



Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee

the council of Australia's university presidents

(ACN 008 502 930 - ABN 53 008 502 930)

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Peter Baxter
First Assistant Secretary
North Asia Division
Japan FTA Taskforce
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
John McEwen Crescent
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Dear Mr Baxter

Japan Australia Free Trade Agreement

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) welcomes negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Japan. The AVCC has a strong and ongoing relationship with the Japanese Association of National Universities (JANU) and welcomes any moves to provide an environment which facilitates the development of collaboration between Japanese and Australian students and universities.

A small number of universities have responded to the initial request for submissions to assist in developing priorities for the negotiations. Their points have been outlined in brief below.

Mutual Recognition of Qualifications: Mutual recognition of qualifications enables greater student mobility. Discussions as part of the FTA to recognise completion of the Japanese Year 12 Kotogakko as equivalent to the Australian year 12 certificate would enable direct entry of Japanese high school graduates to Australian undergraduate degree programs. This would broaden the appeal of Australian education beyond English Language Programs and postgraduate courses.

Transnational Education: The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is working towards recognising foreign universities operating in Japan. The AVCC will be providing information to MEXT in relation to those Australian universities operating in Japan. In regard to recognising Australian universities and their programs, the AVCC wishes to promote the principle of qualifications recognition based on comparability of outcomes rather than study duration.

Student Mobility: Both Japan and Australia require language tests for international students before enrolment. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests required for admission to Australian universities are readily available in Japan (23 exam dates in the Tokyo test centre alone in 2007). However, in Australia, the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) runs only once a year.

To enter a Japanese university, international students must pass a university entrance exam. Some Japanese universities are now using the Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students (EJU) for this purpose. This exam is conducted in Japan twice annually by the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO). The exam is also run by the Japan Foundation in 11 cities outside of Japan, mainly in the Asian region but as yet not in Australia. The availability of both exams to Australian students needs to increase to enable greater student mobility from Australia to Japan.

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Please contact Anne Reynolds, Director International Relations a.reynolds@avcc.edu.au if you have any queries regarding the above points.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Rome". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

David Rome
Interim Chief Executive Officer