

# Adapting to Change: How Curriculum Change Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic Was Handled At 2 Higher Education Institutes in Japan

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## Abstract.

The aim of this paper was to look at how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted tertiary education in Japan, and how curriculums were suddenly shifted to accommodate these new and urgent guidelines that needed to be followed. The paper focuses in particular on how the shift from physical to online classes was handled, and whether or not there is any merit in continuing any of the practices educators were forced to adopt. In order to gain a better understanding of how this transition was managed, two senior teachers in separate Japanese universities were interviewed. The qualitative data that was collected from these interviews underwent thematic analysis, to explore how curriculums were changed, how these changes were introduced, and what (if any) practices are likely to continue in the future. While both interviewees were fully aware of the disruption and stress the pandemic had on both teachers and students, they were both hopeful that many of these lessons learnt could assist tertiary education in Japan, even as the limitations on classrooms subside and their continued use are no longer mandatory. These findings are also triangulated with the wealth of studies written in recent years that focus on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), the pandemic, curriculum change and leadership roles in education.

**Keywords:** Tertiary Education, Tertiary Education Japan, Fourth Industrial Revolution, 4IR, EFL/ESL Education