

(Provisional Translation by Cabinet Secretariat)

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Chief of each economic organization, industry group, and other group,

Request for Employment and Recruitment Activity
for University Students who are Graduating in Spring 2021

(Request)

We have compiled the government's requests about employment and recruiting activities for university students who intend to graduate or complete their coursework in spring 2021, as attached. It would be appreciated if you could notify each member of your organization of this set of requests.

(Background of the Request)

Developing youth human resources is essential for sustainable development in any country. It is also crucial to create an environment in which students can concentrate on their studies and have diverse experiences.

Until last year, the Japan Business Federation ("Keidanren") formulated "Guidelines on Recruiting New Graduates" and its explanatory notes. The university association also issued its Memorandum of Understanding. Given these, the Japanese government also issued its requests to economic groups. In Japan, where so-called "new graduate mass recruitment" has prevailed, these rules made it easier for students to concentrate on their studies and engage in job hunting systematically. At the same time, it has been pointed out that these rules have ceased functioning amid globalization and the rise of information technology. Under these circumstances, Keidanren announced on October 9, 2018, that it

would no longer formulate Guidelines.

However, it is still necessary to ensure that students can concentrate on their studies and engage in job hunting systematically. Additionally, Keidanren and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry expressed that certain rules are needed for the time being. Therefore, the Japanese government formed the “Inter-Ministerial Liaison Committee on Employment and Recruiting Activities Schedule,” with participation from Keidanren and university representative as observers. On October 29, 2018, the Committee expressed its viewpoints on employment and recruiting activities schedule, where members agreed to make requests about students who will graduate in spring 2021 based on the same schedule as that of students graduating in spring 2020. University union, on the other hand, issued its MOU and requests to the business sector on March 25, 2019.

The following attachment outlines requests regarding employment and recruitment activities for university students graduating in Spring 2021, compiled by the Japanese government.

It is vital that both business communities and universities work together to ensure that students can smoothly look for jobs and concentrate on their studies. We would highly appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

(Questionnaire survey)

We plan to implement a questionnaire about dissemination regarding this request. Your cooperation would be highly appreciated.

(Attachment)

Requests for Employment and Recruitment Activity for University Students who are Graduating in Spring 2021

It is vital that university students and the business sector be able to smoothly engage in recruitment activities while ensuring students can remain focused on their studies. From these viewpoints, the government has compiled the following requests and points to be remembered about recruitment activities for university students who are graduating in Spring 2021¹. These requests have been widely sent to economic organizations, industry groups, and other groups.

1. Schedule of recruitment and selection activities

To make sure that university students can smoothly engage in job-hunting activities and focus on their studies, please follow the following schedules:

Public relations activities: No earlier than March 1, 2020

Recruitment and selection activities: No earlier than June 1, 2020

Formal job offers: No earlier than October 1, 2020

“Public Relations” refer to activities where each company widely disseminates industry information, corporate information, information about hiring plans for new graduates, and other kinds of information to students for the purpose of recruitment. The starting point of this activity is the starting date of pre-entry for accepting student registration on the company's hiring website or websites operated by employment information companies. Any activity prior to this start point should be those directed to an unspecified number of students². It is also requested that companies do not acquire personal information or conduct publicity activities utilizing personal information³.

In addition, when conducting public relations activities, it is important that those

¹ The following requests apply to students who are supposed to graduate from universities, master's courses of graduate schools, junior colleges, and technical colleges in Japan. They are not relevant to students who are enrolled in postgraduate doctoral programs.

² Examples of those activities include information transmission using text messages, photos, videos, and others on the website, and public relationships using character information such as documents and booklets.

³ There is no problem with publishing schedules of public relations in advance.

public relations activities do not practically function as recruitment and selection activities and that students do not confuse those two activities. Please also make it clear that it is up to students to voluntarily determine whether they will participate in public relations activities, and that public relations activities do not affect recruitment and selection activities.

“Recruitment and selection activities” refer to activities aimed at selecting students in light of certain criteria. Specifically, these are activities where companies prioritize or select students with the intention of recruitment or activities that are a mandatory part of the recruitment process, and students are gathered at specific time and place, such as interviews and exams⁴.

