

7. Education and Research Environment

1. Description of Current Conditions

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

In November 1996, we formulated the Basic Plan for the Establishment of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in preparation for the opening of APU in April, 2000. Section 4 of this plan ("Basic Ideas for Campus Planning") outlined the following items (Ref. 7-1).

Basic Approaches to Campus Construction

- [1] A highly international world-class campus that Beppu City and Oita Prefecture can be proud of
- [2] A campus open to local residents that has a wealth of amenities in tune with nature and the environment
- [3] A global research hub
- [4] A multimedia campus
- [5] A campus that builds strong rapport between students and faculty
- [6] An out-of-town residential campus
- [7] A community-based campus
- [8] A campus with flexible facilities that can keep up with future demands
- [9] A campus with a 24-hour lifestyle

Since our inception, we have responded to new academic developments and increased student intake capacity by undertaking the following campus development measures. At present, the Review Committee for Campus Maintenance Planning is examining campus development issues (Ref. 7-2).

2003	Construction of Building H concurrent with the establishment of the Graduate Schools
2006	Construction of Buildings, B II, E II and F II in line with academic reforms and increased intake capacity
2007	Construction of AP House II in line with academic reforms and increased intake capacity
2012	Establishment of a Learning Commons in the Library in line with academic reforms
	Relocation of the Self-Access Learning Center (August)
2013	Renovation of the 4th floor of Building A to add a new entrance to the guest

7. Education and Research Environment

	reception rooms
2014	Renovation of the 1st floor of Building A

In developing the education and research environment, discussions are held and details are fleshed out prior to the year in which academic reforms are to be implemented. The academic policies in the APU Phase Three Plan (AY2011 ~2014) were confirmed in the document entitled "Outline for the AY2011 APU Academic Reforms" (Ref. 7-3). Research policies and the development of the research environment were confirmed in "Academy Vision R2020: Research Policy at APU" (Ref. 7-4), and a clear direction was established therefor.

The construction of a Learning Commons, which aims to bolster the learning support function of the library, was the main action taken under the AY2011 academic reforms to enhance library and academic information services. The basic approach for this was outlined in "APU Library Improvement: Aiming to Bolster Library Study Functions (Report)" (Ref. 7-5).

(2) Is there sufficient land, buildings and facilities in place?

The total area of land owned by Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University is 423,419.41 m² of which 65,036 m² is building area. This is significantly more area than required by Standards for Establishing Universities (Table 5, Basic University Data).

We strive to create a comfortable campus with the following initiatives:

- In order to fit in with the surrounding environment, the buildings on campus are all earth tones, but roads and sidewalks have been kept a distinct separate color for aesthetic and safety reasons.
- To ensure that life on campus is comfortable, we installed a fountain and benches and planted shrubbery. We also separate waste into trash and recyclables. In addition, we are working to create a fully smoke-free campus.
- To support student life on campus, we built Building E (Student Union), which houses a cafeteria and student activity space, and Building E II (Student Union II), which houses a shop and student activity space, adjacent to each other. Meanwhile, AP House, our international education dormitory, provides accommodation for up to 1,310 students.
- The campus is also equipped with an athletic field (41,810 m²) and a gymnasium (2,950.67 m²).

We are implementing energy efficiency measures in accordance with the Act on the Rational Use of Energy ("Energy Conservation Act") and the Act on Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures ("Global Warming Prevention Act"). In 2010, the Trust established the Environmental Committee, which has been undertaking activities ever since.

7. Education and Research Environment

In particular, the Committee has promoted the part-time usage of heating equipment, the installation of motion and brightness sensors for light fixtures, and the improvements of Central Security Office facilities.

All facility repair and maintenance and general campus management falls under the jurisdiction of the Administration Office, which works closely with the Trust's Office of Facilities Management on these duties.

With regard to IT devices and equipment, the basic policy is for the visual projection equipment (e.g. projectors and flat screen displays etc.), microphones and audio-visual devices installed and/or located in each of the classrooms to be replaced in order of age when i) equipment gets too old (i.e., at least eight years has passed since installation), and ii) installation and usage conditions have been standardized.

To ensure the safety and sanitation of facilities, we have installed and administer a central monitoring system that detects facility malfunctions and troubles with extraordinary speed. This system also allows us to remotely monitor and manage lighting and air conditioning operations, equipment malfunctions and room entry. The Office of Campus Management and Security, located beside the Central Security Office, is manned 24 hours a day, thereby enabling us to ascertain issues rapidly. This office also manages an in-house contact list and reporting system.

