



Ryugasaki campus

## Ryutsu Keizai University: Preparing International Students for Japan's Workforce

**The Japanese higher education institution helps international students prepare for entry into Japan's workforce with careers support, language learning and global partnerships.** *By Paul Mannion and Cian O'Neill*

Founded in 1965, Ryutsu Keizai University (RKU) gives international students the chance to gain expertise in their fields, learn the Japanese language and develop an understanding of the Japanese culture and mindset.

The university prides itself on welcoming overseas students. President Naoto Katayama highlights: "We provide vital one-to-one careers consultations to help our international students build careers in Japan and prepare them for Japanese corporate culture." Such facilities and resources have led to the university winning the Japan Ryugaku Award in 2023 and 2024. This award spotlights RKU's strong commitment to supporting students from abroad.



Beach training in Okinawa

Currently, international students at RKU represent only 74 percent of the university's population. Katayama notes that whilst there is no specific target, he is aiming to

increase this number to a maximum of 20 percent. To encourage international students to enroll in classes, the university is leveraging the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and has started offering its classes through on-demand videos that are translated into English. "In the future, we believe that Japanese classes can be



translated into English and many other languages in real time with AI, enabling us to accommodate students from diverse linguistic backgrounds," the president says.

With the advancement of AI technologies like this, Katayama also hopes that many of the labor-shortage problems in Japan will be mitigated, highlighting that this would encourage "more international students to come to Japan not only as laborers, but also as experts who can contribute to Japanese companies."

RKU has collaborated with Nippon Express, the Nippon Express

Research Institute and other major Japanese logistics companies to establish the Logistics Innovation Center, with the aim of creating a research hub and developing talent to advance logistics capabilities. Such a collaboration is a great opportunity for international students as Nippon Express and its group companies offer internships and have a quota for employing international students. In terms of post-graduate employment, Katayama highlights the high success rate of the university's international alumni, noting that about 50 percent of its foreign students have landed jobs at Japanese companies in 2024. For international students that require more time to find employment, Japan offers a Designated Activities visa that allows them to stay in the country while they are job hunting.



RKU's soccer field—the university is also a sports powerhouse



"Not only are we specialists in providing specialized education, but we also offer classes for international students to learn the Japanese language, culture and customs."

Naoto Katayama, President,  
Ryutsu Keizai University



[www.rku.ac.jp](http://www.rku.ac.jp)

RKU has recently expanded its network through partnership agreements with 13 institutions in eight countries and regions including Taiwan,



Students at lunchtime

Vietnam, South Korea, Thailand and Italy. Katayama is keen to expand this network further, highlighting that the university is looking to forge partnerships that are good exchanges which benefit both its students and faculty.





# MGU: Bridging Cultures, Building Futures

Momoyama Gakuin University (MGU) blends Christian values, community involvement and global partnerships to create a dynamic learning environment with a focus on both local and international challenges. *By Sasha Lauture and Bernard Thompson*



"We offer students a truly immersive Japanese cultural experience and global academic opportunities."

**Mitsuhiro Nakano**, President,  
Momoyama Gakuin University

Close to the bustling heart of Osaka, Japan, Momoyama Gakuin University (MGU) is making waves not just locally, but internationally. With around 7,000 students, including a growing international contingent, MGU offers an inviting blend of academic rigor, cultural immersion and community-focused initiatives. "We're a university deeply rooted in the Kansai region but with strong global connections," says President Mitsuhiro Nakano.

At the core of MGU's mission is its commitment to social sciences, but the university is far from standing still. "We're preparing to launch a new Faculty of Engineering in 2026," reveals Nakano, emphasizing the institution's focus on evolving alongside industry demands. As a medium-sized university, MGU prides itself on its ability to respond

quickly to societal changes. This dynamic approach is bolstered by the university's strong community involvement and Christian values.

MGU is part of the Anglican Church, which adds a unique layer to its ethos. "Our motto, 'Fostering Citizens of the World,' comes from our Anglican roots," explains Nakano. "We emphasize service to society, both locally and globally." By embracing these values, MGU sees itself as a bridge not just between its students and the world, but between different cultures and viewpoints, connecting people across divides.



With its roots in the Anglican Church, MGU has a founding philosophy of 'Fostering Citizens of the World' in a Christian spirit

MGU's international outlook is clear with its growing roster of overseas partnerships: indeed, it now has alliances with 64 institutions worldwide. "We're not just chasing numbers," Mr. Nakano notes. "We focus on improving the quality of our partnerships." The aim? To address global and local social challenges, with a focus on practical solutions.

MGU's increasing popularity among international students is another sign of its global mindset.

Offering a mix of courses in English and Japanese, the university works to provide students with an immersive experience of Japan—whether through learning the language, experiencing traditional activities like kimono-wearing, or sampling the classroom atmosphere in the country's world-renowned elementary education system.

What's more, MGU's buddy system helps foreign students to navigate Japan's unique cultural landscape, by pairing them with local students. "We make sure our international students feel at home from day one," Nakano says.



The attraction of MGU is that international students can experience various aspects of Japanese culture

"Next year, we're opening a Faculty of Humanistic Education," he continues. "We plan to give international students a chance to experience a Japanese elementary school. It can be difficult for foreigners to understand the finer aspects of Japanese culture, so this is a great opportunity for them."

