

Building a Flexible and Effective Education System Based on Children's Development and Learners' Motivation and Ability (Report) 【Outline】

Education Rebuilding Implementation Council
Fifth Proposal

【29 September 2014 Items for Consultation】

- (1) Stimulating improved cooperation among schools, commencing with the institutionalization of educational continuity from primary through early secondary levels.

① General strategies towards the institutionalization of educational continuity from primary through early secondary levels (Including the state of the teacher certification system)

- (2) Adding flexibility to admission to upper high school institutions in support of the learning development based on motivation and ability.

- ② Early graduation from upper secondary schools in keeping with the current status of the system for early admission to university
- ③ Relaxation of eligibility requirements for entry into university or graduate college (completion of Year 12 or Year 16 courses).
- ④ Adding flexibility to university entry requirements (university entry from non-degree courses at technical colleges, polytechnic colleges, junior colleges and such)

【Report】

To bring about reforms that will bring about a flexible and effective education system linked to children's development and learners' motivation and ability, and in conjunction with other educational reforms, bring to realization education that bring out children's abilities and potential and fosters self-confidence, so that children will acquire sufficient knowledge and skills, improve their capacity to think and reason, and their ability to express themselves and collaborate independently with a variety of people.

- ① **Establishing a system of Integrated Elementary / Lower Secondary Schools (provisional title) and Elementary and Lower Secondary schools with Educational Continuity from Elementary Through Lower Secondary Levels (provisional title)**

(Implement stimulation strategies, beginning with measures to set the number of teachers necessary for the implementation of educational continuity from elementary through early secondary levels and support for facilities improvement.)

On the basis of a joint elementary/lower secondary teaching qualification

(Currently, consideration is given to measures that will enable holders of either an elementary or a lower secondary teaching qualification to teach in corresponding programs, to encouraging the holding of both licenses, and fostering the teaching of the curriculum at elementary school stages as a continuum.)

- ② **Early entrants: the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will approve early entry to those who have, based on the acquisition of credits, an academic ability equal to or above upper secondary school graduation.**
- ③ **The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will accept university entrance qualifications from selected countries. Graduate college entrance qualifications will also be accepted from international students who have held Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for a bachelor degree for three years or longer.**
- ④ **Graduates of upper high school advanced programs will be receive special admission into university once their quality has been ascertained based on standards such as hours studied and assessment structures.**

(Entry into university from career skills development institutions will be reviewed on the basis of university credit requirements.)

Design for a system of Educational Continuity from Elementary Through Early Secondary Levels (proposal)

◎ Design issues

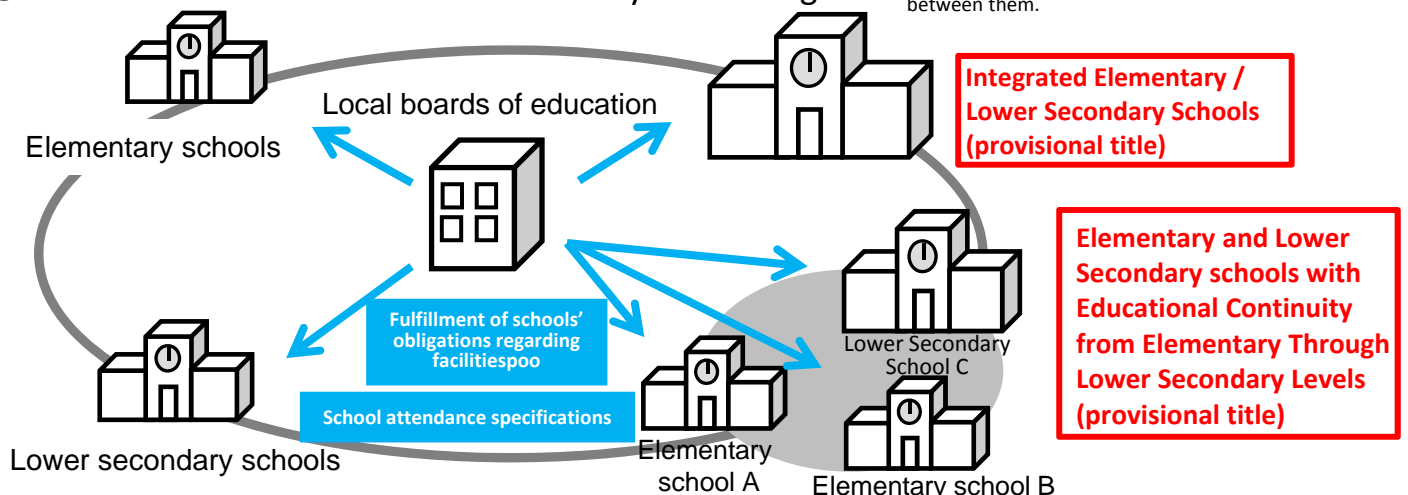
- A new kind of school will be introduced into the School Education Law, where, under a single school principal, as a general rule teachers holding both elementary and lower secondary teaching qualifications will teach the nine years in a continuum. (Integrated Elementary / Lower Secondary Schools (provisional title))
- Independent elementary and lower secondary schools will, modeled on Integrated Elementary / Lower Secondary Schools (provisional title) enable the provision of consistent education (Elementary and Lower Secondary schools with Educational Continuity from Elementary Through Lower Secondary Levels (provisional title))
- In the same way as existing elementary and lower secondary schools, the fulfillment of the obligation to establish municipal schools will be aimed at (municipalities across the board will be able to provide comprehensive elementary and lower secondary school education)
- In the same way as existing elementary and lower secondary schools, by local Boards of Education, the new schools will operate under attendance specifications, and there will be no selection-based school entry.

◎ Two models of elementary/lower secondary continuity in schools

	Integrated Elementary/Lower Secondary Schools (provisional title)	Elementary and Lower Secondary schools with Educational Continuity from Elementary Through Lower Secondary Levels (provisional title)
Term of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine years (However, for the facilitation of school transfers and such, a grouping into an early curriculum of six years and a later one of three years will be set.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as elementary and lower secondary schools
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With nine years of education as an objective, create a curriculum that ensures a nine-year continuum. • The educational guidance for elementary and lower secondary levels having been applied, set up a special curriculum that will be needed for the implementation of the education continuum. (The setup of educational content pivotal to integrated education, and switching and transitioning of curriculum items between study years and schooling levels.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With nine years of education as an objective, create a curriculum that ensures a nine-year continuum. (※) • The educational guidance for elementary and lower secondary levels having been applied, set up a special curriculum that will be needed for the implementation of the education continuum. (Same as Integrated Elementary/Lower Secondary Schools (provisional title))
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One single school principal • A single teaching staff organization • In principle, teaching staff will possess teaching qualifications for both elementary and lower secondary levels. (While currently holders of elementary teaching license may teach the elementary school curriculum and those with a lower secondary teaching license may teach the lower secondary curriculum, the possession of both licenses is encouraged.) <p>(Main supportive measure accompanying the system change) Set a quota of teaching staff numbers required for the adequate management of the nine year term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A principal for each school • A teaching staff organization for each school (Implement steps towards running an organization that ensures integrated education, such as firstly appointing people to take on the overall inter-school alignment, then setting up school management committee mergers, and making joint appointments of school principals. ※) • Teaching staff have teaching licenses corresponding to the respective school kinds <p>(Main supportive measure accompanying the system change) Take steps to supplement teaching staff in order to facilitate the transition to integrated education.</p>
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities may be set up combined or separately. <p>(Main supportive measure accompanying the system change) Assist in the provision of facilities necessary for integrated education, such as a single combined school building model or separate school style spacing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities may be set up combined or separately. <p>(Main supportive measure accompanying the system change) Assist in the provision of facilities necessary for integrated education, such as separate school style spacing.</p>

◎ Visualization of the situation after the system change

(※) Prioritize issues at the normal elementary and lower secondary schools for coordination and demarcation between them.

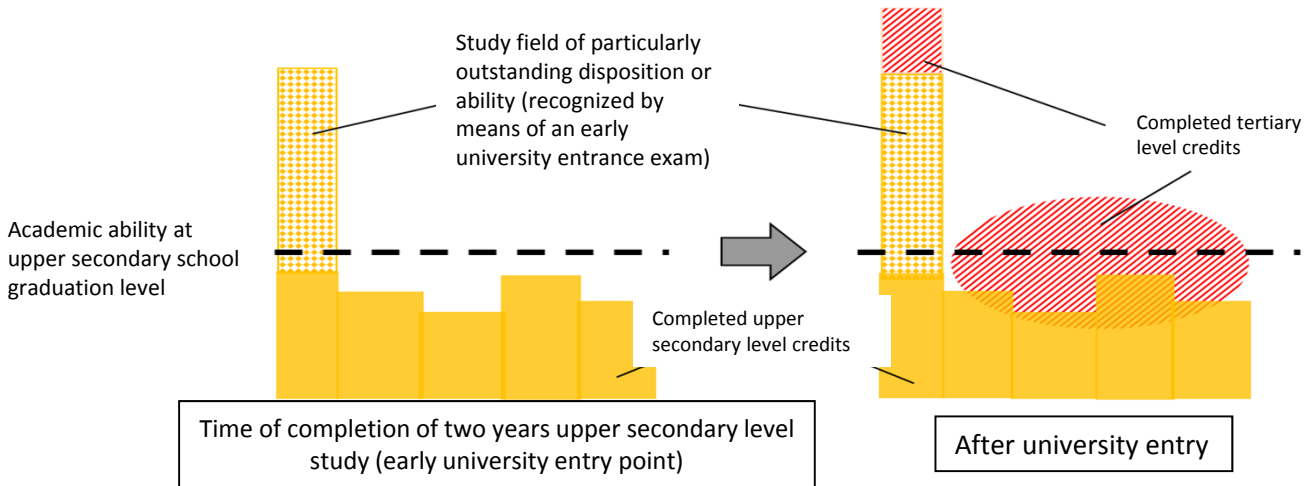


Setting up an upper secondary school graduation levels certification system in relation to early entry into higher studies (Proposal)

Education Rebuilding Council - 5th proposal

In order to enable the accommodation of ability- and motivation-based learning development and subsequent direction changes, **a system of early graduation from upper secondary schools will be institutionalized, on the basis of an early university entry system also being realized.**

Early entrants: **based on tertiary requirements for standardized credit acquisition requirements, the minister will recognize 'equivalent or superior academic ability' for those who have completed three years of study at upper secondary school level.**

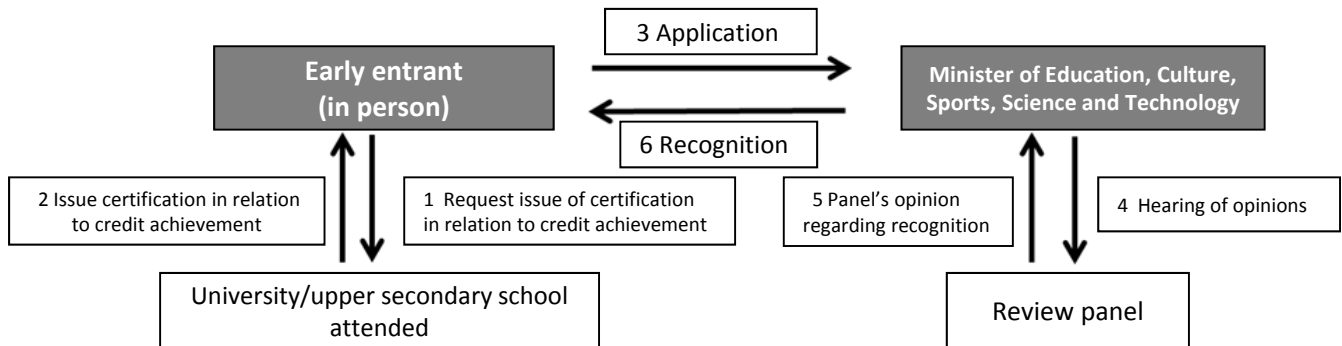


Actual assessment process:

