



MONASH University

**Submission to the
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade concerning
a Japan-Australia FTA**

January 2008

1. Overview

Monash has a steady relationship with Japanese higher education institutions, through the University and its subsidiary Monash College, which offers diploma programs as entry pathways to Monash University. Monash University recognises that Australia is now a preferred destination for overseas study by Japanese students, and that a strong educational relationship has developed between the two countries. Japan remains a significant source country for Australia: in 2007, 14,951 Japanese students studied in Australia.

179 Japanese students enrolled to study at Monash University in 2007. The majority of these students enrolled in the faculties of Arts, Education, and Business and Economics. A number of Japanese students studied at both Monash University's Sunway campus in Malaysia.

Monash currently has 27 active research and education agreements with Japanese educational institutions. These arrangements allow for study abroad and exchange between Monash and partner institutions, for study tours and other academic collaboration. Monash would like to expand and increase activities with its Japanese partner institutions through greater numbers of staff and student exchanges.

Japan is a major market for short courses through Monash Academy (part of Monash College). In 2007, nearly 600 students from Japan enrolled in a short course through the Academy.

Monash broadly supports a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Indonesia, and would like to see the following considerations reflected in any final agreement.

1. Visa Restrictions

Monash would like to highlight for consideration the importance of the Working Holiday Visa (WHV) to Japanese nationals looking to study in Australia. Such visas remain important to the recruitment process for potential Japanese students: many Japanese students who commence their studies at Monash do so having applied onshore while on a WHV. In this regard, statistics available from Australian Education International only tell half the story. For example, 70% of the Japanese nationals who commenced full-degree studies at Monash in Semester 1, 2007 submitted their application while in Australia. We believe a significant portion of these applications were made by WHV holders.

Monash would like to encourage Japanese students to study at its non-Australian campuses in Malaysia and South Africa. Monash would like to see a "multi-lateral" student visa from Australia that would allow Japanese students to commence their degree at either Monash University

Malaysia or Monash University South Africa and complete their degree in Australia. This flexible system would allow students to enjoy a lower cost of living, lower fees and, in the case of Monash University Malaysia, closer proximity to Japan. Monash recognises that Malaysian and South African immigration requirements are critical any such agreement, but requests consideration of this proposal.

2. Flexible Business Practices

Monash has several research links with Japan. The Brain Research Institute at Monash University's Malaysia Campus, for instance, receives funding and support from Japanese industry, and has close links to major Japanese research institutes such as the Japanese Neurological Society.

Discussions around the FTA should include mechanisms and incentives to foster university-industry research collaboration between Australian institutions and Japan. The Australian Government's International Science Linkages program, for instance, already has links with Japan in the area of clean energy technologies. Monash believes Australian universities have much more to offer Japanese industry, and would like to see support for the linkages program expanded to other areas of mutual interest, such as medicine, sciences, sustainability and technology.

More broadly, Monash would like to see more flexible business practices that create an environment of mutual benefit to both Australian and Japanese business. In such an environment, Monash could interact more easily with higher education institutions, research institutes and other private and public businesses, and expand its programs and activities with Japan.