

Desired Attributes for the President of Osaka Metropolitan University

Background

Status of Osaka Metropolitan University (OMU)

Japan's population of 18-year-olds was estimated to be 1.12 million and the number of births was about 770,000 in 2022. What can be called a critical situation with the declining birthrate also means competition for students among universities is expected to become even more intense. When OMU was founded that same year, it had the third largest undergraduate enrollment among national and public universities in Japan. OMU is a comprehensive university with a wide range of academic and research fields spanning the humanities, sciences, and medicine. Based on The University Charter (Ref #1 below) and OMU VISION 2030 (Ref #2 below), OMU aims to improve the quality of education and research, enhance the university's contribution to society, and become an institution that helps the development of Osaka, Japan, and the world.

Preparation for OMU's new campus

A new campus is scheduled to open in autumn of 2025 in Morinomiya near Osaka Castle. It is expected to play an important role in driving the development of the entire area into a next-generation smart city under Osaka Prefecture and Osaka City's Urban Development Strategy for the Eastern Osaka Castle District. Therefore, our university is expected to lead this project by presenting bold and captivating strategies from the perspective of the development and revitalization of the entire area.

Creating a “Center of Knowledge” through the promotion of joint development among industry, academia, public and private sectors

OMU will develop a connected innovation ecosystem hub that leverages the strengths and unique characteristics of each campus. The Innovation Academy project, which strongly promotes industry-academia-public-private joint development from the perspectives of research, industry-academia-government collaboration, and human resources development, plans to complete the hub in the 2024 academic year on the Nakamozu Campus. OMU is beginning full-fledged activities as an advanced research university and a “Center of Knowledge” that contributes to regional development and global-level problem-solving.

Nurturing personnel who can play active roles in any place around the world

With the environment and society rapidly changing, universities need to develop human

resources who have acquired diverse values in addition to cross-disciplinary knowledge and abilities in the humanities and sciences. Naturally, it is essential to develop globally minded personnel who can lead the way in solving not only local issues but also global ones, innovative personnel who can jointly develop society, personnel who will play a central role in digital transformation and green transformation, and doctoral degree holders who can gain an expansive view of society and solve problems based on advanced specialized knowledge.

A university that contributes to society

With social contribution always in mind, OMU views the issues facing the metropolis of Osaka as universal issues facing large cities around the world. The university aims to contribute not only to the growth of Osaka including its economy, but also to Japan and the world as a whole by making full use of its “Convergence of Knowledge.” In addition, OMU’s ability to serve as an urban think tank for Osaka Prefecture and Osaka City will serve as a model for large public universities, while at the same time furthering the university’s own sustainable growth.

Qualities and abilities required of the President

The first undergraduates who enrolled when OMU was founded will graduate with bachelor’s degrees in the 2025 academic year. That is also when the new mid-term plan begins, with the expectation that the university will transform, leaping forward to a further stage of growth. The qualities and perspectives required of a President are extremely diverse, including having a students-first attitude that takes into account how to nurture students for a career after graduation, and how to strengthen ties with alumni.

Under these circumstances, it is necessary for the next President to have a perspective and attitude toward university reform, such as envisioning an advanced education and research institution that looks to the future and presents a new image of the university not bound by existing ideas, bringing innovation to the university.

Among the qualities and abilities desired:

1. A person who not only is able to devote his/her love to OMU and Osaka, but also a person of high character and academic excellence, who can serve as a role model for all faculty and staff, and who can actively and appropriately manage educational and research activities with an international perspective and a spirit of reform.

2. A person who, based on OMU VISION 2030 and soon to be formulated Second Mid-Term Plan of the University Public Corporation Osaka, can provide a clear vision and direction, demonstrate strong leadership, strive to build consensus within the university through communication and management skills, and use advanced problem-solving and implementation skills to achieve further growth and brand building for OMU.
3. A person who has the negotiation, listening, relationship-building, and information-dissemination skills to communicate OMU's achievements in education, research, and social contributions to society, and to promote joint development in a sincere manner with all internal and external parties and stakeholders, including alumni and students' guardians.
4. A person who has insight in corporate management areas such as finance, human resources, planning, and external affairs, and who can assist the chairperson as a vice chairperson of the University Public Corporation Osaka, as well as collaborate with Osaka Prefecture and Osaka City, the founding organizations and management partners of the university.

The medium- to long-term vision the President should possess

1. In order to nurture internationally minded, high-level human resources equipped with the ability to think independently and creatively, the curriculum should be further enhanced and revised to achieve the learning outcomes stated in the graduation and degree-awarding policies (Diploma Policy) and to realize learner-oriented education.
2. Further develop the educational environment so that students can be full of intellectual curiosity and lead a vibrant campus life.
3. Take measures to increase the motivation of faculty members and researchers, promote research in cooperation with domestic and overseas universities, and develop initiatives aimed at strengthening international competitiveness based on advanced research capabilities.
4. In close cooperation with the founding organizations among others, contribute to solving urban issues by enhancing and demonstrating the urban think tank

function and technology incubator role with the promotion of OMU's Innovation Academy project and the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Program for Forming Japan's Peak Research Universities (J-PEAKS) at the core, and by driving urban development in the eastern part of the Osaka Castle district. In addition, OMU shall strive to contribute to the improvement of well-being in Osaka, Japan, and the world.

