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**Abstract**

As of 2004, all universities in Japan must submit to an external accreditation evaluation, to be repeated every 7 years. The universities are to receive detailed written assessments in multiple categories from one of four official accrediting agencies. These assessments are to be publicized. The universities also receive grades: pass, probation, and fail. These reforms, 18 years in the making, were initially intended to imitate practices in the US. However, the changes to Japan's university accreditation practices have gone beyond mimicry; indeed, by incorporating aspects of the Bologna process in Europe, they may even point to the future of US accreditation.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)