

German – Japanese Academic Links Agreement

between

**the Japan Association of National Universities (JANU),
the Japan Association of Public Universities (JAPU),
the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges
and Universities Associations (FJPCUA)**

and

**the German Rectors' Conference
– Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK) –**

The Japan Association of National Universities (JANU), the Japan Association of Public Universities (JAPU), the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations (FJPCUA) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), united in the aim of promoting academic links between the two countries, and in the awareness that a furthering of cooperation in the academic sphere is in the interest of the higher education institutions in both countries, make the following framework agreement.

ARTICLE 1

Purpose and Membership

- (1) The partners to this agreement intend to promote cooperation in the areas of teaching and study, research and development, exchange of students, placement of doctoral candidates, exchange of senior and junior teaching staff and researchers.
- (2) A higher education institution which is represented in the Japan Association of National Universities (JANU), the Japan Association of Public Universities (JAPU), and the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations (FJPCUA) on the one side, and in the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) on the other side is entitled to cooperate directly in accordance with the terms of this agreement with any signatory from the other country.
- (3) This framework agreement shall be supplemented by details of partnership arrangements negotiated bilaterally between cooperating institutions in each country. While signatories are expected to promote cooperation, no higher education institution is expected to enter into partnership obligations beyond its resources.

ARTICLE 2

Fields of Cooperation

Cooperation is to be sought especially:

- in the exchange of undergraduate and graduate students;
- in the placement of Japanese and German graduates and doctoral candidates respectively, and in the placement of researchers;
- in the fostering and implementation of cooperation in the curricular design and implementation of study programmes;
- in the development of joint programmes at bachelor and master level, ending with either a joint or double degree;
- in the fostering of bi-nationally supervised doctoral thesis ("cotutelle de thèse");
- in the fostering and implementing of joint research projects;
- through participation in joint academic events such as symposia, conferences, colloquia, etc.; and
- in establishing contacts in research and teaching, and in exchanging research information via publications, teaching materials, and electronic networks.

ARTICLE 3

Student Exchange

- (1) Japanese and German students who study at the host institution in the framework of structured exchange programmes will receive a tuition waiver, if agreed bilaterally by the higher education institutions concerned.
- (2) Exchanges will be arranged at the individual institutional level. Each participating institution will be responsible for managing its reciprocity requirements.
- (3) The host institutions will provide to the home institution a statement/transcript of study undertaken and/or credit point achievements of each exchange student.

ARTICLE 4
Admissions

- (1) The basis for entry of students will be agreed between each home and host institution, with each taking into account applicants' records of achievement, goals and the comparability of courses to be undertaken. To guide admission decisions, the Japan Association of National Universities, the Japan Association of Public Universities, and the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations on the one side and the German Rectors' Conference on the other side will engage in further consultations to set up recommendations for admission for Japanese and German students and graduates at the higher education institutions in both countries, including the admission to doctoral work/programmes. These recommendations shall become part of this agreement as Appendix 1.

ARTICLE 5
Staff Exchange

- (1) Proposals regarding the attachment of academic staff or researchers to a host institution shall be agreed in writing between the departments and institutes concerned well in advance of the period of stay.
- (2) The parties to the agreement share the view that due consideration should be given to the wishes of both parties regarding the exchange of personnel and connected matters.

ARTICLE 6
Arrangements and Support

- (1) The partner institutions, agreeing on exchanges and attachments, shall attempt to provide every necessary support to participants in the exchange during their stay. They shall allow the participants to use – as far as possible – the host institution's academic resources and amenities on the same terms as members of the host institution in the same category.
- (2) The host institution shall endeavour to help participants gain access also to necessary facilities such as archives, libraries, museums, and laboratories, including computer facilities, which are required for the successful completion of their academic programme or research in the host institution.
- (3) Participating students will enjoy the same rights and privileges and be subject to the same regulations and discipline as students of the host institution.

ARTICLE 7
Programme Implementation

- (1) Details of the implementation of programmes in partner institutions shall be jointly worked out by the appropriate academic institutes and departments and approved by appropriate authorities in those institutions. Specific work programmes of this kind do not rule out additional academic contacts.
- (2) The Japan Association of National Universities, the Japan Association of Public Universities, and the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations on the one side and the German Rectors' Conference on the other side may facilitate broad national academic contact and exchange programmes with varying patterns of voluntary involvement of signatory institutions in the two countries, utilising the good offices of allied bodies.

