

It's About Time Universities Increased Tuition for Foreign Students

日本の大学を取り巻く環境が、少しずつ変わり始めています。近年は海外からの留学生も増え、学びの場がより国際的になる一方で、大学側には新たな課題も見えてきました。教育の質や学生支援をどう維持・向上させていくのかは、多くの関係者にとって避けて通れないテーマです。費用の負担をどう考えるべきかは立場によって見方が分かれる問題でもありますが、あなたはどのような点を重視して判断しますか。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Raising tuition fees is a step that must be taken if our public universities are to continue accepting foreign students. Tohoku University and Tsukuba University, both national universities, have announced that they will be raising fees for international students effective during the 2027 academic year.

The current annual tuition for both universities is ¥535,800 JPY (\$3,450 USD), the same as for Japanese students. However, Tohoku University will raise tuition for foreign students to ¥900,000 (\$5,760). Meanwhile, Tsukuba University will raise foreign student tuition to ¥608,800 (\$3,900). Tuition fees for Japanese students and international students enrolled before the 2026 academic year will remain unchanged.

International students incur considerable costs in terms of support for daily living, consultation options, and other services. Clearly, there is a limit to how much of this burden Japanese students should be expected to bear. Therefore, it is perfectly appropriate that tuition for foreign students should be increased.

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[JAPAN Forward](#)

1. Article

Some people allege that doing so would be "[discriminatory](#)." However, such criticism is completely off the mark. Rather, international students would be worse off if support were not provided properly due to a lack of funds. We would expect the universities to use income from the increased fees to expand support and improve the quality of education. Other universities should also actively consider adopting this approach.

It is common for overseas universities to charge international students higher tuition. The University of Oxford in the United Kingdom charges foreign students four to six times as much as domestic students. Meanwhile, the University of California, Los Angeles, known as UCLA, charges them three times as much as in-state students.

In Japan, tuition has generally been [fixed](#) and the same for all students. But in March 2024, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology revised the ministerial ordinance that sets tuition for national universities. Those changes allow the schools to set tuition fees for international students as they deem appropriate.

The recent decisions by Tohoku University and Tsukuba University to raise tuition fees is highly significant. Private institutions such as Waseda University have also announced that they are considering raising tuition fees. However, the timing has not yet been decided.

The important thing is to clarify what the price increase means. That means outlining how the additional [revenue](#) will be used and the expected effects for students.

Tohoku University plans to use the additional funds to improve the living environment for international students. It also says it will establish a new scholarship system. Meanwhile, Tsukuba University plans to use the entire amount to expand its support system for students.

Still, the announced price increases of 1.7 times at Tohoku University and 1.1 times at Tsukuba University are considerably smaller than those at overseas universities. Japanese institutions will need to verify whether the increases prove sufficient to achieve the intended purposes.

It is also important to ensure that the number of international students admitted is balanced among different countries of origin. The proportion of Chinese students studying at Japanese universities and graduate schools is extremely high. Currently, they account for 58% of all international students at Tohoku University and 51% at Tsukuba University.

This situation is far from the "international educational environment" the two universities are aiming for. We hope that the funds from the fee increase will also be used to attract talented international students from a wide variety of countries and regions.

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2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. tuition 授業料

The tuition at the university has doubled in the last three years.

2. enroll (学校・講座などに) 入学する、登録する

You can enroll in courses during the first week of class if seats are still open.

3. discriminatory 差別的な

The business paid a penalty for its discriminatory hiring methods.

4. fixed 固定された、一定の

Her grandparents could not live on a fixed income and had to work part-time.

5. revenue (国・自治体・企業などの) 収入、歳入

One way to increase government revenue is by raising the tax on gasoline.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What changes in the tuition will Tohoku University and Tsukuba University be making for the 2027 school year?
2. What reasons does the writer give for increasing college tuition for out-of-state students?
3. How do the two universities plan to use the extra income?
4. What do you think about the increases in tuition? Are they too high? Should they be higher?
5. The writer claims that the number of students needs to be “balanced among different countries of origin.” Why? How can it be achieved?

4. 留学生の学費 支援拡充へ値上げ妥当だ

外国人留学生を受け入れていく上でも必要な措置だ。

国立の東北大と筑波大が、留学生の授業料を令和9年度から値上げすると発表した。

いずれも現行は日本人学生と同額の年53万5800円であるのを、東北大は年90万円に、筑波大は年60万8800円に引き上げる。日本人学生や8年度以前から在籍する留学生の授業料は据え置く。

海外からの留学生は、生活支援や相談体制などに相当なコストがかかる。それらを日本人学生にも負担させるのは限界がある。留学生の授業料の値上げは妥当だ。

「差別的」と批判する声もあるが、全く当たらない。むしろ資金不足で支援が行き届かない方が留学生のためにならないだろう。大学側は、値上げ分を支援の拡充にあて、教育の質を高めたらよい。他大学も積極的に検討すべきである。

海外の大学では、留学生にさらに高い授業料を設定するケースが主流だ。英オックスフォード大は自国学生のおよそ4~6倍、米カリフォルニア大ロサンゼルス校は州内学生のおよそ3倍を課している。

日本では同額が一般的だが、文部科学省が昨年3月、国立大の授業料を定める省令を改正し、留学生については自由に設定できるようにした。

今回、東北大と筑波大が値上げを決めた意義は大きい。私立大でも早稲田大が、時期は未定だが値上げを検討していると発表した。

重要なのは、値上げ分の使途や効果を明らかにすることだ。東北大は、留学生の生活環境の充実のほか、新たな奨学金制度を創設する。筑波大は、支援体制の拡充などに全額充当するとしている。ただ、値上げは東北大が1・7倍、筑波大が1・1倍で、海外の大学に比べて小さい。それで十分かどうかとも検証する必要がある。

留学生の出身国が偏らないようにすることも大切だ。日本の大学や大学院は中国人留学生の割合が極めて高く、東北大では留学生全体の58%、筑波大でも51%が中国人留学生である。

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出典：留学生の学費 支援拡充へ値上げ妥当だ
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4. 留学生の学費 支援拡充へ値上げ妥当だ

これでは両大学が目指す「国際色豊かな教育環境」とはいいがたい。値上げ分の資金を活用し、さまざまな国や地域から優秀な留学生を集める取り組みを進めてほしい。



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