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CCT Venues-Docklands
Thames Quay
193 Marsh Wall
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Session 3:Curriculum, Research and Development

Development of field-specific benchmark to evaluate learning outcomes for junior college students in Japan

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The target of this presentation

- Accountability in HEIs is one of the central issues of colleges and universities all over the world. Student's learning outcome is an essential factor in improving it.

1. **Creating a benchmark standard in each major to evaluate educational outcomes of Japanese junior colleges through national college student's survey.**
2. **It aims to make a change "useful" evaluation processes to improve the educational quality of junior colleges not only for recent and prospects students but also improving accountability to policymakers.**

BACKGROUND

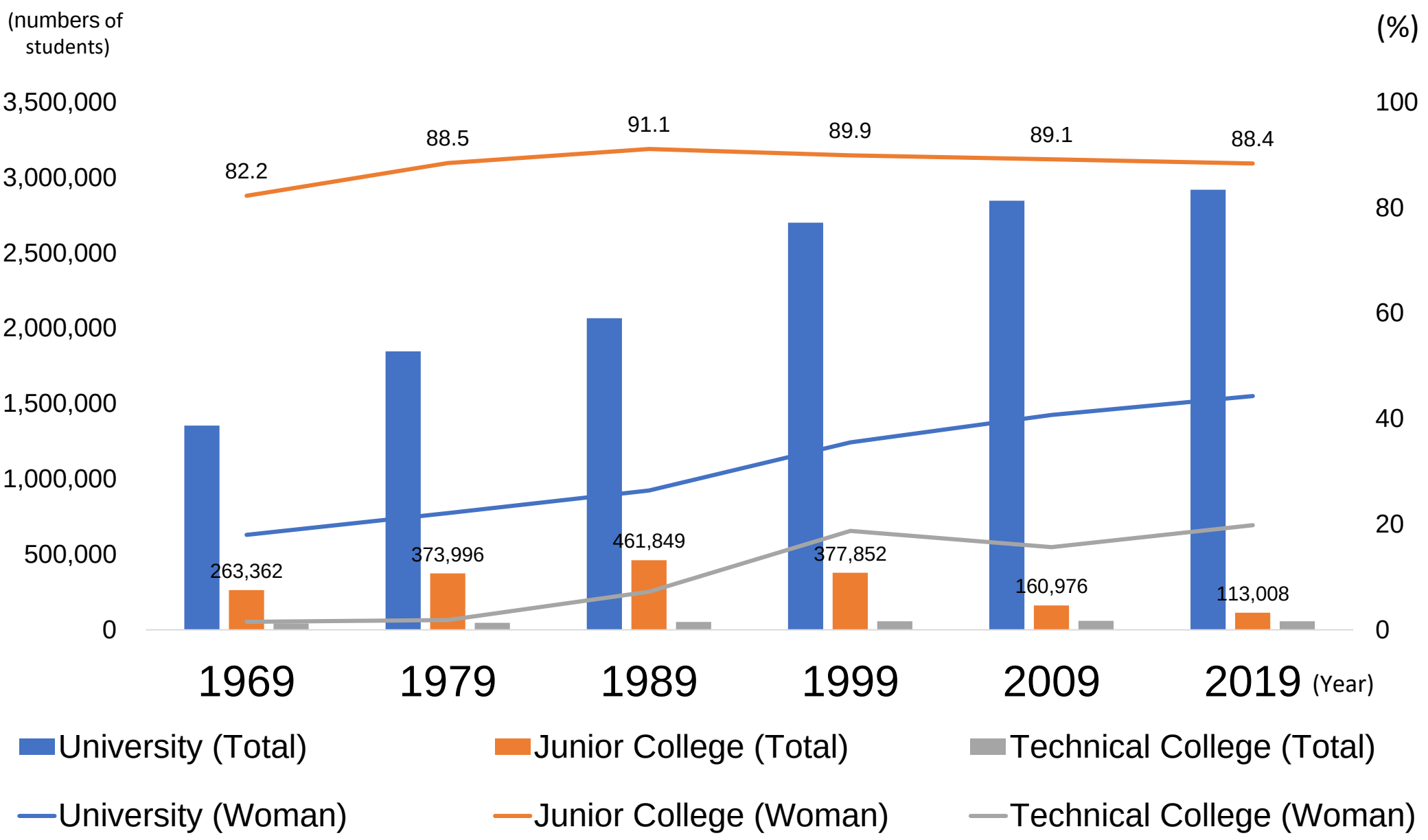


Fig.1: Number of students in each types of institution and % of women's students

The purpose of university and junior college based on the educational act

- The purpose of the university:

The University aims to develop knowledge, morals, and applied abilities by teaching and studying **specialized fields deeply** as well as giving wide knowledge as the academic center.

