installation or since they started being used) and 2) installation and usage conditions are being standardized.

[2] Ensuring a Safe and Hygienic Environment

To ensure the safe and hygiene of facilities at APU, we have installed and manage a central monitoring system that picks up any faults or trouble with facilities with extraordinary speed. This system makes it possible to operate lighting and ventilation, detect trouble with a facility, and monitor the entering and leaving of rooms. The Office of Campus Management and Security, located beside the Central Monitoring System, is manned 24 hours a day, meaning a very rapid response time if any trouble occurs. The Office also manages in-house telephone tree and has a reporting system.

Any problems that arise with campus facilities are dealt with and, if necessary, handled with assistance from the Trust's Office of Facilities Management. All APU rules and regulations aim to ensure a safe and hygienic campus, prevent fire and disaster, protect the lives of and prevent bodily damage to all of the people on campus, as well as protect the assets of the Trust.

(3) Are the library and academic information services functioning adequately?

<Status and Suitability of Library Books, Academic Journals and Digital Information>

[1] Development of Academic Information and Development of Usage Environment

As of the end of AY2012, the APU library stocked 175,997 books (Document 7-3), 2,410 journal titles (Document 7-4), 77 types of electronic journals (Document 7-5), and 3,553 audiovisual resources (Document 7-6). Combined with the books and materials available at Ritsumeikan Library there are a total of 3,180,384 books (Document 7-7) and 77 types of electronic journals available (eight of which are e-journals only available to APU and not Ritsumeikan University). Students have access to a very unique and well balanced collection of books and resources suited to the academic and research fields found at APU.

Of the approximately 10,000 new books purchased every year (Document 7-9), the majority are syllabus related books (faculty recommended reference books and texts), and books that students request the library to purchase. However, we also get in an array of academic titles pertaining to undergraduate courses and lectures, as well as a wide range of educational books covering interdisciplinary fields and liberal arts.

In addition to the 77 types of electronic journals available (reference 7-12), the APU library also has subscriptions to 1,663 Japanese (Document 7-10), and 747 western magazines and journals (Document 7-11) and is rapidly expanding the number of western magazines made available, in line with our educational and research activities. APU's educational and research activities encompass not just Asia, but the entire globe, and with a unique system

that welcomes large numbers of international students and foreign faculty it is no surprise that the opportunities for students, faculty and staff to travel overseas are plentiful. In addition to making it possible for students, faculty and staff to access journals without having to carry heavy materials around, the recent increase of tablet computers shows that our initiative to increase electronic journals is fitting to the current needs of students, faculty and staff.

With regards to databases, APU has its own unique database that, when coupled with the Ritsumeikan database available to APU students, offers a total of 77 types of digital journals (Document 7-13), as at the end of AY2012. These databases are available via the on-campus LAN network in either the research rooms or open computer room.

In addition, after reviewing past library outlines, several new initiatives were introduced. As a part of realization of the "Learning Commons" idea which transforms the library roles to be spaces where students can study individually or in groups, the university has offered learning areas for group study and debate, booths where faculty give academic advice to students, and booths that offer Japanese and English writing support since AY2011. With an area also dedicated to ongoing English and Math support by resident faculty and staff, it truly is a learning space for everybody. In addition, the development of a wireless LAN environment allows students to access the on-campus network, search the academic information system and use digital information wirelessly from their own laptops. Moreover, these same systems can be accessed from outside the university by registering with the university's VPN (Virtual Private Network).

Users can also request copies and Inter-Library Loans (ILL), as well as reserve books and make other requests online, making for a very convenient service offered to APU Library users.

[2] Library Literacy Education and Development of an Environment for Using Academic Information

Academic information is becoming computerized at an extremely fast pace and in order for research, academia and learning to be able to utilize this diverse array of information it is paramount that we develop an environment that promotes digital usability as well as provides education on correct usage.

Regarding usage environment, the portal functionality of academic information has been increased and, using the Ritsumeikan academic information system RUNNERS, it is now possible for APU students to access a seamless searching of books, magazines and electronic journals from the APU Library as well as the six Ritsumeikan University libraries. Students can search, reserve and request books from any of these facilities and vice versa.

