

山形大学短期交換留学プログラム

# STEP-YU

Short-Term Exchange Programs at Yamagata University

**Spring Semester 2021- Spring Semester 2022**

*For further information, please contact:*

*Study Abroad Student Support*

*Kojirakawa Campus International Center*

*Yamagata University*

*1-4-12 Kojirakawa-machi, Yamagata-shi, Yamagata, 990-8560, Japan*

*TEL: +81-23-628-4117,4927 FAX: +81-23-628-4957*

*E-mail: [kmryug@jm.kj.yamagata-u.ac.jp](mailto:kmryug@jm.kj.yamagata-u.ac.jp)*

*<http://www.yamagata-u.ac.jp>*

## 1. Yamagata University

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Yamagata University has six faculties with twelve majors and seven post-graduate courses. It has four campuses, located in three different cities across Yamagata Prefecture. Both the Kojirakawa (Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences; Education, Art and Science; and Science) and Iida campuses (Faculty of Medicine) lie in Yamagata City. The Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Agriculture are located in Yonezawa and Tsuruoka, respectively.

The total number of students on all four campuses is about 9,000. One of the leading universities in the Tōhoku (northern Japan) area, it fulfils an important role in both study and research. With ‘symbiosis between nature and mankind’ as its theme, Yamagata University is very active in developing human resources that will play a major role in the next generation. The university aims to pursue and develop knowledge and work towards the prosperity of the local communities.

As of May 1, 2020, 267 students from 29 countries and territories were studying at Yamagata University. We have exchange agreements with 101 universities in 26 countries and territories, offering ample international educational experience for both students and faculty.

## 2. STEP-YU

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Yamagata University offers two short-term programs for international students, giving students from universities on exchange agreement the opportunity to study here while being registered at their home schools. These programs are generically called STEP-YU (Short-Term Exchange Program at Yamagata University). The possible exchange of course credits and the number of students exempted by the host university from paying tuition are set out in agreements between Yamagata University and our partners. A list of these partner universities is available on our website.

General ( <i>Ippan</i> ) Exchange Program	1 semester or 1 year	students from universities on exchange agreement with Yamagata University or its faculties
Yamagata University Japan Studies Program (JSP)		

### **General (Ippan) Exchange Program**

#### **Outline**

This program aims to give both undergraduate and graduate students of various countries an opportunity to further their Japanese language ability and their understanding of Japan, as well as their special studies and research. It offers regular courses given in Japanese in our six faculties. Enrolment is possible in all faculties and post-graduate courses. Depending on the exchange agreement with the partner institution, enrolment may be limited to undergraduate students. Graduate students of science are expected to be fluent enough in Japanese to master everyday life even if they perform their research in English. Therefore, students with low proficiency in the Japanese language are strongly advised to participate in Japanese language training both prior to coming to Japan and while at Yamagata University. Students are sometimes advised to change programs after application. For the possibility of performing research in English, please ask the faculty in which you want to enroll directly.

**Program terms**

Spring: April 1, 2021 for 6 months or 1 year  
Fall: October 1, 2021 for 6 months or 1 year

**Conditions of Application**

- A student should be enrolled at a university or faculty with an exchange agreement
- A student must be at least in their second year of undergraduate study at the time of application
- JLPT must be at least level N2
- Students who have already graduated from their home university, or who will graduate from their home university during the period of their intended study at Yamagata, may not apply
- Students who wish to study at the Faculty of Engineering, School of Science and Engineering (Engineering), or at the Graduate School of Organic Materials Science, please refer to the guidelines of the STEP-YUFE program, the specialized exchange program for engineering. Details available at <http://yu-eng-iec.sakura.ne.jp/en/>

**Yamagata University Japan Studies Program (JSP)****Outline**

This program aims to give undergraduate students of various countries an opportunity to further their understanding of Japan. In order to advance understanding of Japan independent of Japanese language ability, lectures on aspects of Japanese culture are offered in English. The students will be assigned to one of the faculties on Kojirakawa campus.

**Program terms**

Spring: April 1, 2021 for 6 months or 1 year  
Fall : October 1, 2021 for 6 months or 1 year

**Conditions of Application**

- A student should be enrolled at a university or faculty with an exchange agreement
- A student must be at least in their second year of undergraduate study at the time of application
- In principle, a student should have already undertaken at least 150 hours (one year) of Japanese language study at a teaching institution
- If JLPT level N3 has not been attained, and the applicant is not a native English speaker, a copy of a certificate of an English language test, such as TOEIC, IELTS or CET, must also be submitted
- Students who have already graduated from their home university, or who will graduate from their home university during the period of their intended study at Yamagata, may not apply

### 3. Class Content

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#### **General (Ippan) Exchange Program**

##### **Japanese Language Course (Yamagata City Area)**

All students take Japanese languages class at a level based on the results of their placement test. The following courses were held in the Spring Semester 2020. One lesson lasts 90 mins. (\* = Spring semester only)

LEVEL	COURSE	SUBJECT (LESSONS PER WEEK/CREDITS)
Lower Elementary	Elementary Japanese 1	Integrated Skills (4/3), Reading (1/1), Writing (1/1)
Upper Elementary	Elementary Japanese 2	Integrated Skills (4/3), Reading (1/1), Writing (1/1)
Lower Intermediate	Intermediate Japanese 1*	Integrated Skills (4/4), Reading (1/1), Writing (1/1)
Upper Intermediate	Intermediate Japanese 2*	Integrated Skills (4/4), Reading (1/1), Writing (1/1)
Common Subjects		Kanji 1 (1/1), Kanji 2 (1/1), Kanji 3* (1/1), Kanji 4* (1/1)
Lower Advanced	Advanced Japanese 1*	Reading (1/1), Writing (1/1), Speaking (1/1), Listening (1/1)
Upper Advanced	Advanced Japanese 2*	Reading (1/1), Writing (1/1), Speaking (1/1)
Research Instruction	Independent Study Project	Independent Study Project II (1/2)

##### **Supplementary Courses in Japanese Language (Yonezawa Area)**

The following courses were held in the Spring Semester 2020. One lesson lasts 90 mins. No credits are given.