- After admission to university, the early entrant applies in person to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.
- A review panel is formed (including upper secondary and university stakeholders), which appraises the application on the basis of the following criteria:

(Review criteria:)

- Achievement of at least 50 upper secondary credits (with two year upper secondary level credits as a main target)
- Achievement of at least 16 tertiary credits
- Achieved credits must not be heavily weighted toward a limited area of study.
- On the basis of the review panel's opinion, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will recognize academic ability equal or above upper secondary school level.



Effect of recognition:

The ability to acquire legal status and social recognition equivalent to normal upper secondary high school graduation
 (Candidacy qualification for various qualifying exams and general university entrance qualification, under the title 'Recipient of Special Upper Secondary High School Equivalent Recognition' (provisional title))

Review of entry qualifications into universities and graduate colleges supporting internationalization (proposal)

Education Rebuilding Council - 5th proposal

In order to enable the accommodation of ability- and motivation-based learning development and subsequent direction changes, and in conjunction with the institutionalization of a system of early graduation from upper secondary schools on the basis the realization of an early university entry system, **the country will, so as to enable support of internationalization, relax the requirements for completion of the 12 or 16 years of study imposed by university and graduate college entrance qualifications** for the acceptance of international students from countries with different education systems.



- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will, upon verification, **allow entry into our country's universities by international students who come from selected countries with a curriculum of less than twelve years.**
- If a person has a degree from a country with a degree curriculum of less than 16 years but **standard degree requirements in terms of degree quality assurance have been achieved, entry qualifications into this country's graduate colleges will be recognized.**

■ the present situation

In the current system, the following main requirements apply as regards entry qualifications into this country's universities and graduate colleges by persons who have graduated from overseas schools:

	University entry qualifications	Master's Program	(Ph.D. Program)
Completion requirements	Must have completed 12 years of schooling overseas	Must have completed 16 years of schooling overseas (for medical, dentistry, some pharmacological, and veterinarian studies this is 18 years)	No completion requirements ✕Must have a Master's degree or appropriate vocational degree
Individual assessment of entry qualifications and age requirements	Must pass entry qualification assessment of the particular university, and be at least 18 years of age	Must pass entry qualification assessment of the particular graduate college, and be at least 22 years of age (for medical, dentistry, some pharmacological, and veterinarian studies this is 18 years of age)	Must pass entry qualification assessment of the particular graduate college, and be at least 24 years of age

■ Specifics

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will take steps towards allowing the possibility of admission to our country's universities by international students from selected countries where the education curriculum is less than 12 years, having ascertained individually the conditions for university entry based upon equivalency with this country's curriculum and the university entry conditions upon completion of such curriculum.
- Where an overseas country's curriculum is less than 16 years, and the candidate is in possession of a Bachelor's Degree, following verification of the Degree quality assurance, and: (1) where the Degree has been obtained through an assessment process in a program provided by an institute of accreditation, and (2) the curriculum through which the Degree was obtained has a completion term of at least 3 years, qualification for entry into this country's universities will be granted.

