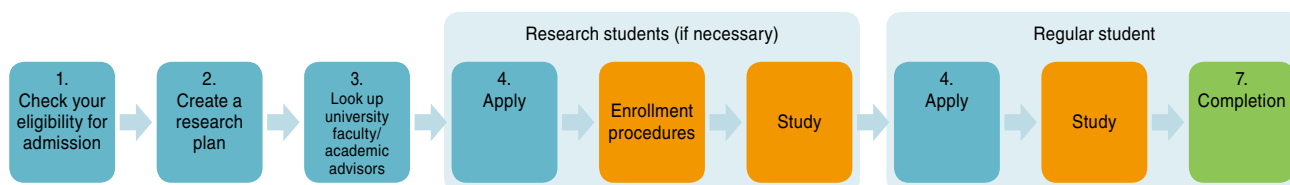


# Graduate Schools



## 1 Check your eligibility for admission

Students must satisfy any one of the following eligibility criteria:

### 1 Master's program/Doctoral program (first phase)

- 1) Japanese university graduates
- 2) Students that have been conferred their bachelor's degree through the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE)
- 3) Students who have completed 16 years of school education in countries other than Japan
- 4) Students who have completed a program with the standard study period of three years or more at universities or equivalent educational institutions in countries other than Japan and received a degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree
- 5) Students who have completed 16 years of education at education institutions in Japan recognized as having overseas undergraduate programs
- 6) Students who have completed designated professional training college courses
- 7) Students recognized as having academic abilities equivalent to or better than university graduates in an individual entrance qualification examination conducted by a graduate school, and who have reached 22 years of age

### 2 Doctoral program (second phase)

- 1) Students with a Japanese master's degree or students with a Japanese professional degree
- 2) Students who have been awarded with an overseas degree equivalent to a master's degree or professional degree
- 3) Students who have completed graduate programs at education institutions in Japan recognized as having overseas graduate programs and who have obtained a degree equivalent to a master's degree or professional degree
- 4) Students who have graduated from universities and have been involved in research study at universities or research centers (including overseas universities and research centers) for two years or more, and recognized as having academic competency equivalent to persons with a master's degree by the graduate school
- 5) Students recognized as having academic abilities equivalent to or better than master's degree or professional degree holders in an individual entrance qualification examination conducted by the graduate school, and who have reached 24 years of age

### 3 Doctoral program (faculties of medicine, dentistry, veterinary sciences and certain pharmaceutical programs)

If you apply to a program in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or certain pharmaceutical sciences, please confirm directly with the school of your choice before applying since eligibility requirements for admission vary according to the applicant's academic background.

## 2 Create research plan

A research plan is a document that outlines the subject and approach of your research. Most graduate schools require the submission of a research plan. Your research plan should include the following items:

- 1) Purpose of your research
- 2) Background
- 3) Meaning
- 4) Method
- 5) References, etc.

The format and word count requirement vary with each graduate school. The word count for a research plan is usually about 2,000 Japanese characters. When developing a research plan, it is important to clarify and understand what has been accomplished and what work remains in your area of research by carefully reviewing the relevant theses and articles.

Key examination points are as follows:

- 1) Research ambition
- 2) Ability to find a topic
- 3) Ability to analyze things
- 4) Ability to think logically
- 4) Knowledge relating to major/specialty

### Online database of journal articles

#### • CiNii Articles

<http://ci.nii.ac.jp/en>

#### • Article Search Cross

<https://gross.atlas.jp/top>



#### ●実践 研究計画作成法

(How to write a research plan)  
(In Japanese only)

You can learn how to write a research plan and how to prepare for the oral test.

Author: JASSO

Published: Bonjinsha Co., Ltd.

(sold in Japan)

Note: Available for browsing at Study in Japan Resource Facilities (see page 41)

### 3-1 Find a school

#### Graduate school information (JASSO)

[http://www.jasso.go.jp/en/study\\_j/search/daigakukensaku.html](http://www.jasso.go.jp/en/study_j/search/daigakukensaku.html)

#### Graduate school lookup (Japan Study Support)

<http://www.jpss.jp/en/>

### 3-2 Look for your prospective academic advisor

An academic advisor is a professor/lecturer who gives you advice on studies and course planning. Basically, you have to look for an academic advisor on your own. Some graduate schools require the applicants to look for an academic advisor and obtain his/her informal consent prior to the submission of the application.