- The purpose of the junior college:

The junior college aims to develop knowledge, morals, and applied abilities by teaching and studying specialized fields **for cultivating essential abilities and basic skills for working industrial society and living life well.**

The characteristics of junior college

- 2-years and inexpensive tuition and fees.
- Geographically, it is widely distributed throughout the country, including small and medium-sized cities.
- Contributing to the achievements in training professionals in specific fields such as early childhood education and food nutrition by fitting women's demands.
- "Trying" to make opportunities to life-long learning

(The Center of Education Commission, 2015)

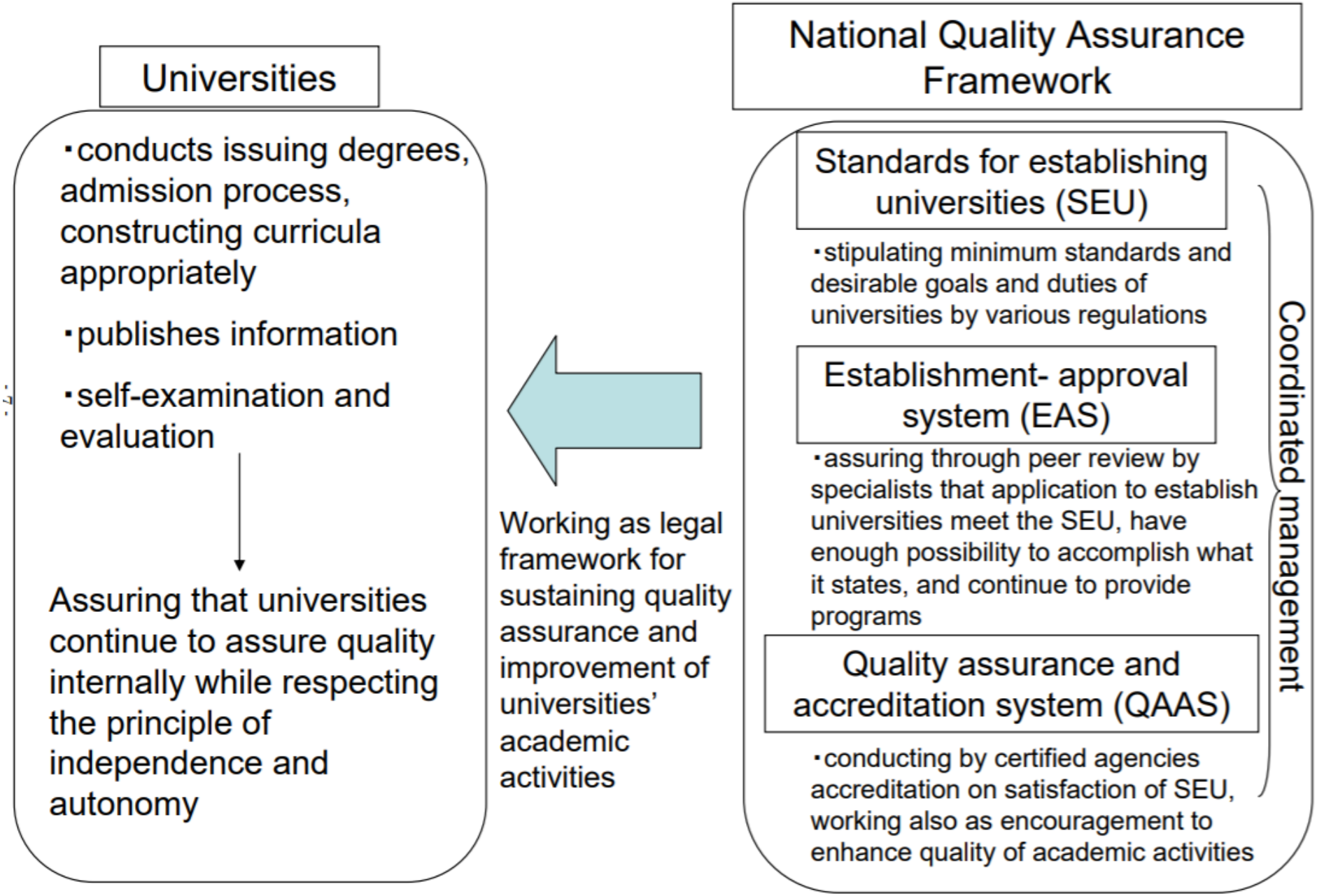


Fig.2: Illustration of QAF in Japan

Refer from
Higher Education Bureau, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2009, "Quality Assurance Framework of Higher Education in Japan"