We also formulated the Ritsumeikan Trust Risk Management Regulations (Ref. 7-6), Ritsumeikan Trust Fire and Disaster Prevention Management Regulations (Ref. 7-7) and the Ritsumeikan Trust Faculty and Staff Health and Safety Management Regulations (Ref. 7-8) to ensure campus safety and sanitation control, prevent accidents and disasters, and protect the life, physical well-being and property of all members of the university.

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

1) Establishment of infrastructure to provide and promote the usage of academic information

As of the end of AY2013, the library stocked 189,442 books, 2,084 periodicals, 70 online databases and electronic journals (Ref. 7-9), and 4,504 audio-visual resources (Table 31, University Data Book). Combined with materials available from Ritsumeikan University via inter-library loan, a total of 3,253,161 books can be accessed, making for a distinctive yet well-balanced collection suited to the education and research fields at APU.

Of the approximately 10,000 new books purchased every year (Table 31, University Data Book), the majority are books listed in syllabi (i.e., reference books and textbooks recommended by faculty), books that students request the library to purchase, and academic titles pertaining to lectures. In this way, the collection spans a wide range of subject matter, including interdisciplinary fields and liberal arts.

The library has subscriptions to 1,354 Japanese and 694 foreign periodicals as well as

7. Education and Research Environment

70 online databases and electronic journals. Keeping in mind APU's unique features, we maintain a particularly robust collection of foreign periodicals. Furthermore, given the global scope of our activities, we have enhanced our databases and electronic journals so that students, faculty and staff can access them from anywhere. As of March 2014, we have subscriptions to 70 databases, including our own subscriptions and those for so-called core databases which we share with Ritsumeikan University. These can be accessed at any time from either the faculty offices or the open computer room via the on-campus LAN network. There is also a virtual private network (VPN) that can be used to access databases from off campus. Library users can use the library homepage to request photocopies, apply to borrow books from other institutions via inter-library loan (ILL) and reserve books, which enables us to offer highly convenient academic information services.

In AY2011, we adopted a Learning Commons to transform the library into a space where students can study individually or in groups and added booths where students can receive academic advising from faculty as well as booths that offer Japanese and English writing support.

2) Library literacy education and the development of an environment for using academic information

Using the Ritsumeikan Academic Information System (RUNNERS), library users can search for books, periodicals and electronic journals from the APU Library as well as the six Ritsumeikan University libraries; they can also reserve and request materials from any of the libraries in the system by way of inter-library loan.

In addition, we teach library literacy in First-Year Student Workshop I, which is required for all incoming freshmen, and in connection to this, we offer out-of-class sessions where students learn to search for books in the collection and search for information from online sources. This resulted in an increase in the average number of books borrowed by students from 16.8 in AY2012 to 17.9 in AY2013 (Ref. 7-10, p. 3). Furthermore, we engage in learning support in the form of library guidance sessions, which are held according to a yearly schedule and include in-class guidance sessions implemented in cooperation with faculty as well as guidance sessions targeting graduate students (Ref. 7-11).

3) Library overview

The library covers an area of 3578.73 m² and has 851 seats (Ref. 7-12). It has a Reserve Corner, which provides one-stop access to the books designated as Required Readings and Further Readings for every subject as well as to regular books. It also has a section for periodicals and magazines, an audio-visual corner, an information search corner, academic advising booths, a Writing Center, which provides Japanese and English writing support, group study rooms and a Multimedia Room. In AY2013, the library was open for 339 days, attracted approximately 540,000 users and lent out nearly 100,000 books (Table 32, University Data Book).

7. Education and Research Environment

Librarian-qualified staff from an outsourcing company assist users at the main counter and the Reference Counter. Reference Counter staff are also involved in some of the library guidance sessions held to promote library literacy. Student staff are also involved in library operations. They shelve books, run guidance sessions, provide quick reference services and engage in publicity activities.

Through NACSIS-Webcat (a comprehensive catalogue database) and ILL with the National Diet Library, the National Institute of Informatics, and other domestic and international universities, we can access and share a wide range of academic information and catalogued data, thus ensuring the effective usage of resources.

4) Effective budget management

The collection management policy and other policies were reviewed in AY2012, after which we began using e-books for the Required Readings and Further Readings stipulated in the syllabi for all subjects. We also increased the upper limit for purchasing books recommended by faculty from ¥200,000 per faculty member in AY2012 to ¥250,000 per faculty member in AY2013. In this way, we have striven to manage the budget more effectively (Ref. 7-13).