2. Consideration of academic schedule

Students cannot discretionarily decide dates, places, and other factors of recruitment and selection activities, as they can with public relations activities. Therefore, it is required that companies carefully take academic dates and other dates into consideration and make sure locations of universities do not affect selection processes.

Examples of such considerations include:

- Contact students well in advance when conducting interviews and/or entrance tests
- Set dates in a manner so that they do not interfere with classes, seminars, experiments, exams, teaching practice, or other activities at universities
- Consider setting dates on weekends, holidays or sometime after the evening on weekdays.

In addition, if there are individual requests from students, it would be appropriate to take them into consideration as much as possible.

It should particularly be noted that the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics are scheduled to be held in 2020. Students in local areas are likely to find it difficult to arrange accommodation facilities for interviews and examinations. It is also expected that dates for interviews and examinations overlap those for volunteer training. Therefore, please be aware of the circumstances of each student, as shown above in the selection process.

⁴ Pre-screening such as submitting of entry sheets, taking web tests or test center tests is not included in recruitment and selection activities, as students can freely choose whether/when they do so.

3. Providing diverse recruitment and selection opportunities for Japanese students⁵ studying abroad, international students, and other students.

Some Japanese students feel studying abroad is a disadvantage in job hunting activities. To alleviate these concerns, each company is asked to take appropriate measures for students returning from overseas, based on their individual needs. Establishing separate recruitment and selection opportunities for those students is an example of such measures. In addition, companies that take such measures are encouraged to actively provide information on their websites or other resources.

Also, international students who study in Japan and wish to find a job in Japan should not feel they are being treated unfairly. Therefore, each company is asked to take appropriate measures for international students. An example is to carry out various and flexible recruitment and selection considering the required skill of Japanese language is diverse across industries and job types. Again, companies that take such measures are encouraged to actively provide information on their websites or other resources.

Furthermore, some students, including Japanese students, students studying abroad, and international students in Japan, may not be able to get a job at the aforementioned timing. To provide job opportunities to those students, companies should consider setting up various recruitment opportunities, including the introduction of year-round recruitment and fall recruitment.

4. Ensuring fair, equal and transparent recruitment

Based on laws including the Labour Measures Comprehensive Act, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, the Youth Employment Promotion Act, and the Employment Promotion Act for Persons with Disabilities, fair, equal and transparent recruitment and selection activities are required. In addition, please make sure that no harassment of students takes place during the recruitment and selection processes, and that students' freedom to choose their job is not hindered. For example, it is not appropriate to force students to reject other companies' job offer or to make a written statement about joining a company before a formal job offer.

5. Internships

Internships are an opportunity for students to have work experience related to their major and future career while attending university, and can be regarded as a part of university education. Given these purposes, in carrying out internships, it is not

⁵ In this section, "Japanese students" mainly refer to Japanese students who study abroad during the aforementioned schedule of recruitment and selection activities.

appropriate to allow only students in the 3rd year of undergraduate degree and the 1st year of master's degree. It should also be made clear that internships are not related to public relations activities and recruitment and selection activities⁶.

In addition, please do not conduct public relations and recruitment screening activities under the name of internships prior to the aforementioned start point of each activity. These actions will lead to a decline in credibility for the entire internship. In particular, some of short period internships, including so-called "one-day internships," entail no work experience and essentially serve as opportunities for business descriptions of companies. It is not applicable to undertake such programs under the name of internship.

6. Further utilization of grade certificates and other information

In recruitment and selection activities, each student's grades and efforts to study should be appropriately evaluated by obtaining and utilizing universities' grade certificates and other information. Asking students questions about those pieces of information at the time of an interview is an example of such evaluation.

7. Consideration to Cool Biz and other measures

Since the time of the recruitment and selection activities will be carried out in the rainy season and summer season, please consider Cool Biz (the Japanese government's initiative to encourage workers to wear comfortable clothing rather than suits during summer) and other measures. Please make students aware of your policies on this issue.

8. Hiring graduates within 3 years after graduation

To provide young people who have willingness and ability with a wide range of application opportunities, please take appropriate measures according to each company's situation and employment policy. An example is to allow people who have already graduated yet have no work experience to apply for jobs at the same time as new graduates.

⁶ This request does not apply to any internship for students graduating in spring 2021 which companies use for public relationship activities and/or recruitment and selection activities, expressing their intentions to do so.