JACA: The Japan Association for College Accreditation

- One of the certified accreditation agencies as a part of the Quality assurance and accreditation system (QAAS)
- Established in 1994
- All junior colleges are mandated to be evaluated at least once every seven years in 2005
- JACA became a sister organization with the Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), which is a part of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in U.S.

METHOD

Applying the "*Tandaiseichosa*": National Survey for Junior College Students, NSJCS

- The purpose of the NSJCS is to monitor entire college experiences and evaluate learning outcomes based on the responses of paper-based survey from junior college students.

- Almost 20,000 (about 50 inst.) junior college students participate the survey every year.

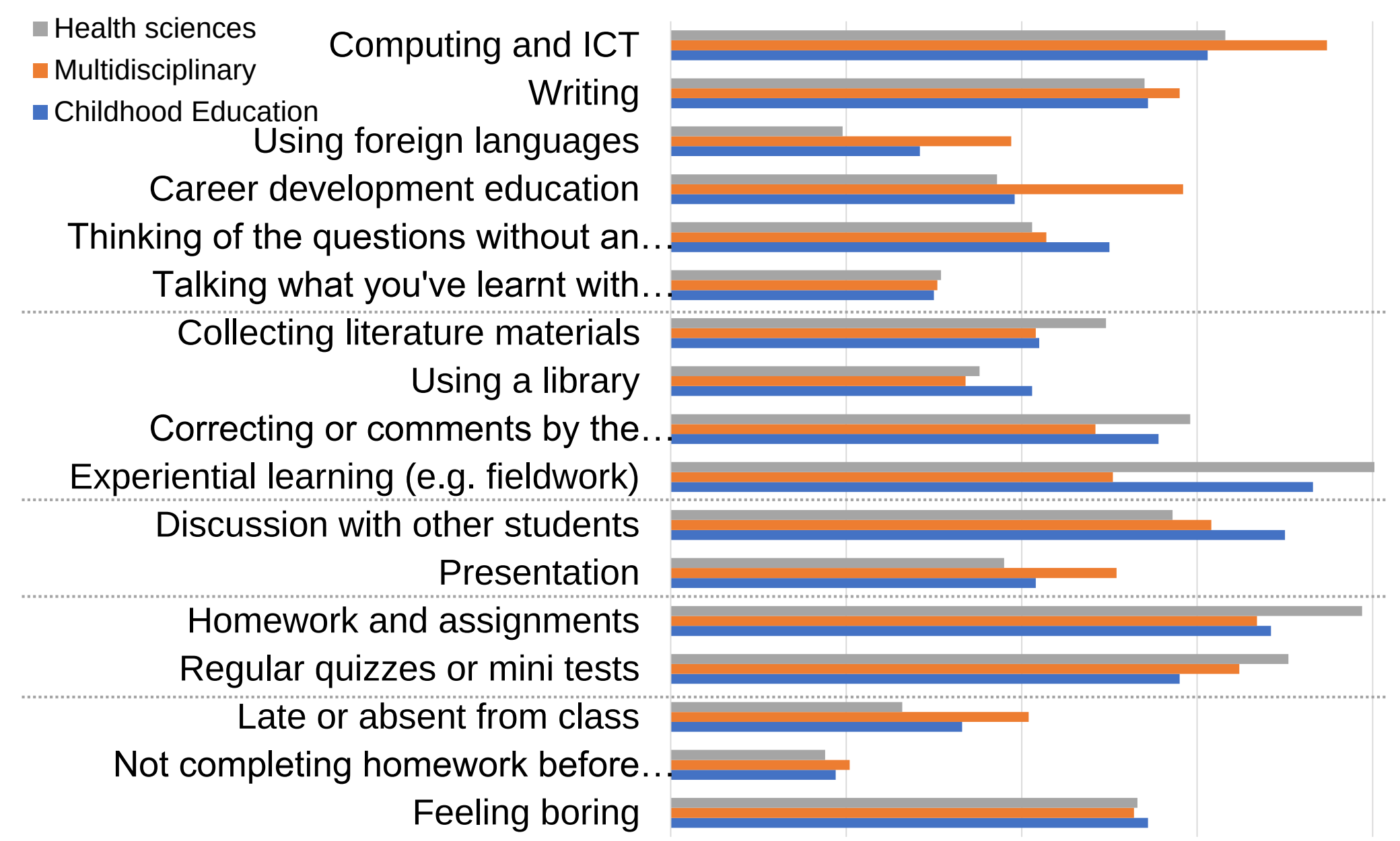
- The data of NSJCS fully relies on indirect student's evaluation.