ARTICLE 8
Consultation

Representatives of the Japan Association of National Universities, the Japan Association of Public Universities, and the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations on the one side and the German Rectors' Conference on the other side shall consult at regular intervals to consider the progress of cooperation and to investigate further projects.

General information on both national higher education systems is provided in [Appendix 2](#).

ARTICLE 9
Duration

This agreement shall be valid for five years. It shall be renewed for a further five years unless one of the parties gives written notice of discontinuation at least six months before the date of its termination. Any amendments shall be agreed in writing after joint consultations.

ARTICLE 10

This agreement shall come into operation after each party has gone through the appropriate procedure of assent and authorisation and after the signed texts of agreements have been exchanged.

The English version is the valid one and both sides may produce translated versions (Japanese/German) for dissemination purposes.

Bonn/Tokyo, 26 June 2015

Japan Association of National Universities (JANU)

German Rectors' Conference (HRK)



Prof. Dr. Susumu Satomi
President



Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler
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Japan Association of Public Universities (JAPU)



Prof. Dr. Masayoshi Kiyohara
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Prof. Dr. Atsushi Seike
President

APPENDIX 1

GERMAN – JAPANESE ACADEMIC LINKS AGREEMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES

Decisions on admission of students with German qualifications to Japanese higher education institutions and students with Japanese qualifications to German higher education institutions will be made by the receiving institution according to the national higher education regulations.

To assist institutions in the decision-making process, the Japan Association of National Universities (JANU), the Japan Association of Public Universities (JAPU), and the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations (FJPCUA) on the one side and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) on the other side have agreed to the following recommendations.

They are aware that changes of structures and standards in both systems may require, from time to time, a review of these recommendations.

(1) Language of Tuition

German and Japanese students wishing to study in the other country shall demonstrate an appropriate level of competence in the language of tuition.

(2) Recognition of Qualifications Giving Access to Higher Education

Japanese and German higher education institutions shall recognize the qualifications issued by the other party meeting the general requirements for access to higher education, unless a substantial difference can be shown between the general requirements for access.

(3) Recognition of Periods of Study and Credit Transfer

In principle, periods of study at higher education institutions in Japan or Germany shall be regarded as comparable and recognized on a working load basis, unless substantial differences can be shown.

However, there are programmes and awards in each system which do not lend themselves to direct comparisons with awards in the other system and these shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Also, individual institutions may have specific standards, such as grades or other evaluation requirements, to be satisfied as prerequisites for admission to particular programmes of study.

(4) Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications

To the extent that a recognition decision is based on the knowledge and skills certified by the higher education qualification, each party shall recognize the higher education qualifications conferred in the other country, unless a substantial difference can be shown.

(5) Admission of Students and Graduates

Admission of Japanese Students and Graduates

Holders of a Japanese *gakushi* degree shall be eligible for admission to German graduate programmes in accordance with the profile of their prior studies, subject to the requirements of the receiving institution.

Holders of a Japanese *shûshi* degree shall be considered for doctoral work in Germany (*Doktorand*), subject to the requirements of the receiving institution.

Other students shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Admission of German Students and Graduates

Holders of a German bachelor's degree shall be eligible for admission to Japanese graduate programmes in accordance with the profile of their prior studies, subject to the requirements of the receiving institution.

Holders of a German master's degree shall be considered for doctoral programmes in Japan, subject to the requirements of the receiving institution.

Holders of a German *Diplom* or *Magister* degree or a *Staatsprüfung* shall be considered for doctoral programmes in Japan, subject to the requirements of the receiving institution.

Holders of a German *Diplom FH* shall be eligible for admission to Japanese graduate programmes in accordance with the profile of their prior studies.

Other students should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

(6) Doctoral Degrees

Doctoral degrees awarded by Japanese and German institutions shall be regarded as being equivalent.

In the context of bi-nationally supervised doctoral thesis ("cotutelle de thèse"), the partner universities recognize the respective selection criteria of the participating institutions.