(4) Is there sufficient infrastructure and conditions in place to support education and research?

1) Establishment of infrastructure to support education and research

With the adoption of the Learning Commons, we established spaces for group learning, which is a feature of many of our classes, and we set up the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) as a place where students can receive language learning support outside of class. In addition, we introduced the online tool Blackboard to complement our classroom lectures, and in student exchange programs subsidized by MEXT's Re-Inventing Japan Project, we started using Manaba Folio, an e-portfolio that visualizes and enables the sharing of student growth. In this way, we have established sufficient infrastructure and conditions to support education and research.

We operate two systems to provide academic support in lectures, graduate student Teaching Assistants and undergraduate Peer Advisors. In AY2013, we employed 639 students under these systems.

In case of Peer Advisors, upperclassmen who previously took First-Year Student Workshop I and II, which is required for all freshmen, are employed as Peer Advisors in the same subjects to answer students' questions and to assist with the creation of materials and classroom operations, thus supporting both the faculty and fellow students. This enables smooth classroom management and makes for more interactive classes. We also hire students to perform a range of other functions. We also employ specialized staff who provide technical assistance in educational settings and students who offer support in the

7. Education and Research Environment

library.

2) Bilingual support: The foundation of an international university

We admit large numbers of international students with no Japanese language proficiency at the time of enrollment. For this reason all signage on campus is in both Japanese and English, all offices are equipped to deal with students in both Japanese and English, and the homepage has been written in both Japanese and English since our inception. Since opening, we have operated our registration support system and issued academic transcripts and other official certificates and notifications in both Japanese and English.

3) Support for faculty research

Regarding research allowances, tenured faculty, fixed-term faculty, and specially-appointed faculty all receive ¥200,000 in individual research materials expenses and ¥100,000 in research travel expenses every academic year (Ref. 7-14).

In addition, we operate the following systems, including internal research subsidies, in an effort to enhance research support for our faculty.

	Budget
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Academic Research Subsidies (Grant-in-Aid-Linked / General) (Ref. 7-15)	¥22,000,000 (Ref. 7-17)
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Academic Conference Presentation Subsidy System (Ref. 7-16; Ref. 7-17)	
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Academic Publication Subsidies (Ref. 7-18)	¥3,500,000
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University International Conference Subsidy System (Ref. 7-19)	¥1,000,000

These funds are equivalent to ¥220,833 per full-time faculty member. (This applies to 120 full-time faculty members excluding Lecturers, who are not eligible for these systems.) In addition, we operate the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Academic Development Leave (ADL) system, which exempts up to eight tenured faculty per year from classes so they can focus on their research during a sabbatical (Ref. 7-20).

Under the aforementioned Faculty Assessment System, the faculty member who receives the Special Award for Research is provided with a subsidy to be used for either publication or research as well as priority in applying for ADL (Ref.7-21 p7).

As was mentioned earlier, the Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies was established at APU in 1996 to promote Asia Pacific-related research and disseminate research achievements. In AY2010, we established the International Association for Asia Pacific Studies to elaborate upon the “creation of a new academic discipline” set forth in the Opening Declaration. This Association aims to shape and promote Asia Pacific studies and

7. Education and Research Environment

become an intellectual hub that can globally accumulate and disseminate research results in various academic disciplines as they pertain to the sub-regions of the Asia Pacific.

(5) Are the necessary measures in place to ensure compliance with research ethics guidelines?

With regard to research ethics, we have formulated the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Code of Ethics (Ref. 7-22). With this Code of Ethics, in addition to guaranteeing researchers the right to freely engage in research based on their good conscience as academics, the Code of Ethics, we aim to create a shared ethical outlook for the entire university so that both APU and its researchers can fulfill their responsibilities to society in a self-directed manner. We also aim 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 research at APU, we hope to earn the trust of the public and maintain it over the long term. We also formulated the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Human Subjects, and all faculty whose research is applied by these guidelines were notified individually by the office. We also posted them on our homepage (Ref. 7-23).

To enforce the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Code of Ethics, we established the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Ethics Committee. When deemed necessary, the Committee issues guidance to our researchers (Ref. 7-24). The Committee also handles i) questions and complaints about researchers who commit violations stipulated in the Code of Ethics, ii) questions and complaints from people who claim to have been treated improperly or unfairly by a researcher, and iii) reports of falsifications, fabrication and plagiarism.