#### How to search for an academic advisor:

- Ask your academic advisor in your university to introduce a graduate school academic advisor.
- Obtain information from academic journals, recommendations from former international students or researchers in your country.
- Look for an academic advisor from the website.
- Ask the university you want to enroll to introduce a graduate school academic advisor.

#### Online database of researchers

##### • researchmap

<http://researchmap.jp/search/?lang=english>

##### • J-GLOBAL

<http://jglobal.jst.go.jp/en/>

#### When contacting a university or an academic advisor:

You should write specifics of your research results, your future research plan and the reasons why you chose that particular academic advisor. It will be better if you attach a letter of recommendation from your academic advisor in your home country. As the academic advisor can judge you only from your letter, it may be difficult for him or her to immediately accept your request. So, what you need to do is to communicate through several letters to show your deep interest in the subject matter. Instruction concerning how to write an e-mail message to an academic advisor is provided in the book “実践研究計画作成法 (How to write a research plan)” introduced above.

#### Advice from a student studying in Japan

An academic advisor is an extremely important part of your student life. Gather information about potential academic advisors as much as possible from current students and other sources and consider which one will be the best match for you.

### 4-1 Check application materials required

To enter a regular graduate school program, some graduate schools allow applicants to take an examination to enter the program directly, while others prefer that students enter the regular program after studying as a research student (*kenkyusei*).

- 1) Application form (graduate school-specific form)
- 2) Certificate of bachelor's degree (or anticipated degree)
- 3) Certificate of master's degree (or anticipated degree) (in case of a doctoral course)
- 4) Transcript of the last school attended
- 5) Letter of recommendation
- 6) Research thesis (graduation thesis) and summary
- 7) Research plan
- 8) Others

Documents for submission may vary according to graduate schools, and some schools require them to be translated into Japanese or English. It is best that you inquire directly with the relevant school for details.

### 4-2 Check the application period

In most cases the application period is from summer through October/November, or in January. In either case, admission is generally in April. There are some graduate schools that use a September or October admission system.

### 4-3 Check the entrance exam

Admission consists of the following parts. Admission process and requirements vary depending on the school. It is best that you visit the school website for details.

- 1) Document screening (application materials required)
- 2) Test on academic ability (written exam on major field or designated subjects)
- 3) Interview (in person or online)
- 4) Short essay
- 5) Oral examination on major field (in person, by phone, etc.)

## 5 What is a research student (*kenkyusei*)?

A research student is defined as a non-degree student, as explained below.

- 1) Students enrolled in a course for short-term research and not to obtain a degree (mainly graduate-school level)
- 2) Short-term international students enrolled in a course under the inter-university exchange agreement (undergraduate courses and graduate schools)
- 3) Students enrolled to prepare for admission to regular graduate school programs (mainly for students who have completed undergraduate courses)

**Selection process:** In most cases, the admission process is based on screening of documents.

**Status of residence:** In order to obtain the “Student” status of residence as a research student who is to study by auditing courses exclusively, he or she will have to attend at least 10 hours of classes a week. Additionally, research students who don’t audit courses but conduct unpaid research will need a “Cultural Activities” visa.

## 6 What is a professional graduate school?

A professional graduate school aims to nurture professionals who have highly specialized expertise and who can play a leadership role in a variety of social and economic fields. Typical examples of professional graduate schools are a graduate school of law (law school) that educates professionals in law and a graduate school of education that develops educators. There are other professional graduate schools which are specialized in fields such as business, management of technology (MOT), accounting, and public policy. There are MBA programs where students can take classes in English.

## 7 What are the requirements for course completion?

Program	Academic degree	Required study period	Total credits earned	Others
Doctoral program	Doctorate	5 years	30 credits or more (including credits earned in the master’s program)	Appraisal on the doctorate graduate thesis and has passed the exam
Master’s program	Master’s	2 years	30 credits or more	Appraisal on the master’s graduate thesis and has passed the exam
Professional degree program	Master’s (professional)	2 years	30 credits or more (Total credits to be earned are different for graduate school of law and graduate school of education.)	
	Juris doctor (professional)	3 years		
	Master of education (professional)	2 years		

Notes:

1. Graduate school doctorate programs are sometimes divided into the first phase (two years) and the second phase (three years).
2. The required period of undergraduate study in medicine, dentistry and veterinary and certain pharmaceutical programs is six years, and the duration of their graduate (doctoral) programs is four years. There is no master’s course for medicine, dentistry, for certain pharmaceutical programs as well as for veterinary.