In order to enhance cooperation at doctoral level, the participating institutions are encouraged to investigate the possibility of employing English as *Lingua franca* in cotutelle procedures.

(7) Music and the Arts

In the disciplines of music and the arts, individual musicianship and artistic talent are, beyond formal requirements, the decisive criteria for admission and have to be demonstrated in special entrance examination procedures.

In Germany, these disciplines are offered at Universities of Art/Music and in specialized Schools /Academies of Music and Schools/Academies of Arts, which are both part of the higher education system. Musicology and history of arts, though, are predominantly offered at universities. Universities of Art/Music and some of the Schools/Academies of Music and Schools/Academies of Arts are also doctorate-granting institutions.

In particular in the field of music (composition, instruments, voice, conducting, etc.) and the arts, the designation of formal awards for corresponding types of qualifications may vary from school to school.

(1) Holders of a Japanese *Bachelor's degree* in music or the arts shall be eligible for admission

- to programmes in fields of musical performance or the arts leading to a *Master's degree* (or a *Magister Artium* degree or *Diplom* degree) completed by a *Künstlerische Abschlussprüfung* or equivalent qualifications, subject to the requirements of the receiving institution. Depending on individual qualifications, applicants may be granted advanced standing, but may also be expected to fulfill specific additional study requirements.
- to programmes in musicology and arts studies leading to a *Master's degree* (or a *Magister Artium* degree or *Diplom* degree), subject to the requirements of the receiving institution.

While advanced standing may be granted, necessary proficiency in various languages and/or other prerequisites may require additional studies.

- (2) Holders of a Japanese *Master's degree* in music or the arts shall be eligible for admission
 - to advanced programmes in fields of musical performance or the arts leading to the *Konzertexamen* (Concert Examination) or the status of *Meisterschüler/in*, subject to the requirements of the receiving institution. Depending on individual qualifications, applicants may be expected to fulfill specific additional study requirements.
 - to doctoral work in musicology or history of art, subject to the requirements of the receiving institution. Aside from general conditions for doctoral work, necessary proficiency in various languages and/or other prerequisites may require additional studies. Students seeking a doctoral degree may consider prior participation in (parts of) the relevant Master's programme useful for the fulfillment of additional study requirements.

- (3) The German qualification *Diplom* awarded by a university or an equivalent higher education institution in a field of music or the arts should be considered as equivalent to the degree "Master of Arts".

- (4) The German qualification *Konzertexamen* or the status of *Meisterschüler/in* awarded after the completion of advanced studies in a field of music or the arts, or equivalent qualifications, should be considered as equivalent to the degree "Doctor of Musical Art" and "Doctor of Arts", respectively, with regard to relevant professional work as well as qualification for teaching the subject.

APPENDIX 2 GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

INFORMATION ON THE GERMAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM¹

1. Types of Institutions and Institutional Status

Higher education (HE) studies in Germany are offered at three types of higher education institutions (HEI).²

- *Universitäten* (Universities) including various specialized institutions, offer the whole range of academic disciplines. In the German tradition, universities focus in particular on basic research so that advanced stages of study have mainly theoretical orientation and research-oriented components.

- *Fachhochschulen* (Universities of Applied Sciences) concentrate their study programmes in engineering and other technical disciplines, business-related studies, social work, and design areas. The common mission of applied research and development implies an application-oriented focus of studies, which includes integrated and supervised work assignments in industry, enterprises or other relevant institutions.

- *Kunst- und Musikhochschulen* (Universities of Art/Music) offer studies for artistic careers in fine arts, performing arts and music; in such fields as directing, production, writing in theatre, film, and other media; and in a variety of design areas, architecture, media and communication.

Higher education institutions are either state or state-recognized institutions. In their operations, including the organization of studies and the designation and award of degrees, they are both subject to higher education legislation.

2. Types of Programmes and Degrees Awarded

Studies in all three types of institutions have traditionally been offered in integrated "long" (one-tier) programmes leading to *Diplom-* or *Magister Artium* degrees or completed by a *Staatsprüfung* (State Examination).

Within the framework of the Bologna-Process one-tier study programmes are successively being replaced by a two-tier study system. Since 1998, two-tier degrees (Bachelor and Master) have been introduced in almost all study programmes. These changes designed to provide enlarged variety and flexibility to students in planning and pursuing educational objectives, they also enhance international compatibility of studies.