LEVEL	SUBJECT
Beginner	Survival, General Japanese 1, Kanji
Lower Intermediate	General Japanese 2, Japanese Skills 2
Upper Intermediate	General Japanese 3, Japanese Skills 3
Advanced	General Japanese 4, Japanese Skills 4

##### **Supplementary Courses in Japanese Language (Tsuruoka Area)**

The following courses were held in the Fall Semester 2020. One lesson lasts 90 mins. No credits are given.

LEVEL	SUBJECT
INTRODUCTORY	

For regular courses taught in Japanese, see the websites of each faculty and graduate school.

## **Yamagata University Japan Studies Program (JSP)**

JSP includes a Japanese language course. See above for details. The following courses were also held in 2020. One lesson lasts 90 mins.

### **Japanese Culture**

Spring Semester:

- Introduction to Japanese Linguistics (1, 2)
- Introduction to Dialectology (1, 2)
- Japanese Pastimes: Their History and Effects on Society (1, 2)
- An Introduction to Japanese Performing Arts (1, 2)
- An Introduction to Japanese Culture I (2, 2)
- Showa Japan I (1, 2)

Fall Semester:

- Shodo: Japanese Calligraphy (1, 2)
- Introduction to Classical Japanese (1, 2)
- Introduction to Elements of Japanese Society (1, 2)
- Japanese Literature on Screen (1, 2)
- Japanese Rites of Passage (1, 2)
- An Introduction to Japanese Culture II (2, 2)
- Showa Japan II (1, 2)

### **Opportunities to Discover Japan (2019)**

Spring Semester:

- Cherry blossom viewing and picnic
- Pottery making
- Japanese soba noodle making
- Hot spring and castle visit
- Japanese traditional musical instruments
- Traditional kimono dressing
- Japanese street art *nankin tamasudare* (plate spinning)
- Buddhist meditation (*zazen*)
- Japanese traditional game (*kendama*)

### **Other intercultural experiences (2019)**

- Tea ceremony (*cha no yu*)
- Visits to local families and schools
- Hanagasa (one of the biggest local festivals in Japan)
- Lion dance (*shishimai*)

The Yamagata University International Friendship Circle and various international exchange groups organize valuable opportunities such as *Imonikai*.

## 4. Life in Japan

### Academic Schedule

SEMESTER	DATE	DETAILS
SPRING	April	<b>Start of Spring semester</b> Orientation, Japanese language placement test, class registration
	late July - early August	Final exams
	early August - mid-September	Summer break
FALL	mid-September	<b>Start of Fall semester</b> Orientation, Japanese placement test
	October	class registration
	late December - early January	Winter break
	early February	Final exams
	late February - early April	Spring break

### On arrival

After arriving in Yamagata, students will be lodged at an International House or the Seimei Dormitory. Within two or three days, students will be required to register their addresses, open bank accounts and take their Japanese Placement Test, as well as to participate in a study orientation. Students must register for classes during the first week of term. A regular Yamagata University student will act as a ‘buddy’ in order to help the overseas student get used to life in the Yamagata area.

### Housing

Of the short-term international students at Yamagata University in Yamagata City, about 60 can be accommodated at the Seimei Dormitory or at one of the two International Houses (Kasumichō or Hirashimizu). Your location will be determined in advance by the International Center. Should the number of applicants exceed capacity, you may be required to live in a private apartment near the campus. Kasumichō International House is about a 20 minute walk from the campus, close to Yamagata Station with good shopping opportunities. Both Hirashimizu International House and the Seimei Dormitory are about 30 minutes on foot from Kojirakawa Campus, with a shuttle bus also available (schedule varies throughout the year).

Details of dormitory and communal service fees (per calendar month) and security deposits (payable upon check-in) are shown below. Bedding fees are about ¥10,000 for one semester or about ¥13,000 for one academic year. Electricity, gas, and water are paid separately. Fees include internet connection, with the exception of Hirashimizu International House where it must be paid separately. The number of single rooms is limited and some students may have to share a two-bedroom apartment, generally arranged with respect to nationality. The security deposit is used for cleaning and other expenses upon moving out. After deductions for any damage or loss, the balance will be returned to you upon departure.

Dormitory	Room Type	Fee	Communal Services	Security Deposit
Kasumichō Int. House	Single	¥5,900	¥4,000	¥30,000
	Couple	¥11,900	¥4,000	¥36,000
	Family	¥14,200	¥4,000	¥45,000
Hirashimizu Int. House	Family	¥14,200	¥500	¥45,000
Seimei Dormitory	Single	¥10,000	¥0	¥30,000

### **Cost of living**

Students who do not lodge at either International House or the Seimei Dormitory will be helped to find a room:

- furnished room: ¥50,000 to ¥70,000
- furnished room with bath and toilet: ