

To Graduate School Students

Outline of the Student Registration System of Ritsumeikan University Graduate Schools

<Changes from AY2010>

April 2010

Ritsumeikan University Graduate Schools

<Contents>

Outline of the Student Registration System of Ritsumeikan University Graduate Schools

<Changes from AY2010>

Contents

Aims of Changes to the System	1
Outline of Changes in the Student Registration System of Graduate Schools	
Change 1: Maximum Period of Enrollment (<i>Zaigaku Nengen</i>)	2
Change 2: Total Period of Leave of Absence Allowed	3
Change 3: Conditions for Readmission	3
Change 4: Leave of Absence for Students Who Have Exceeded the Standard Period of Study	4
Change 5: Maximum Allowed Period of Registration after Readmission —In the case of readmitted students who had withdrawn from school after having attended for longer than the standard period of study	4
Change 6: Abolition of Retroactive Conferral of Doctoral Degree (Course) and Special Registration Fees for Doctoral Candidates	5

Reference (Ritsumeikan Regulations)

- <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/acd/gr/in/regulations/index.htm>

Aims of Changes to the System

- The number of students enrolled in graduate programs at Ritsumeikan University—both master's (including professional degree program) and doctoral (including 5-year integrated doctoral program)—has nearly doubled that of 10 years ago. In particular, the role of the doctoral program has expanded greatly. In the past, the doctoral program was geared only towards individuals seeking academic careers and served primarily as a scholar/researcher training course. In recent years, however, the doctoral program has accepted a variety of individuals and functioned as a place of research to help those individuals pursue various career paths not limited to researchers and university faculty.
- Since the old student registration system was designed based on the assumption that only a small number of students would be enrolled in graduate programs, it had become outdated and did not fit the actual situation of graduate schools. Under these circumstances, we at Ritsumeikan University have changed our student registration system to make it clearer and simpler.
- These changes have been based on our belief that as with the undergraduate program, the graduate program is also an educational program that leads to the obtainment of a degree. Our basic attitude is that although as a rule students are expected to complete their degree programs within the standard period of study, even if they exceed that period, we will guide them to degree completion through systematic education and research guidance. We have also made the graduate school's student registration system consistent with that of the undergraduate school (college) as much as possible, to make the system easier to understand.
- The changes have also been made with the aim of ensuring compliance with the Japanese government's graduate school reform policy including qualitative enhancement of graduate education.
- Below are summarized major changes to the student registration system of Ritsumeikan University Graduate Schools. If you have any questions, contact the Graduate School Affairs Division or your graduate school office.

Outline of Changes in the Student Registration System of Graduate Schools

Change 1: Maximum Period of Enrollment (*Zaigaku Nengen*)

(1) Maximum period of enrollment refers to the maximum number of years for which a student can be enrolled in the graduate school. Students cannot extend their enrollment beyond this period.

(2) In the case of readmission, the period of time for which the readmitted student was enrolled in school before will be counted as part of the student's total period of enrollment.

(3) The semester during which the student takes a leave of absence and the semester during which the student withdraws from school or is removed from school register will not be included in the student's period of enrollment. However, if the date of withdrawal or removal from school register is the last day of the semester, that semester will be included in the student's period of enrollment.

Program		Maximum period of enrollment
Master's program and first stage of doctoral program		4 years
Doctoral program		6 years
5-year integrated doctoral program		*10 years (from first-year enrollees in AY2010 or third-year transferees in AY2012)
Professional degree program	School of Law	5 years
	Management School	4 years

*8 years for students who entered the 5-year integrated doctoral program in AY2009 or before and those who transferred into the third year of the 5-year integrated doctoral program in AY2011 or before.