As for cultivating literacy by using a library, first year students are taught about library literacy in the "Freshman Workshop" class that all first years are required to take. It is also tied into course content, with students being required to physically search for information, borrow books and carry out the required study outside of class hours. These initiatives resulted in an increase in the average number of books borrowed by students from 13.6 in 2011 to 15.1 in 2012, validation that the services offered to students are functioning well. With the Library also carrying out the field and objective specific Library Guidance sessions according to a yearly schedule, and working with faculty to tailor on-demand guidance sessions including class and graduate guidance sessions, the APU library has adequate user education systems in place.

<Library Dimensions, Placement of Librarian Qualified Specialist Staff, User Environment such as Opening Hours, Reading Room and Information Search Facilities>
With 851 seats and an overall area of 3578.73 ㎡ (Document 7-14), the library reading area also includes a "reserve corner", where texts and reading materials related to current courses are all shelved together in the one location, a magazine and periodical corner, an audiovisual corner, an information search corner, an academic advising corner, a Japanese and English writing support center, group study rooms, and a multimedia room etc.

With regards to whether or not students have access to an adequate learning environment, in 2009, library hours were extended from 8:30 to 21:15 to 8:30 to 24:00 during school period. In AY2012 the library was open 341 days of the year (Document 7-15), was visited approximately 480,000 times (Document 7-16) and lent out approximately 90,000 books (Document 7-19).

APU uses an external company for the main staffing of the library, with librarian qualified outsourced-staff assisting users at the main counter and the reference desk. The staff in charge of the reference desk also carry out library guidance sessions and parts of the literacy education for library users. Student staff are also employed to help with the everyday running of the library through assistance with guidance sessions, quick reference and communications and public affairs.

Information regarding library usage is outlined in the "AY2012 APU Library & Learning Commons Annual Report" (Document 7-18). The most notable thing about AY2012 was the 13% rise in library users compared to 2010, before the learning commons were established (Document 7-19), showing that the library is fast becoming an area for students' independent study. The APU Library will use this result to further strengthen the learning commons as an area for student learning.

<Development of System for Sharing Academic Information with Other Domestic Educational and Research Institutions>

By using the NACSIS-Webcat (comprehensive catalogue database) and the ILL to mutually cooperate with the National Diet Library, the National Institute of Informatics, and other domestic and international universities, APU is able to share and effectively utilize a wide range of academic information and catalogued data.

<Current Budget Management>

The library budget management policies were reviewed in AY2012 and based on these new policies, we have been able to implement budget usage more effectively as follows: the introduction of E-books for syllabus, textbooks and reference books related to the university courses and the book purchasing budget for faculty recommended books went from a maximum of 200,000 yen per faculty member in AY2012, up to 250,000 yen in AY2013.

(**4) Are the environment and conditions suited for academic and research support?**

<Development of Facilities and Equipment Suited to Academic Program Features, Student numbers, and Teaching Methods>

The environment and conditions suited to APU's student numbers, teaching methods and course content were reviewed in both the AY2006 and AY2011 Academic Reforms. In response to the AY2011 Academic Reforms, "Learning Commons" were established to promote group learning and give students a place to receive academic advice. Spaces were set up for students to carry out group work, one of the features of APU classes, outside of class hours, and a Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) built to give students a place to study and receive language learning support outside of regular classes. In addition, we introduced the online tool "Blackboard" that is used to complement interactive lectures and started using manaba folio, an e-portfolio that visualizes and commoditizes student growth as part of MEXT's 2011 student exchange program, the "Re-Inventing Japan Project". APU is adequately maintaining an environment and conditions that support education and research.

Information regarding school grounds and buildings, lecture theaters and study rooms can be found in diagram 5 of the Basic University Data.

<Bilingual Services as the Foundation of an International University>

In order to realize the university's mission and goals, we accept large numbers of international students on an English base, and with no Japanese language skills.