The German Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Degrees³, the German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning⁴ and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong

¹ The information covers only aspects directly relevant to purposes of the Diploma Supplement. All information as of 1 January 2015.

² *Berufsakademien* are not considered as higher education institutions, they only exist in some of the *Länder*. They offer educational programmes in close cooperation with private companies. Students receive a formal degree and carry out an apprenticeship at the company. Some *Berufsakademien* offer Bachelor courses which are recognized as an academic degree if they are accredited by a German accreditation agency.

³ German Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Degrees, Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 21 April 2005.

⁴ German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (DQR). Joint resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany, the

Learning⁵ describe the degrees of the German higher education system. They contain the classification of the qualification levels as well as the resulting qualifications and competencies of the graduates.

For details cf. Sec. 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 respectively. Table 1 provides a synoptic summary.

3. Approval/Accreditation of Programmes and Degrees

To ensure quality and comparability of qualifications, the organization of studies and general degree requirements have to conform to principles and regulations established by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK).⁶ In 1999, a system of accreditation for programmes of study has become operational under the control of an Accreditation Council at national level. All new programmes have to be accredited under this scheme; after a successful accreditation they receive the quality label of the Accreditation Council.⁷

4. Organization and Structure of Studies

The following programmes apply to all three types of institutions. Bachelor's and Master's study courses may be studied consecutively, at various higher education institutions, at different types of higher education institutions and with phases of professional work between the first and the second qualification. The organization of the study programmes makes use of modular components and of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) with 30 credits corresponding to one semester.

4.1. Bachelor

Bachelor degree study programmes lay the academic foundations, provide methodological skills and lead to qualifications related to the professional field. The Bachelor degree is awarded after three to four years.

The Bachelor degree programme includes a thesis requirement. Study courses leading to the Bachelor degree must be accredited according to the Law establishing a Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany.⁸

First degree programmes (Bachelor) lead to Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), Bachelor of Engineering (B.Eng.), Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.), Bachelor of Music (B.Mus.) or Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.).

German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the German Conference of Economics Ministers and the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 15 November 2012). More information at www.dqr.de.

⁵ Recommendation of the European Parliament and the European Council on the establishment of a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning of 23 April 2008 (2008/C 111/01 – European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning – EQF)

⁶ Common structural guidelines of the *Länder* for the accreditation of Bachelor's and Master's study courses (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 10.10.2003, as amended on 04.02.2010)

⁷ "Law establishing a Foundation 'Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany'", entered into force as from 26 February 2005, GV. NRW. 2005, nr. 5, p. 45 in connection with the Declaration of the *Länder* to the Foundation "Foundation: Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany" (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 16 December 2004.)

⁸ See note No 7.

The Bachelor degree corresponds to level 6 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework.

4.2. Master

Master is the second degree after another one to two years. Master study programmes may be differentiated by the profile types "practice-oriented" and "research-oriented". Higher education institutions define the profile.

The Master degree study programme includes a thesis requirement. Study programmes leading to the Master degree must be accredited according to the Law establishing a Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany.⁹

Second degree programmes (Master) lead to Master of Arts (M.A.), Master of Science (M.Sc.), Master of Engineering (M.Eng.), Master of Laws (L.L.M.), Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.), Master of Music (M.Mus.) or Master of Education (M.Ed.). Master study programmes which are designed for continuing education may carry other designations (e.g. MBA).

The Master degree corresponds to level 7 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework.

4.3. Integrated "Long" Programmes (One-Tier): Diplom degrees, *Magister Artium*, *Staatsprüfung*

An integrated study programme is either mono-disciplinary (Diplom degrees, most programmes completed by a *Staatsprüfung*) or comprises a combination of either two major or one major and two minor fields (*Magister Artium*). The first stage (1.5 to 2 years) focuses on broad orientations and foundations of the field(s) of study. An Intermediate Examination (*Diplom-Vorprüfung* for Diplom degrees; *Zwischenprüfung* or credit requirements for the *Magister Artium*) is prerequisite to enter the second stage of advanced studies and specializations. Degree requirements include submission of a thesis (up to 6 months duration) and comprehensive final written and oral examinations. Similar regulations apply to studies leading to a *Staatsprüfung*. The level of qualification is equivalent to the Master level.

