

Chronology

- 1869 Prince Kinmochi Saionji founds the private academy, Ritsumeikan
- 1900 Kojuro Nakagawa, former secretary of Prince Saionji, establishes the Kyoto Hosei School, the predecessor of the current College of Law
- 1903 Under the Professional School Degree, the school name changes to “Kyoto Profession School of Law”
- 1904 The school name changes to “Kyoto College of Law and Politics” under the Professional School Degree
College of Law, College of Economics and Preparatory Course for university are Established; School of Law, School of Public Administration, School of Economics and Specialized School are established
- 1905 The school adopts the name “Ritsumeikan,” with permission of Prince Saionji
- 1913 The name of the school is changed to “Ritsumeikan University”
- 1917 A special graduate school is established for those who wish to take the bar examination
- 1922 Ritsumeikan University is reestablished under the University Decree
College of Law (Departments of Law and Economics) and Graduate School and Preparatory Course are established
- 1945 Hiroshi Suekawa is appointed as the President of Ritsumeikan University
The President introduces a series of democratic reforms, including the Plenary Council and the Presidential Election System
- 1948 Ritsumeikan University is reorganized under the School Education Law to include Colleges of Law, Economics and Letters
- 1949 College of Science and Engineering is established
- 1950 Graduate Schools are established
- 1962 College of Business Administration is established
- 1963 Evening classes are reformed; evening class for College of Letters is reorganized

(Department of Humanities is established)

- 1964 Evening class for College of Business Administration is established; evening class for College of Science and Engineering is reorganized (Department of Engineering Science is established)
- 1965 College of Social Sciences is established; College of Economics and College of Business Administration are relocated to Kinugasa Campus in Kita Ward, Kyoto City
- 1978 College of Letters and all evening classes are relocated to Kinugasa Campus
- 1981 All colleges are relocated to Kinugasa Campus
- 1987 Department of Information Engineering is established in College of Science and Engineering
- 1988 College of International Relations is established; Kyoto United Nations Depository Library is established
- 1991 Joint Ritsumeikan-UBC Program is established on the campus of the University of British Columbia, Canada
- 1992 Kyoto Museum for World Peace is established; Graduate School of International Relations is established
- 1994 Biwako-Kusatsu Campus (BKC) is established in Kusatsu City, Shiga Prefecture; College of Science and Engineering is relocated to BKC; College of Policy Science is established; Department of Biological Engineering and Department of Environmental Systems Engineering are established in College of Science and Engineering; Department of Information Engineering reorganized (Department of Information established)
- 1996 Departments of Optical Engineering and Robotics are established in College of Science Engineering; Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences is established
- 1997 Graduate School of Policy Science is established
- 1998 Colleges of Economics and Business Administration is relocated to BKC; Integrated Institute of Arts and Science is established
- 2000 Departments of Mathematical Science and Physical Sciences are established

- 2001 Graduate School of Science and Human Services is established; Department of Human Welfare is established in College of Social Sciences; Department of Sociology is established in College of Letters
- 2003 Graduate Schools of Language Education, Information Science, Core Ethics and Frontier Sciences are established
- 2004 College of Information Science and Technology is established; Ritsumeikan University School of Law is established
- 2005 Graduate School of Technology Management is established
- 2006 Graduate School of Management is established; Suzaku Campus is established in Kyoto City Ritsumeikan University School of Law is relocated to Suzaku Campus
- 2007 College of Image Arts and Sciences established; Graduate School of Public Policy is established; In College of Social Sciences, Department of Social Sciences and Department of Human Welfare are combined to form Department of Social Sciences
- 2008 Colleges of Life Sciences and Pharmaceutical Sciences are established
- 2010 College of Sport and Health Science is established; Graduate School of Sport and Health Science is established
- 2011 Graduate School of Image Arts and Sciences is established; Global Studies Major is established in College of International Relations
- 2012 Graduate School of Information Science and Engineering is established; Graduate School of Life Sciences is established; In College of Science and Engineering, Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Department of Photonics are combined to form Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering; Department of VLSI System Design changes its name to Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering; Department of Mechanical Engineering and Department of Micro System Technology are combined to form Department of Mechanical Engineering; In College of Letters, 14 majors and programs are combined while eight programs and 18 majors are established
- 2013 Community and Regional Policy Studies Major is established in College of Policy Science

Ritsumeikan University co-established International School of Information Science & Engineering with Dalian University of Technology

- 2014 Graduate School of Pharmacy is established; Major in Informatics of Behavior and Culture is established in Graduate School of Letters (Two majors with 15 fields in total)
- 2015 Osaka Ibaraki Campus (OIC) is established in Ibaraki City, Osaka Prefecture; Colleges of Business Administration and Policy Science, Graduate Schools of Business Administration and Policy Science, Graduate School of Technology Management, and Graduate School of Management are relocated to OIC; Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences is established in College of Pharmaceutical Sciences
- 2016 College of Comprehensive Psychology is established; Hirai Kaichiro Memorial Library opens
- 2017 Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education is established; In College of Information Science and Engineering, Department of Information Science and Engineering is established to form seven courses in one department; College of Economics is reorganized to form one department and two majors
- 2018 College of Gastronomy Management is established / American University-Ritsumeikan University Joint Degree Program is established in College of International Relations / Graduate School of Science for Human Services is reorganized / Graduate School of Human Science is established
- 2019 College of Global Liberal Arts is established
- 2020 Major in Pharmaceutical Sciences in the Graduate School of Pharmacy is established (Master's Program)
- 2021 Graduate School of Gastronomy Management is established