

Graduate Education

Educate researchers and exceptional professionals who can devote effort to society's demands.

[Vision]

<Humanities>

(Educating researchers)

Kwansei Gakuin University has an excellent track record with regard to educating researchers, and we must keep up this record if we are to maintain and expand the university's status. However, as current circumstances make it difficult to secure highly talented individuals, such efforts must be premised on multi-faceted and generous support mechanisms such as using early graduation schemes, enhancing fee exemption and scholarship programs, providing financial support for obtaining degrees through study abroad, expanding opportunities for acquiring educational experiences and elevating performance, and helping to visualize career paths. From a financial standpoint, the need to provide such generous support will also make it necessary to confine doctoral program candidates to a small number of the most highly talented individuals. For faculty members, the competitive allocation of resources based on the number of researchers they produce will also be required. To maintain the high quality of doctoral program candidates, fostering competition at the graduate program level will be essential, premised on the formation of certain parameters.

(Cultivating exceptional professionals)

In the masters programs, including the professional graduate schools, we will launch new initiatives to engage in the cultivation of "exceptional professionals" who possess the specialized knowledge and skills sought by society and industry, as well as an even higher degree of competency in combining those knowledge and skills to produce outcomes. We will pursue initiatives that transcend the boundaries of graduate school departments in anticipation of the era of Big Data, such as data science, cross-disciplinary programs in administration, law and other programs, as well as the use of multi-disciplinary minors, such as the United Nations and Foreign Affairs Course. Through these programs, in addition to specific specialist areas, students will acquire the knowledge and skills that will be essential for business in the new era, as well as practical competencies via long-term internships and other hands-on experiences that will be valued highly by companies.

The demand for these kinds of "exceptional professionals" cultivated in graduate schools is predicted to grow in accordance with advances in knowledge-based societies, the need for productivity improvements due to Japan's shrinking population, and the increase in overseas businesses which place importance on masters and doctorate degrees. Under current circumstances, however, industry's requirements and the universities' policies for human resources development are not in alignment, resulting in a mismatch. To remedy this situation, Kwansei Gakuin will collaborate with business organizations and others to engage in a "tuning project" similar to those being undertaken in Europe to "tune," or correctly align the ideal of talented individuals and the "required competencies" as seen by industry and academia. We will also open up new markets as we deepen their industry collaborations. These initiatives will also lead to the creation of demand for "re-learning" by people already in the workforce, and our collaborations with companies will deepen even further.

Consideration of the cultivation of such exceptional professionals will require measures such as coordinating with undergraduate programs to shorten enrollment periods.

<Sciences>

In the Graduate School of Science and Technology, the enhancement of research laboratories will have a major impact on education in the undergraduate and graduate school programs, as well as on research activities. For this reason, securing talent for the masters programs will be our greatest challenge. We will seek to enhance our research laboratories by setting targets for the number of graduates who advance to our masters programs and expanding the pool of talent. The enhancement of our research laboratories will lead to an increase in the number of students proceeding to the doctoral programs, resulting in a virtuous circle of the production of more researchers.

The sciences differ from the humanities in that there is no differentiation between the cultivation of exceptional professionals and the production of researchers, and graduate school needs to be viewed as a continuation from the undergraduate programs. We will enhance the foundational education provided in the first year of the undergraduate programs, and cultivate individuals who will be employable in technical fields by using the entire enrollment period, from the second year of the undergraduate programs to the end of the graduate programs.

<Percentage of teaching faculty who are graduates of Kwansai Gakuin University>

Being able to visualize career paths at the “exit” is one of the most important factors in securing highly talented individuals, which is what researcher cultivation is based on.. However, recruiting master's program graduates to become university teaching faculty is expected to become even more difficult as the population of 18-year-olds continues to shrink. For this reason, we need to consider the possibility of a certain increase in the number of researchers selected from within the ranks of our own graduates. While it is only natural that we should maintain the principles of competition to avoid a decline in quality, we will consider the feasibility of a range of strategies, such as setting criteria for the percentage of KGU graduates on faculty, reviewing the age distribution of teaching faculty, and the use of a tenure-track system¹⁰.

¹⁰ A system in which teaching faculty are first employed for a fixed term, and upon examination of their track record and competencies during that fixed term, if they pass the requirements, they will be transitioned to tenure (life-time) employment.