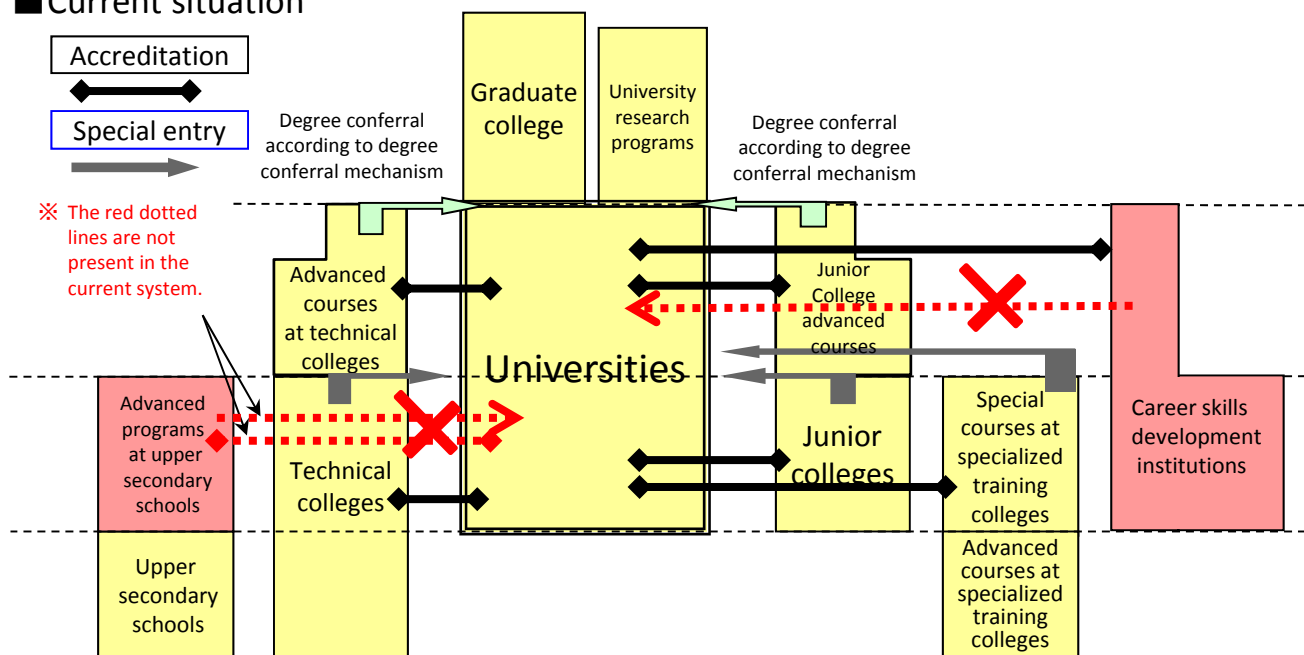
Adding flexibility to admission to upper high school institutions (proposal)

Education Rebuilding Council - 5th proposal

As learners develop their own studies in a flexible manner in accordance with their own objectives, **it will be necessary for institutions of higher learning to facilitate changes of direction between them, so as to permit the challenge of a variety of study areas.**

- As regards the fulfillment of standard requirements at technical college non-degree programs, with such programs making university entry accreditation as their study completion objective, **completion of such a non-degree program at a technical college will open the door to special university entry.**
- As regards career skills development institutions, in an amendment to a public notice in September of 2014, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology announced that completion at such institutions may be counted as tertiary credits. **Educational content at career skills development institutions will be reviewed as required, on the basis of future tertiary accreditation conditions.**

■ Current situation



※ The above table is simplified, and is not a comprehensive representation of all reciprocal credit recognition or special entry arrangements between educational institutions.

■ Specifics

- As regards advanced programs at upper secondary schools, through measures such as the setting of new standards regarding terms of study, class hours, educational content and teaching staff qualifications, as well as the construction of mechanisms for objective assessment, and with such programs making university entry accreditation as their study completion objective, the door will be opened to university admission for those who have completed an advanced program at upper secondary schools.
- As regards career skills development institutions, in an amendment to a public notice in September of 2014, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology announced with regard to the recognition of study completion at such institutions as tertiary credits that educational content at career skills development institutions will be reviewed as required on the basis of future tertiary accreditation conditions.