Table.1: Research subject

Major fields	Specified fields	Number of respondents In 2015-2018
Childhood Education	Early childhood education and care	31,792
Multidisciplinary	General education, cultural studies	8,464
Health sciences	Nursing, care welfare, nutrition	17,863

Analyzing and comparing classroom experiences and learning outcomes in 3 major fields of junior colleges to find characteristics of each.

RESULTS

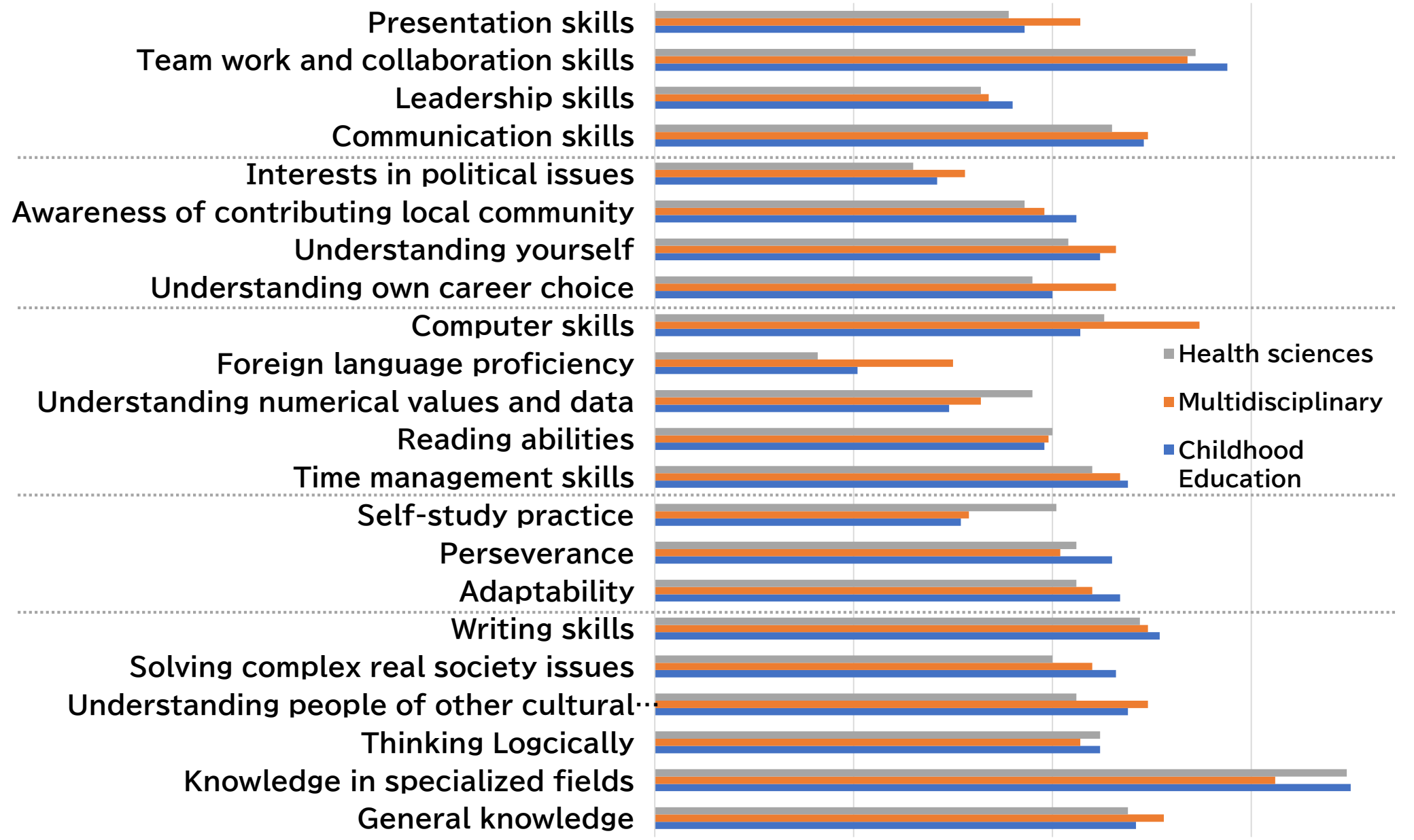


Q.1 How often have you experienced in the classes of your junior college?

Table.2: Key facts (Classroom experiences)

Major fields	Key factor (positive aspects)		Key factor (negative aspects)	
Childhood Education	Discussion with other students	3.25	Computing and ICT	3.03
	Thinking of the questions without an answer	2.75	Regular quizzes or mini tests	2.95
	Using a library	2.53		
Multi-disciplinary	Career development education	2.96	Experiential learning (e.g. fieldwork)	2.76
	Using foreign languages	2.47	Correcting or comments by the instructor on submissions	2.71
	Writing	2.95	Late or absent from class	2.52
	Computing and ICT	3.37		
	Presentation	2.77		
Health sciences	Experiential learning (e.g. fieldwork)	3.51	Discussion with other students	2.93
	Regular quizzes or mini tests	3.26	Presentation	2.45
	Homework and assignments	3.47	Career development education	2.43
	Correcting or comments by the instructor on submissions	2.98	Using foreign languages	1.99
	Collecting literature materials	2.74		
	Late or absent from class*	2.16		

*These items have a certain / some extent of difference comparing other major fields.



Q.2 How much has your junior college experiences contributed?

1=decreased significantly, 2=decreased, 3=Nothings changed,
4=increased, 5=Increased significantly

Table.3: Key facts (learning outcomes)