For this reason all signage around campus is in both Japanese and English, all offices are equipped to deal with students in Japanese and English, and the homepage, as has been the case since inauguration, is updated in both Japanese and English. Japanese and English enrollment support system, and the issuance of academic transcripts and other

official APU certificates in both Japanese and English were already developed and ready for use at the time the university opened.

<Development of the Educational and Research Support Systems such as Teaching Assistants (TA), Research Assistants (RA) and IT Staff>
APU implements two systems for academic support in lectures, graduate student Teaching Assistants (TA(G)) and undergraduate Peer Advisors (TA(UG)). In AY2012 this system employed 673 students.

The undergraduate Peer Advisor (TA (UG)) system sees senior students who took the same classes, assisting with making the materials for the Freshman Workshop I and II, and answering questions. They also help with the running of classes, offering support to both faculty and students, resulting in the smooth running of classes and a more effective learning outcome.

In addition we also have student staff assisting in the library and IT staff supporting the computerization of academic information.

<Securing Faculty Research Allowances, Rooms and Official Research Leave>
The Research Activation Policy APU implemented in 2008, aims to improve internal Academic Research Subsidies to help promote a research environment that cultivates more faculty research achievements.

Regarding research allowances, tenured faculty, fixed term faculty, and specially-appointed faculty all receive Individual Research Materials Fund of 200,000 yen and Research Travel Expenses of 100,000 yen per year (Document 7-20).

APU is striving to enhance research support for faculty, including the improvement of internal research subsidies. APU currently offers faculty the APU Academic Research Subsidy with a budget of 21,626,000 yen (Document 7-21 and 7-22), APU Academic Publication Subsidy with a budget of 3,500,000 yen (Document 7-23), and the APU International Conference Subsidy with a budget of 2,000,000 (Document 7-24). This translates to 162,431 yen per full-time faculty member, not including Lecturers as they are not eligible to apply.

In addition, tenured faculty are able to utilize the "APU Academic Development Leave" system (Document 7-25), allowing faculty to be exempt from class obligations in order to go on a research based sabbatical.

Faculty who receive special awards in the field of research, under the already outlined faculty assessment system, are awarded with the following:
[1] Faculty Assessment Special Award Research Subsidy
    Faculty are entitled up to 1,000,000 yen to subsidize either research or publication costs within 2 years of receiving the award.
[2] ADL Priority Application

Faculty who have their application granted are given 500,000 yen to help cover part of transport, accommodation and training costs. This is separate to the individual research fund.

As previously stated, RCAPS (The Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies) is in charge of research promotion and the dissemination of research outcomes for all research related to the Asia Pacific region. RCAPS was established in 1996, 4 years before the university was even opened. To realize APU's goal to "create a new academic discipline", as outlined in the opening declaration, the university established the International Association for Asia Pacific Studies (IAAPS) in 2010.

This Association aims to shape and promote Asia Pacific Studies, and become the knowledge hub accumulating and publishing research achievements internationally in individual disciplines and in relation to each region of the Asia Pacific.

(5) Are the necessary steps in place to ensure research is ethically sound?
<Development Status of Internal Regulations Pertaining to Research Ethics>
Regulations concerning research ethics are stipulated in the "APU Research Ethics Policy" (Document 7-26). In addition to guaranteeing academically conscious individual research activities, this policy states that the whole university shares the ethical outlook for APU, and APU researchers to autonomously fulfill social responsibilities. It also aims to protect the individuals and/or organizations being researched, and the researchers themselves, against any rights violations during the research process. Through the appropriate and efficient execution of academic research at APU, we hope to gain the ongoing confidence and trust of the public. The university has separate guidelines stipulated in the "APU Guidelines for People-Focused Research" (Document 7-27), which each faculty member planning on conducting research that falls under this category is informed of individually by the Secretariat.

<Suitability of Establishment and Management of a Research Ethics Internal Review Body>
In order to strictly enforce the "APU Research Ethics Policy", the university established an "APU Research Ethics Committee" (Document 7-28). This committee gives the appropriate advice and counsel to researchers as deemed necessary, dealing with consultations and complaints pertaining to the actions of researchers with regards to the research ethics set down in the Research Ethics Policy. The Committee also deals with consultations and complaints from people who have been treated unfairly or unequally by researchers, as well as handles any warnings to do with falsification, forgery or plagiarism of research papers etc.