5. By making the most effective use of resources such as human resources, fiscal resources, and university facilities, consider how the undergraduate and graduate schools should be organized to meet the needs of the times from the perspective of optimization, and work closely with the founding organizations on campus reorganization and related improvements.
6. Promote and foster a large number of diverse and outstanding human resources, realize further enhancement of education and research for the next generation, and make unceasing efforts to become a university of choice for excellent human resources and students from Japan and around the world, regardless of nationality, gender, age, or other factors.

Ref #1: Osaka Metropolitan University Charter

(Unofficial English translation for reference only)

Cities encompass a rich variety of functions as places where people and their activities are concentrated, and new studies are created. It is an important mission of a university located in a city to tackle the many issues that the city faces by bringing together various kinds of wisdom and tackling them head-on, and to share the results with the related members of the city. In achieving this mission, the spirit of respect for human rights, freedom, equality, and peace, as well as the search for universal human truths, which are fostered at the university, is of great significance.

The aforementioned spirit will be fully demonstrated through education and research of comprehensive knowledge spanning a wide range of fields and highly specialized academics, fostering outstanding individuals with rich humanity and high intellect, abundant in applied and practical skills, and who will become leaders in society.

OMU, based on the recognition that we will contribute to the peace of mankind and the sustainable development of society, hereby establishes its philosophy and goals as its Charter, aiming to be a university that people are proud of, contributing to the development of the metropolis of Osaka and, by extension, the international community, as a reliable base of the region that makes great strides in the world, through its positive activities in areas including education, research, and social contribution.

Education

OMU provides education that aims to cultivate individuals who can acquire the liberal arts education necessary to become modern human beings, who can stand on a broad perspective by refining their international sensibilities, who can make independent and comprehensive judgments, have problem-solving skills based on a high sense of ethics, who can acquire rich humanity and the civic public spirit to actively participate in society, and who can learn and grow continuously and developmentally over their lifetimes.

Research

In the spirit of independence, freedom, and enterprising spirit of academic research, OMU will develop and pass on the search for truth and the creation of knowledge by respecting diversity and internationality, integrating them, and promoting advanced academic research that guarantees reliability and fairness. OMU also aims to develop new academic fields to solve social issues and return the results of our research to society.

Social Contribution

As a public university located in the metropolis of Osaka, OMU will work closely with the local community, local government, and industry to develop and pass on culture, maintain and promote people's health, and solve various urban problems using the university's specialized knowledge and resources. In addition, OMU will contribute to the development of the local community and the international community by promoting advanced research and returning the results of such research to society.

Management

OMU will be managed democratically under the leadership of the President, based on a spirit of independence and autonomy, and will strive to formulate decisions on a university-wide basis. In addition, OMU will be accountable to society through prompt and fair responses to the circumstances surrounding the university.

Ref #2: OMU VISION 2030 (Summary)

<https://www.omu.ac.jp/vision-en/>

To become a university that will shape the society of the future through Convergence of Knowledge, Osaka Metropolitan University (OMU) has set these three aims: (1) Creating a ‘Center of Knowledge’, (2) Tackling Social Issues, (3) Contributing to Sustainability, and to achieve these three aims, OMU has established Visions in six areas:

Vision 1: Joint Development of Society

Established in Osaka as one of the largest public universities in Japan, we will strengthen our ties with government and all types of communities and industries, using the university’s knowledge to solve various regional issues, and contributing to the health and welfare of the people and the improvement of their well-being.

Vision 2: Education

We will nurture individuals who have the ability to question the essence of things and have problem-solving skills from the perspectives acquired by both advanced expertise and broad interdisciplinary experiences, and the ability to design the society of the future by collaborating with others.

Vision 3: Research

We will promote world-class fundamental/applied research and interdisciplinary research centered on the exploration of academic principles, aiming to become an internationally competitive research university, and take on the challenge of solving social issues.

Vision 4: Medical Care

By making use of cutting-edge medical knowledge, we will contribute to the realization of a sustainable society by nurturing leading medical professionals and providing high-quality, patient-oriented medical care.

Vision 5: International Cooperation

By building an international education and research network, we will contribute to solving global issues by promoting the circulation of knowledge and cultivate global leaders who can advance mutual understanding around the world.

Vision 6: Governance

Under the president's leadership, we will innovate our university's administrative structure by advancing the establishment of a diversified financial base and strategic allocation of resources.