External evaluations of colleges and graduate schools that is unheard of in other universities

External evaluation is very important as an opportunity to receive objective evaluation. Ritsumeikan University has numerous colleges and graduate schools in a wide range of academic fields, and conducts not only external evaluation of the whole university, but also external evaluation for the respective special fields in all colleges and graduate schools. External evaluators selected from each academic and society field evaluate the education and research activities of each college and graduate school, and the evaluations are utilized for improvements and enhancements. No other university carries out external evaluations of their respective colleges and graduate schools in such a large-scale and systematic way.

Endeavors have been carried out based on the Mid-Term Plan (seven-year plan) concerning university assessment activities that were formulated in AY2011 towards the AY2018 Third University Accreditation*. Based on the Ritsumeikan Charter, the newly formulated R2030 Plan and the university accreditation results etc., we will formulate and promote the Mid-Term Plan concerning the university’s assessment activities for the Fourth University Accreditation. Through these endeavors we aim to create a “culture of quality” in Ritsumeikan University.

* University accreditation conducted by the Japan University Accreditation Association

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Detailed information regarding the above matters, self-study reports, external evaluation results of respective colleges and graduate schools etc., can be viewed on the “Office of University Assessment and Institutional Research” website.

The Office of University Assessment was established in March 2005 with the aim of working towards the establishment and promotion of university assessment activities in Ritsumeikan University, and contributing to new reform and development of the university. Under the mission of the Ritsumeikan Charter, namely enhancing the quality of education and research, based on Ritsumeikan’s history and features, to international standards, the Office of University Assessment and Institutional Research is striving daily to achieve these goals.

The organization responsible for promoting internal quality assurance (IQA) in the university as a whole, is the Self-Study Committee. The Office of University Assessment and Institutional Research functions as the Self-Study Committee’s secretariat.

Subcommittees for respective fields are established under the Self-Study Committee. The subcommittees are responsible for encouraging active IQA within each relevant organization, and performing reviews and assessments of relevant fields from the perspective of the whole university.

In particular the Academic Affairs Subcommittee compiles data concerning diverse educational practices and the results of self-studies from 16 colleges and 22 graduate schools (as of AY2020), and provides the relevant information that serves as the basis for reviews and assessments in the field of academic affairs.

Conceptual Image of the Promotion of IQA

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IAQ in the field of academic affairs has the following organizational structure: President → Self-Study Committee → Academic Affairs Sub-committee → colleges/graduate schools → faculty members. A structure whereby each college and graduate school works autonomously towards managing academic affairs and evaluations within a broad and university-wide framework, including the Ritsumeikan Charter, Mid-Term Plan, educational guidelines etc., is the system that suits Ritsumeikan University, which has numerous colleges, graduate schools etc.