- Integrated studies at *Universitäten* (U) last four to five years (Diplom degree, *Magister Artium*) or 3 to 6.5 years (*Staatsprüfung*). The Diplom degree is awarded in engineering disciplines, the natural sciences as well as economics and business. In the humanities, the corresponding degree is usually the *Magister Artium* (M.A.). In the social sciences, the practice varies as a matter of institutional traditions. Studies preparing for the legal, medical and pharmaceutical professions are completed by a *Staatsprüfung*. This applies also to studies preparing for teaching professions of some *Länder*.

The three qualifications (Diplom, *Magister Artium* and *Staatsprüfung*) are academically equivalent and correspond to level 7 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework. They qualify to apply for admission to doctoral studies. Further prerequisites for admission may be defined by the Higher Education Institution, cf. Sec. 5.

- Integrated studies at *Fachhochschulen* (FH) / Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) last four years and lead to a *Diplom* (FH) degree which corresponds to level 6 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework. While the FH / UAS are non-doctorate granting institutions, qualified graduates may apply for admission to doctoral studies at doctorate-granting institutions, cf. Sec. 5.

⁹ See note No 7.

- Studies at *Kunst- and Musikhochschulen* (Universities of Art/Music etc.) are more diverse in their organization, depending on the field and individual objectives. In addition to *Diplom/Magister* degrees, the integrated study programme awards include Certificates and certified examinations for specialized areas and professional purposes.

5. Doctorate

Universities as well as specialized institutions of university standing and some Universities of Art/Music are doctorate-granting institutions. Formal prerequisite for admission to doctoral work is a qualified Master (UAS and U), a *Magister* degree, a *Diplom*, a *Staatsprüfung*, or a foreign equivalent. Comparable degrees from universities of art and music can in exceptional cases (study programmes such as music theory, musicology, pedagogy of arts and music, media studies) also formally qualify for doctoral work. Particularly qualified holders of a Bachelor or a *Diplom (FH)* degree may also be admitted to doctoral studies without acquisition of a further degree by means of a procedure to determine their aptitude. The universities respectively the doctorate-granting institutions regulate entry to a doctorate as well as the structure of the procedure to determine aptitude. Admission further requires the acceptance of the Dissertation research project by a professor as a supervisor.

The doctoral degree corresponds to level 8 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework.

6. Grading Scheme

The grading scheme in Germany usually comprises five levels (with numerical equivalents; intermediate grades may be given): "*Sehr Gut*" (1) = Very Good; "*Gut*" (2) = Good; "*Befriedigend*" (3) = Satisfactory; "*Ausreichend*" (4) = Sufficient; "*Nicht ausreichend*" (5) = Non-Sufficient/Fail. The minimum passing grade is "*Ausreichend*" (4). Verbal designations of grades may vary in some cases and for doctoral degrees.

In addition, grade distribution tables as described in the ECTS Users' Guide are used to indicate the relative distribution of grades within a reference group.

7. Access to Higher Education

The General Higher Education Entrance Qualification (*Allgemeine Hochschulreife, Abitur*) after 12 to 13 years of schooling allows for admission to all higher educational studies. Specialized variants (*Fachgebundene Hochschulreife*) allow for admission at *Fachhochschulen* (UAS), universities and equivalent higher education institutions, but only in particular disciplines. Access to study programmes at *Fachhochschulen* (UAS) is also possible with a *Fachhochschulreife*, which can usually be acquired after 12 years of schooling. Admission to study programmes at Universities of Art/Music and comparable study programmes at other higher education institutions as well as admission to a study programme in sports may be based on other or additional evidence demonstrating individual aptitude.