Major fields	Key factor (positive)		Key factor (negative)	
Childhood Education	Knowledge in specialized fields	4.25	Computer skills	3.57
	Team work and collaboration skills	3.94	Understanding numerical values and data	3.24
	Adaptability	3.67		
	Perseverance	3.65		
	Awareness of contributing local community	3.56		
Multi-disciplinary	Computer skills	3.87	Knowledge in specialized fields	4.06
	General knowledge	3.78		
	Understanding people of other cultural backgrounds	3.74		
	Understanding own career choice	3.66		
	Presentation skills	3.57		
	Foreign language proficiency	3.25		
Health sciences	Knowledge in specialized fields	4.24	Communication skills	3.65
	Self-study practice	3.51	Understanding yourself	3.54
	Understanding numerical values and data	3.45		

*These items have a certain / some extent of difference comparing other major fields.

DISCUSSION

Key findings:

- The results of NSJCS show the differences in classroom experiences and learning outcomes in each major fields.

- Junior colleges require to be evaluated department/course bases in each major rather than a whole assessment of the institution.

- The benchmark standard that belongs to major fields seems to be an essential factor to evaluate junior college outcomes correctly.

Other issues:

- Academic field classification is key to making a correct benchmark standard.
- Indirect student's evaluation still concerns with its quality and preciseness.
- The limitation of the national-level survey is difficult to apply for evaluating the impacts of individual classes and instructors.

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- Higher Education Bureau, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2009, “Quality Assurance Framework of Higher Education in Japan”

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