

Reform of Higher Education in Japan - Fostering responsiveness to society -



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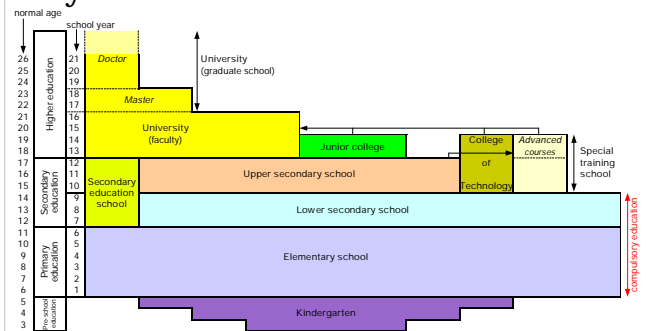
I Education system in Japan

The present school system

- Entire revision under the occupation
- Nine-year compulsory education
- Unified into a single track system
 - universities being open to every graduate of an upper-secondary school
 - abolition of distinction among higher education institutions

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Organisation of the present school system



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A very good performance in primary and secondary education

- Ranking in the OECD's PISA 2000
 - first group for mathematics and science
 - second group for reading
- PISA 2003
 - still in the same groups as the PISA 2000
 - Japan slightly lowered its ranking by country.

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II Higher education in Japan

1. Foundation of modern higher education institutions

- Imperial universities
 - University of Tokyo (later Imperial University, then Tokyo Imperial University) in 1887
 - Other imperial universities in major cities
 - Based on the German model
- Other types of institutions of higher learning (public and private)

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Number of higher education institutions as of 1943

	<i>Universities</i> [imperial universities]	<i>Specialised Schools</i>	<i>Total</i>
Governmental (national)	19 [7]	58	77
Local public	2	24	26
Private	28	134	162
Total	49 [7]	216	265

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Characteristics of pre-war higher education

- Well-organised bureaucratic administration system in governmental institutions
- Coexistence of the three sectors of higher education institutions – governmental (national), local public and private
- Limited number of governmental institutions and a larger number of private institutions
- Absolute priority to the national institutions, especially the imperial universities

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After the war (as of 1949)

- 70 national universities without difference in legal status among them
- 17 local public universities
- 81 private universities
- Junior colleges (regarded as provisional)

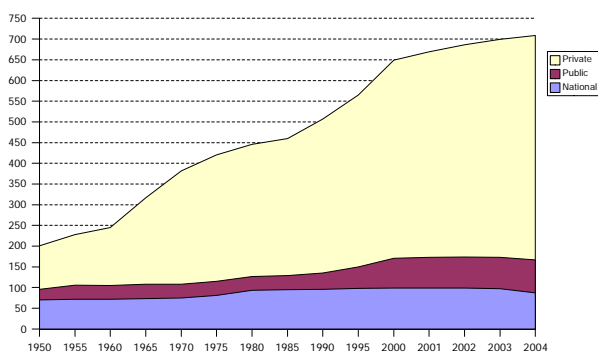
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2. The expansion of higher education and its decline

- Rapid growth of higher education in the 1960s and early 1970s
- Number of institutions
 - 1960 : 245 universities and 280 junior colleges
 - 1975 : 420 universities and 513 junior colleges
- Multiplication of students from 1960 to 1975
 - Universities : 2.77 times
 - Junior colleges : 4.28 times

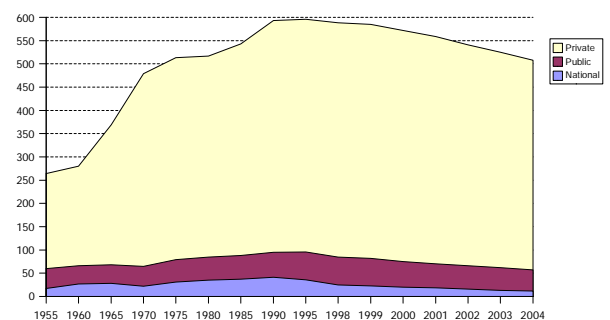
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Number of universities by sector



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Number of junior colleges by sector



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- Enrolment ratio (of the age cohort)
 - 10.3% in 1960
 - 38.4% in 1975

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Student movements in the late 1960s and university reform

- Incapable of coping with the growth in the 1960s
- Student movements from 1966
- Central Council for Education's 1971 Report
 - diversification of higher education;
 - curriculum reform;
 - improvements in teaching methods;
 - opening of higher education to the general public

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The planned expansion of higher education after 1975

- A decade plan for higher education from 1976 to 1986
- Creation of special training schools (advanced courses) as non-university institutions in 1975