2. Self Assessment

This report talks about the development of APU's education and research environment, whether there are clear policies in place regarding this development, the adequate development and maintenance of school grounds, facilities and equipment, the functionality of the school library and academic information services, adequate development of an environment that supports education and research and lastly, the steps necessary to ensure adherence to research ethics.

[1] Items That Are Showing Results

<Library Environment that Supports Learning>

From the perspective of creating a "learning focused library", and to build up a collection of books relevant to the academic content of courses at APU, the library, in general, purchases 2 of every book listed in the syllabus (books listed as further reading: up to 15 for the undergraduate colleges and 30 for the graduate school, plus 3 texts each for undergraduate and graduate). In addition, as a course content related learning support policy, the library shelves all texts and suggested further reading material for all current courses in the "Reserve Corner". The number of students using the library has increased significantly since the establishment of the Learning Commons. With regards to "creating a friendly atmosphere that encourages students to study and use the library as second nature" and "incorporating new learning and student support services, including student staff", the APU library has been successful in creating an environment that promotes learning, offers students advice on information searches, encourages the use of new arrival books and which employed 27 Library Assistants (LA) in AY2012.

[2] Items Requiring Improvement

<Revision of the Library Collection Policy>

The APU library still collects books in accordance to the "APU Library Collection Policy" formulated at the time of inauguration. However, the increase in new mediums such as electronic journals and e-books has resulted in an outdated collection policy, which was originally formulated with only printed materials in mind. This, coupled with the fact that almost one third of APU regular classes (English Base) in AY2012 have become digital, means it is time to review our Library Collection Policies.

3. Development Policies towards the Future

[1] Items That Are Showing Results

<Library Environment that Supports Learning>

It has been confirmed that there is a high correlation between GPA scores and the number of times the library is used. We need to keep working towards making it a habit for students to frequent the library regularly.

[2] Items Requiring Improvement

<Revision of the Library Collection Policy>

Based on the concept of the Learning Commons, we will research the trends in implementation and usage of the digital medium in other universities both within Japan and abroad. Within AY2013, discussions should be held regarding more appropriate library collection policies. In addition, policies regarding the continual purchasing or cancellation of periodicals that can be viewed both digitally and in paper format should be formulated, along with standards for deciding whether to continue or cancel online databases. We are working towards sharing this information with all related parties.

4. Supporting Documents

7-1 Revitalization of the APU Library in an Effort to Bolster its Study Functions (Report)
      Library Commons as a venue for Student Learning, Exchange and Growth
      17 Nov, 2009 University Senate meeting

7-2 Basic University Data, diagram 5 / University Data, diagrams 22-33

7-3 Documents on Number of books in the APU Library

7-4 List of Academic Information Databases in the APU Library

7-5 List of audio visual materials in the APU Library

7-6 Documents on Number of books in the APU Library

7-7 List of Academic Information Databases in the APU Library

7-8 Shifts in APU Library book numbers

7-9 Shifts in APU Library book numbers

7-10 Number of books in the APU Library

7-11 Number of books in the APU Library

7-12 List of Academic Information Databases in the APU Library

7-13 List of Academic Information Databases in the APU Library

7-14 APU Library facilities dimension

7-15 2012 Library open-hours calendar

7-16 Changes in Entrant Numbers 2012

7-17 Number of Borrowers and Books Lent 2012

7-18 2012 APU Library & Learning Commons Annual Report

7-19 Changes in Entrant Numbers 2012

7-20 APU Individual Research Funds Handling Regulations

7-21 2012 APU Academic Research Subsidy Application Guidelines (March 27, 2012 University Senate)

7-22 2012 APU Academic Research Subsidy Results (June 12, 2012 University Senate)

7-23 2012 APU Academic Book Publication Subsidy System Screening Policies (February 14, 2012)