Applicants with a vocational qualification but without a school-based higher education entrance qualification are entitled to a general higher education entrance qualification and thus to access to all study programmes, provided they have obtained advanced further training certificates in particular state-regulated vocational fields (e.g. *Meister/Meisterin im Handwerk, Industriemeister/in, Fachwirt/in (IHK und HWK), staatlich geprüfte/r Betriebswirt/in, staatliche geprüfte/r Gestalter/in, staatlich geprüfte/r Erzieher/in*). Vocationally qualified applicants can obtain a *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* after completing a state-regulated vocational education of at least two years' duration plus professional practice of normally at least three years' duration, after having successfully passed an aptitude test at a higher education institution or other state institution; the

aptitude test may be replaced by successfully completed trial studies of at least one year's duration.¹⁰

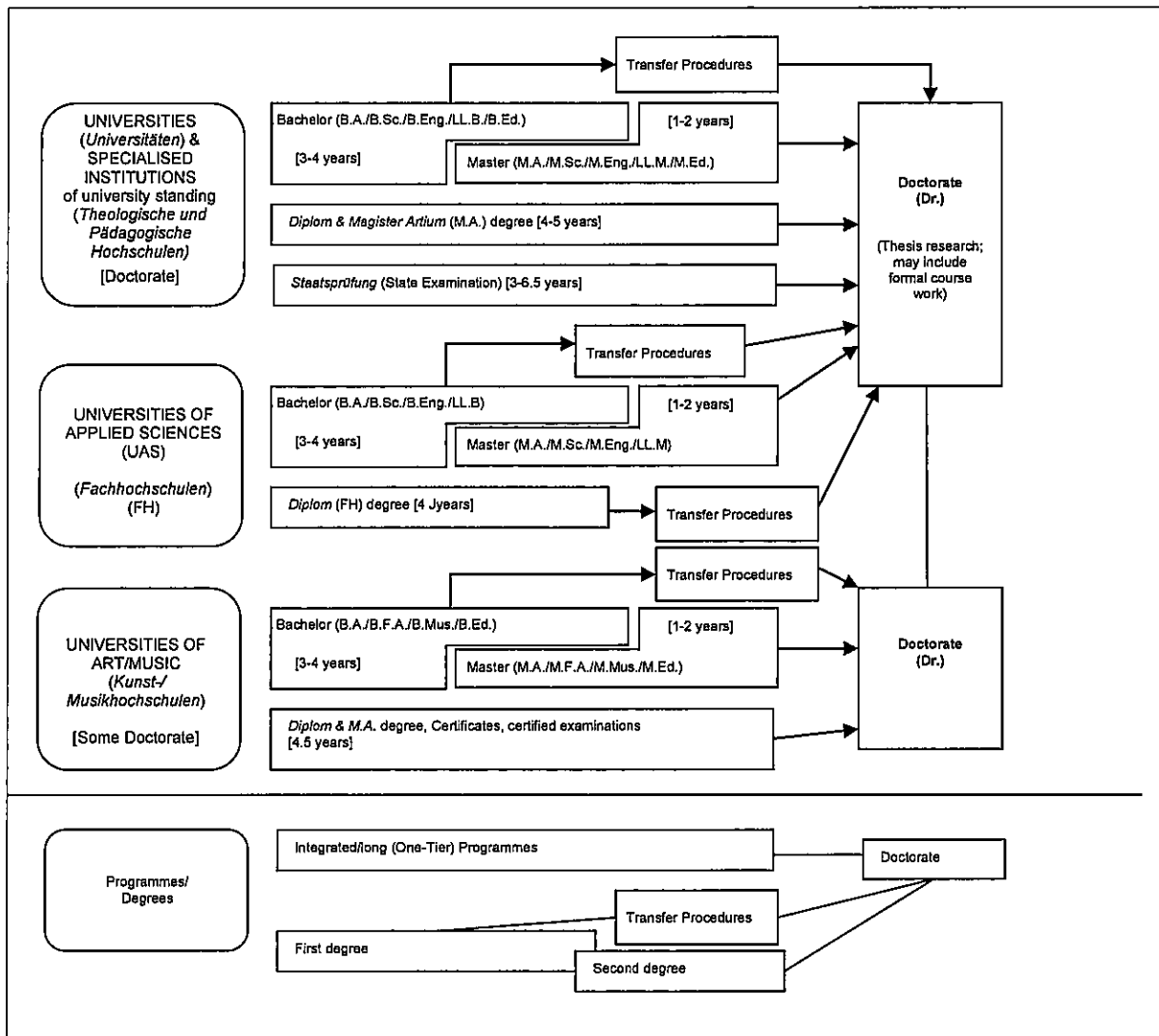
Higher education institutions may in certain cases apply additional admission procedures.