One of the most anticipated changes at MGU is the upcoming Faculty of Engineering. Mr. Nakano explains that this new faculty aims to tackle a critical

need in the region—engineering talent to support public infrastructure. "Japan has a shortage of engineers, particularly in technical roles," Nakano says. "By establishing this faculty, we're addressing both local and national problems."

MGU's blend of local focus and global outlook is evident across its programs. Whether it's helping to shape future engineers, nurturing entrepreneurial talent, or fostering cross-cultural understanding, MGU is a university with its sights set on the future.



Constantly updating its learning to meet the changing times, MGU is to open its Faculty of Humanistic Education in 2025

For those looking for a medium-sized university with global ambitions, it can be said that Momoyama Gakuin University is the perfect choice. As Nakano puts it: "We offer students not just an education, but an opportunity to make meaningful contributions to society."





Yagoto campus



Tempaku campus



Nagoya Dome Mae campus

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## Meijo University: In Pursuit of Carbon Neutrality

**A Japanese university pioneering advancements in carbon neutrality, Meijo is driving sustainability with water conservation and water recycling technology.** *By Sasha Lauture and Cian O'Neill*

Established nearly 100 years ago, Meijo University is one of the largest universities in the Chubu region of Japan.

The learning institution is known for its strong research capabilities. According to Dr. Nobuyuki Katagiri, associate professor in the Faculty of Science and Technology's Department of Environmental Technology, this makes Meijo University a great environment for conducting research. Of particular importance to the university is its pursuit of sustainability and carbon neutrality. As Katagiri explains, "Meijo University has established the Meijo Research Promotion Organization for Carbon Neutrality, with the aim of fostering a carbon neutral society—a hot topic in recent years. Through the promotion of research that contributes to carbon neutrality, the body has been working to realize the university's goal of 'equipping students with developmental practical skills and the ability to take decisive actions so that they become internationally

competent professionals who leverage the benefit of the Chubu region."

Katagiri is at the forefront of this pursuit for carbon neutrality, currently working on a research project with the goal of turning organic components of sewage into a renewable energy source for use as a raw material for biofuel or sustainable aviation fuel.

Another major area of Katagiri's research focuses on water resource conservation technology. Water resource depletion has become a serious global problem due to climate change. To tackle this issue, Katagiri believes that water should be used in a cyclical manner in each region, highlighting: "Used water becomes a resource when it is treated appropriately. We believe that efficient water use can be achieved by selecting the most appropriate water treatment technology according to the contamination of the water, setting the treatment level according to the intended use, and making sure not to over-treat the water."

"Meijo University offers an environment that is conducive to devoting oneself to research."

**Dr. Nobuyuki Katagiri,**  
Associate Professor,  
Meijo University



Katagiri not only believes that water resource conservation technology is key to counteracting water resource depletion, but also sees water recycling technology as crucial. When discussing his and his team's work, he explains: "We study how natural processes purify water contaminated by humans, utilizing the special functions of living organisms to detoxify toxic substances and use the water as recycled water."

Katagiri and his team are currently developing various water purification technologies such as a portable water treatment system with membrane filtration technology at its core. This type of technology is particularly useful in times of disaster and in areas without water infrastructure.

## Hokkaido: University Study in a Global World

**Hokkaido Bunkyo University will target Asian and African undergraduate populations in line with a governmental call to increase overseas student numbers.**

*By Sasha Lauture and Sean McBride*

Hokkaido Bunkyo University was founded in 1999, but its origins date back eight decades to the establishment of the Hokkaido Women's Nutrition School in 1942.

Today the university, whose educational philosophy is based on the spirit of active learning, boasts three faculties and seven different departments.

The Faculty of International Studies takes in students from both Japan and overseas, and its purpose, in the words of University President Toshihiro Watanabe, is to cultivate local as well as international knowledge.

"Only by fostering those with an international mindset," he says, "can we drive globalization and harmony."

If the presence of the Faculty of International Studies is a means of enticing overseas students to undertake their degrees in Japan, then the Faculty of Medical Health Science is primarily aimed at developing leaders who can respond to Hokkaido's rapidly aging community.

Watanabe again: "We provide educational programs so that students are equipped with

the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in a preventative society."

The newly established Department of Regional Development, meanwhile, which is part of the Faculty of Health Science and Education, aims to leverage regional characteristics and local resources to build and maintain a sustainable society.

Looking to the future, the university is currently strengthening its approach to digital transformation so that it can make the best use of artificial intelligence in its educational program. As part of its 100-year vision, the institution hopes to increase its student body to 3,000, an ambitious proposal that will involve capitalizing on existing partnerships with other domestic and foreign universities as well as the wider local community.

"Our purpose," Watanabe concludes, "is to help create human personnel with deep practical knowledge and an ability to contribute to society. In the eyes of the global community, I want Hokkaido Bunkyo University to be seen as an institution that raises the standard of professionals, nurturing people with practical, hands-on skills."



**Toshihiro Watanabe,**  
President,  
Hokkaido Bunkyo University

[www.do-bunkyo.ac.jp/en](http://www.do-bunkyo.ac.jp/en)

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