Change 2: Total Period of Leave of Absence Allowed

- (1) A leave of absence may be granted, upon written request, to students who need to interrupt their studies for two consecutive months or longer, due to illness or another compelling reason.
- (2) A graduate school may order a student to take a leave of absence when it deems it to be inappropriate for the student to attend school due to illness or another reason.
- (3) The period of absence is not counted into the period of enrollment.
- (4) The maximum continuous period of leave of absence is two years. However, in exceptional circumstances, an extension of leave of absence may be permitted up to a maximum of an additional one year.
- (5) The total amount of leave of absence may not exceed three years (five years for 5-year integrated doctoral program). However, this rule shall apply only to all newly-admitted, transfer and readmitted students in AY2010 or after.
- (6) Students are exempt from tuition and fees during their absence, but will be charged continuous enrollment fee (*zaiseki-ryo*).

Change 3: Conditions for Readmission

(1) Students who have withdrawn or whose names have been removed from the school register may apply for readmission to the same graduate school as before. Students seeking readmission must file an application within two years from the day following the last day of the semester in which withdrawal or removal occurred. Each application will be reviewed for approval or rejection. Note that students who were removed from the register because of exceeding the maximum period of study and those who were dismissed for disciplinary reasons are not eligible to apply for readmission.

<Special exception for readmission of Ph.D. (course)-seeking students>

(2) In addition to eligible applicants as described in (1) "Conditions for Readmission" above, individuals who entered a doctoral program or a 5-year integrated doctoral program in AY2009 or before and those who transferred into the third year of the 5-integrated doctoral program in AY2011 or before may also be eligible to apply for readmission, provided that the following conditions are met:

- The student left a doctoral program or a 5-year integrated doctoral program

after having attended the program for longer than the standard period of study and having earned the required number of credits, but without receiving a doctoral degree; and

-Application is made within two years and six months from the day following the last day of the standard period of study.

Readmission under this exception will be granted only once.

Change 4: Leave of Absence for Students Who Have Exceeded the Standard Period of Study

Before the change, students enrolled in a doctoral program (including a 5-year integrated doctoral program) for longer than the standard period of study were not eligible for a leave of absence. However, since April 2010, these students have also become able to request a leave of absence, if they are unable to continue their studies for two consecutive months or longer due to illness or other compelling reasons. A leave of absence may be granted if the reason is determined to be valid by the school.

Change 5: Maximum Allowed Period of Registration after Readmission

—In the case of readmitted students who had withdrawn from school after having attended for longer than the standard period of study

(1) Before the change, in a doctoral program (including 5-year integrated doctoral program), “the maximum allowed period of registration for readmitted students was three years, counting from the day following the last day of the standard period of study,” and the period of leave of absence and the period during which the student was not on the school register were counted towards the student’s maximum period of enrollment.

(2) However, from April 2010, in the case of readmitted students in a doctoral program (including a 5-year integrated doctoral program) who had withdrawn from the program after having attending for longer than the standard of study, the period of leave of absence and the period during which the student was not on the school register will be excluded from the student’s maximum period of enrollment. To put it another way, the allowed period of registration after readmission is a period which is obtained by subtracting the enrollment period

before withdrawal from the maximum period of enrollment (*Zaigaku Nengen*).

Change 6: Abolition of Retroactive Conferral of Doctoral Degree (Course) and Special Registration Fees for Doctoral Candidates

(1) Based on the principle that a doctoral degree (course) shall be conferred on students who file a doctoral degree application and pass the dissertation screening while they are enrolled in the doctoral program, it has been decided that the rule on retroactive conferral of doctoral degree (course) (*) shall not apply to first-year enrollees in AY2010 or after and third-year transferees in AY2012 or after.

(2) Students who applied for a doctoral degree during the period from the day following the Graduate School-specified deadline to the end of the semester must enroll in the next semester (beyond the standard period of study), to have their dissertations examined. The school fees for the semester following that in which the application was filed shall be “special registration fees for doctoral candidates” (25,000 yen per semester).

(3) A doctoral degree shall be conferred on the last day of the enrolled semester (on September 25 in the first semester and on March 31 in the second semester).

* Retroactive conferral of doctoral degree (course) means that if a student passes the dissertation screening within six months after withdrawing from the program with ABD status, a doctoral degree will be conferred retroactively on the day of withdrawal. For example, if a student withdraws from the program with ABD status on March 31, 2010 and passes the dissertation screening in July 2010, a doctoral degree will be conferred retroactively on March 31, 2010.