8. National Sources of Information

- Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) [Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany]; Graurheindorfer Str. 157, 53117 Bonn; Fax: +49[0]228/501-229; Phone: +49[0]228/501-0; <http://www.kmk.org>
- Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen (ZaB) [Central Office for Foreign Education as German NARIC]; <http://www.kmk.org/zab>; E-Mail: zab@kmk.org
- "Documentation and Educational Information Service" as German EURYDICE-Unit, providing the national dossier on the education system (<http://www.kmk.org/dokumentation/zusammenarbeit-auf-europaeischer-ebene-im-eurydice-informationsnetz.html> ; E-Mail: eurydice@kmk.org)
- Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK) [German Rectors' Conference]; Ahrstrasse 39, D-53175 Bonn; Fax: +49[0]228/887-110; Phone: +49[0]228/887-0; www.hrk.de; E-Mail: post@hrk.de
- "Higher Education Compass" of the German Rectors' Conference features comprehensive information on institutions, programmes of study, etc. (www.higher-education-compass.de)

¹⁰ Access to higher education for applicants with a vocational qualification, but without a school-based higher education entrance qualification (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of March 2009)

Table 1: Institutions, Programmes and Degrees in German Higher Education



INFORMATION ON THE JAPANESE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

1. Overview of the Japanese higher education system

Japanese universities are divided into three categories according to their founding entities: national universities originally founded by the national government (today each national university's founding entity is its respective national university corporation); public universities founded by local governments or public university corporations; and private universities founded by educational corporations. There are also other types of higher education institutions, such as colleges of technology providing five-year practical and creative education designed to prepare students to seek professional careers immediately after graduation, as well as advanced courses of special training schools (specialized vocational training colleges) aiming to develop skills necessary for professional or daily lives and increase literacy.

2. Types of higher education institutions and degrees they award

2.1. Types of higher education institutions and degrees

- Universities and graduate schools

Universities and graduate schools award bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional degrees to their graduates.

Universities award bachelor's degrees to students upon their completion of bachelor's programs. After that, master's degrees and doctoral degrees are conferred on students who have completed master's programs and doctoral programs, respectively. In addition, professional degrees, which are equivalent to master's degrees, are awarded to students at the time of their completion of professional graduate programs.

Universities may award doctoral degrees to individuals who are recognized as having the same academic ability as those who have passed the doctoral thesis review and examinations that their graduate schools conduct and who have earned doctoral degrees, regardless of whether they have actually enrolled in doctoral programs.

- Junior colleges

Junior colleges confer on their graduates associate degrees.

Qualifications of Post-Secondary Non-University Education

- Colleges of technology

Colleges of technology award the title of Associate to their graduates.

- Professional Training College (Specialized Training College, Postsecondary School)

Those who have completed the professional training college (specialized training college, postsecondary school) approved by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology may qualify as holders of the Diploma or Advanced Diploma.

2.2. Awarding of degrees by the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE)

NIAD-UE awards bachelor's degrees to learners who have, after graduating from a junior college, a college of technology or a professional training college, acquired academic credits to fulfill the prescribed requirements according to the NIAD-UE's criteria and have sufficient academic

attainments in the particular disciplinary field. Credits can be earned by participating in an undergraduate program at a university in Japan as a non-matriculated student or in a NIAD-UE approved advanced program offered by a junior college or a college of technology. NIAD-UE evaluates applicants' academic ability by examination of earned academic credits and a submitted work such as thesis, work of art or musical performance.

NIAD-UE awards bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees to those who successfully complete a program at the NIAD-UE recognized educational institutions which have been established by ministers other than the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and provide education equivalent to a university undergraduate program or a graduate school's master's or doctoral program. NIAD-UE evaluates applicants' academic ability by examination of earned academic credits. Applicants for master's and doctoral degrees are required to defend their theses.

2.3. Standard periods necessary for earning a degree

Bachelor's degree: four years

Master's or professional degree: two years after earning a bachelor's degree

Doctoral degree: five years after earning a bachelor's degree

2.4. Requirements for graduation and program completion

(1) Bachelor

To graduate from bachelor's programs, students are required to study in a university for at least four years and obtain 124 credits or more.