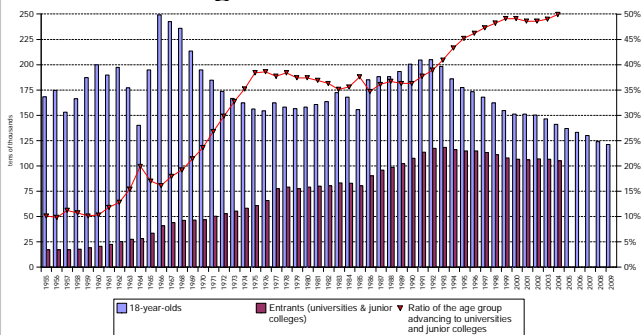
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Second expansion in the 1980s and early 1990s

- Number of universities
 - 1980 : 446 universities (93 national, 34 public and 319 private)
 - 1995 : 565 universities (98 national, 52 public and 415 private)
 - 2004 : 709 universities (87 national, 80 public and 542 private)
 - junior colleges have been decreasing however

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Trends in 18-year-old population and access to higher education



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III Higher education and societal needs – How can universities be more responsive to society?

1. The transition to universal higher education

- M. Trow's Model
 - elite phase
 - mass phase
 - universal phase

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Characteristics of the three phases of higher education system defined by M. Trow (1974)

	<i>Elite</i>	<i>Mass</i>	<i>Universal</i>
<i>Enrolment ratio</i>	Under 15%	Between 15 and 50%	Over 50%
<i>Attitude towards access</i>	Privilege	Right	Obligation
<i>Primary functions of higher education institutions</i>	Shape the mind and character of the ruling class; Prepare students for broad elite roles	Prepare a much broader range of elites; Transmission of skills	Prepare large numbers of people for life; Maximise their adaptability to society
<i>Curriculum</i>	Highly structured; Highly specialised and governed by the professor's notion	More modular, marked by semi-structured sequences of courses; Credit system; Movement between fields	Less structured and boundaries between courses being broken down; Rejection of academic forms and standards

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2. Diversification of universities and their programmes

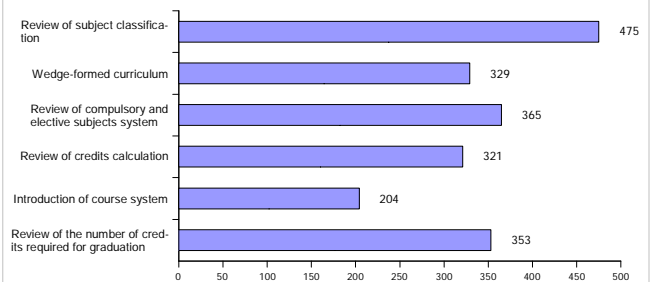
- Towards the universal phase
 - Over 50% in 1987 (non-university sector included)
- Decade plan was over in 1986.
- Acceleration of diversification of higher education institutions
- Establishment of the University Council in 1987
 - academic and non-academic members
 - comprehensive study on higher education

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- Abolition of subject areas in 1991
 - structure curricula reflecting their own educational ideals and objectives
 - no definition of subject areas, such as general education and specialised education
 - no requirement on obtaining a certain number of credits in each subject area (acquisition of a minimum total number of credits only)

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Implementation of curriculum reform in universities (2001)



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1998 Report *A Vision for the University of the 21st Century and Future Reform Measures : Distinctive Universities in a Competitive Environment*

- Improve the **quality of education** and research with the purpose of nurturing the ability to investigate issues;
- Secure university **autonomy** by making the educational and research system structure more flexible;
- Establish university administration and management with **responsible decision-making** and implementation; and
- Individualise universities and continuously improve their education and research by establishing **multiple evaluation systems**.

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2002 revision of the School Education Law

- More flexibility for a reorganisation of faculties and departments
 - A reorganisation without change in the kinds and fields of degrees does not need ministerial authorisation.
- Introduction of a continual third-party evaluation system
 - accreditation every 7 years by a accrediting organisation authorised by the MEXT (Ministry of Education)

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Incorporation of national universities in 2004

- Change in the status of the governmental institutions
- Legal personality and more autonomy
- Non-public servant status for staff
- Participation of external people in university administration

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Closing remarks

Three major factors for HE reform

- Diversification in students
- Changes in the demand for human resources
- Increased reliance of industry on academic research activities

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Deregulation to have universities more responsive to society

- Differentiation of institutions
- Increased autonomy
 - institutional structure
 - curricula

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For universities

- Continual reform
- Improvement of the management
 - Rationalisation of the administration
 - Development of non-academic staff

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Government's role

- Definition of the grand design of higher education
- Maintaining an appropriate competitive environment
- Quality assurance
- Investment for the future (development of human resources)

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