

The Japan Association of National Universities (JANU)

September 30, 2021

Mr. MASUKO Hiroshi  
Director-General, Higher Education Bureau  
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology  
Government of Japan

**RE: Request for Relaxation of New Entry to Japan for Privately Financed International Students affected by COVID-19**

Dear Mr. MASUKO:

While universities are preparing for the fall enrollment, the entry of international students has been restricted due to COVID-19. While MEXT Scholarship students are being admitted in stages, privately-financed international students have been unable to enter for a prolonged time.

Universities continue to respond by offering online classes, etc., but experiments and practical training courses cannot be conducted online. This problem is extremely severe, especially for graduate students with short study periods, and the need to promptly secure study opportunities for these students is increasing day by day. During the abovementioned period, international students have been losing opportunities for experiencing Japanese culture firsthand and personal exchange. Furthermore, Japan has been losing opportunities to nurture the future Japanophiles and people well-versed in Japan and prospects for Japanese students to build a global network. The current situation needs to be improved so that Japan aspires to be a diverse, sustainable, and inclusive society.

Competition for international students intensifies worldwide, and some countries are beginning to accept vaccinated international students, including Japanese students. Due to the continuing restrictions on travel to Japan, some international students who have decided to study in Japan are now switching to other countries that accept international students. The drain and decrease of international students, who are highly skilled professionals, is a dire situation that could lead to a decline in Japan's research capabilities and a decrease in Japan's presence in the future, including in terms of national security. Therefore, upon lifting the declaration of a state of emergency, we request the following easing measures for the new entry of privately financed international students. We ask for

your special consideration in negotiations with the relevant ministries and agencies.

1. Relaxation of the suspension of new entry for privately financed international students and resumption of visa issuance on the premise that each university has a responsible acceptance system and thorough infection prevention measures.
2. Shortening the waiting period significantly for privately financed international students after entering Japan who submit a negative certificate and a vaccination certificate.

NAGATA Kyosuke

President