(2) Master

To complete master's programs, students are required to study in a graduate school for at least two years (or one year for students with outstanding achievements), obtain 30 credits or more, receive necessary research guidance, pass the review of their master's theses or research results concerning specific themes as well as relevant examinations, depending on the purposes of the graduate programs they are enrolled in.

(3) Professional

To complete professional degree programs, students are required to study in a professional graduate school for at least two years, obtain 30 credits or more, and attend other relevant courses.

(4) Doctoral

To complete doctoral programs, students are required to study in a graduate school for at least five years (or three years for students with outstanding achievements), obtain 30 credits or more, receive necessary research guidance, and pass the review of their doctoral theses and relevant examinations.

2.5. Requirements for earning a credit

For each course, 45 class hours of study is calculated as one credit.

3. Admission qualifications

In Japan, qualifications necessary for entering universities are set forth by such laws as the School Education Law. Each university recruits students on the basis of the admission standards that it set in compliance with the university admission qualifications stipulated by said laws.

3.1. Qualifications for entering universities

Those who have completed 12 years of school education, such as graduates from high schools or secondary schools, are eligible to enter universities. However, those with particularly outstanding qualities are recognized as eligible for university admission after completing 11 years of school education.

Described below are details of qualifications of eligible individuals.

- (1) Those who have graduated from high schools or secondary schools
- (2) Those who have completed the advanced courses of special needs school or the third year of the colleges of technology
- (3) Those who have completed 12 years of school education overseas
- (4) Those who have passed a 12-year education equivalency examination given overseas
- (5) Those who have completed schools for children of foreign nationals in Japan which are designated as being equivalent to overseas high schools
- (6) Those who have completed school education at overseas education institutions that are designated as equivalent to high school
- (7) Those who have completed the advanced courses of designated special training schools
- (8) Those who have completed schools, etc. that were founded under Japan's pre-war education system
- (9) Those who hold overseas university admission qualifications such as the International Baccalaureate, the Abitur, and French baccalauréat
- (10) Those who have completed 12 years of school education in schools for children of foreign nationals in Japan that are authorized by international accrediting organizations (WASC, CIS, ACSI)
- (11) Those who have passed the high school equivalency examination (former university entrance qualification examination)
- (12) Those who have completed 12 years of school education in high schools etc. and have been admitted as a result of an individual university's own selection procedures

3.2. Qualifications for entering graduate schools (qualifications for enrolling in master's programs or the first stage of doctoral programs)

Those who have completed 16 years of school education, such as those who have graduated from universities or who are deemed by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to have abilities that are equivalent to or higher than a university graduate, are eligible to enroll in master's programs or the first stage of doctoral programs. However, those with particularly outstanding qualities are recognized as eligible to enroll in relevant graduate programs after completing 15 years of school education.

Described below are details of qualifications of eligible individuals.

- (1) Those who have graduated from universities
- (2) Those who have been awarded a bachelor's degree by the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation
- (3) Those who have completed 16 years of school education overseas

- (4) Those who have completed 16 years of school education of other countries by taking correspondence courses in Japan that are offered by schools in such other countries
- (5) Those who have completed school education provided by foreign schools in Japan that are designated as equivalent to foreign universities (Locations in Japan of a foreign university designated by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)
- (6) Those who have completed the advanced courses of designated special training schools (List of the Advanced Courses of Special Training Schools designated by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)
- (7) Those who have completed studies at schools, etc. under Japan's old education system
- (8) Those who have completed studies at schools affiliated with Japan's ministries or agencies, such as National Defense Academy, Japan Coast Guard Academy, and Meteorological College
- (9) Those who have been admitted as a result of an individual graduate school's own selection procedures (master's programs)

3.3. Second stage of doctoral programs

Those who hold master's or equivalent degrees or who are deemed by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to have abilities that are equivalent to or higher than a master's degree holder are eligible to enroll in the second stage of doctoral programs.

4. International Cooperative Curricula Scheme (joint degree with foreign universities)

Under the Japanese legal system, a new scheme was put into effect to allow Japanese universities (including junior colleges) to organize academic programs with foreign universities jointly ("International Cooperative Curricula Scheme") to confer « joint degrees » in their names and the names of partner universities in foreign countries on those who have completed prescribed programs.