2. Assessment

(1) Items that are Showing Results

1) Library infrastructure for learning support

To build a collection of books relevant to the academic content of subjects at APU, the library, as a general rule, purchases two copies of every book listed in the syllabi (Books listed as Further Reading: up to 15 for undergraduate subjects and 30 for graduate subjects; Required Reading: up to three each for undergraduate and graduate subjects). Also, when classes are in session, the library shelves the books denoted as Required Reading and Further Reading in the syllabi in the Reserve Corner as part of its efforts to support student learning. Since the adoption of the Learning Commons, the percentage of students using the library has increased (Ref. 7-10 p5). In AY2013, the library employed 63 Academic & Learning Resource Core Staffs (ALRCS). In this way, our efforts to create an environment

7. Education and Research Environment

to encourage learning are commendable (Ref. 7-11).

2) Full-time faculty research funds

In AY2014, the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Academic Research Subsidy system was revised to urge faculty to apply for Grant-in-Aid and provide them with generous financial support to that end. The result of this is a more clearly defined purpose for research since we can now assure fairer distribution of internal research subsidies while promoting the acquisition of Grant-in-Aid, thereby raising the level of our research activities.

(2) Areas for Improvement

1) Research ethics

In light of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Code of Ethics, the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Ethics Committee issues the necessary guidance and advice concerning research ethics to researchers, but some researchers say the consultation procedures and screening process have become opaque. Furthermore, as the number of consultations on research ethics and compliance increases every year, we are not always able to respond quickly under the existing system.

3. Strategic Direction for the Future

(1) Items that are Showing Results

1) Library infrastructure for learning support

We have determined there to be a high correlation between the number of library visits and GPA, so we will continue developing systems that encourage students to get into the habit of using the library regularly.

2) Full-time faculty research funds

In AY2015, we will reach the final year of the process launched in AY2014 to improve the operation of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Academic Research Subsidy system. This means that the general internal research subsidies that are not linked to Grant-in-Aid applications will be discontinued, leaving only the Grant-in-Aid-linked type; therefore, we will strive to design a new system that not only provides research funds to faculty preparing to apply for Grant-in-Aid, but also disbursed additional research funds as a special in to those faculty who have secured Grants-in-Aid.

7. Education and Research Environment

(2) Areas for Improvement

1) Research ethics

Keeping an eye on policy trends at the national level, we will strive to enhance our efforts to raise awareness about research ethics. We will also formulate guidelines containing detailed procedures to ensure that researchers do not commit research misconduct stemming from an inadequate understanding of ethics. Also, since the number of consultations regarding research plans involving human subjects is on the rise, we will develop a screening framework under the supervision of the Research Ethics Committee to ensure a swift and proper response thereto.

4. Supporting Resources

- 7-1: Basic Plan for the Establishment of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University
- 7-2: "On the Establishment of the Review Committee for Campus Maintenance Planning"
- 7-3: "Outline for the AY2011 APU Academic Reforms—Cultivating Human Resources with International Currency through Assurance of Quality in Learning"
- 7-4: "Academy Vision R2020: Research Policy at APU"
- 7-5: "APU Library Improvement: Aiming to Bolster Library Study Functions—Creating a Learning Commons where Students Can Learn, Interact and Grow—(Report)"
- 7-6: Ritsumeikan Trust Risk Management Regulations
- 7-7: Ritsumeikan Trust Fire and Disaster Prevention Management Regulations
- 7-8: Ritsumeikan Trust Faculty and Staff Health and Safety Management Regulations
- 7-9: List of online databases available from the APU Library, APU homepage
- 7-10: AY2013 Annual Report
- 7-11: AY2014 Policy for Learning Support Activities in the APU Library Learning Commons (Proposal)
- 7-12: Area covered by APU Library facilities
- 7-13: "Handling of the AY2014 APU Library Book Budget (Draft)"
- 7-14: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific Regulations on the Handling of Individual Research Funds
- 7-15: Application Guidelines for AY2014 APU Academic Research Subsidies (Grant-In-Aid Linked and General Types)
- 7-16: Application Guidelines for the AY2014 APU Academic Conference Presentation Subsidy
- 7-17: "AY2014 APU Academic Research Subsidy: Screening Policy for the Conference Presentation Subsidy"
- 7-18: Application Guidelines for the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Academic Publication Subsidy Regulations

7. Education and Research Environment

- 7-19: "Regarding the AY2014 Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University International Conference Subsidy System"
- 7-20: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Regulations for Academic Development Leave
- 7-21: Partial Correction of the Faculty Assessment System (Assessment of AY2014 Activities)
- 7-22: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Code of Ethics
- 7-23: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Human Subjects
- 7-24: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Research Ethics Committee Regulations