

The Pioneering role of Okayama University Medical School in admitting the first ever International Baccalaureate Diploma Students into the Medical School and Health Science Department

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Abstract

With the ongoing globalization of Japan, there has been a rapid growth in the internationalization of Japanese universities. International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP) students have been eligible for admission into Japanese Universities since 1979. Okayama University was the first national university to welcome IBDP students in 4 faculties and 1 special course in 2012, and in 11 faculties and 1 special course in 2015. The Medical Faculty at Okayama University admitted the first ever IBDP students into medical school and nursing school from April 2015. Since the IB education system is completely different from Japanese high school education, IBDP students require ample support both academically and otherwise following admission, for effective and smooth transition into academic and campus life. To meet such demands, Okayama University has appointed IBDP student counsellors, who provide continuous support to IBDP students through one-on-one counselling and by keeping the IBDP student community in touch through the SNS “IBDP LINE GROUP”. In order to create an exclusive international environment where IBDP students can heighten their linguistic and communication skills, the university has also set up the “L-café” or Language café. This international space welcomes anyone who has an interest in foreign languages and/or wants to interact in a relaxed environment. Most IB student’s at Okayama University work part-time at the L-Café. With effective planning, proper student support and understanding, Okayama University aims at providing and developing a positive academic and social experience for present and future IB students enrolling into the various departments of the medical and other faculties.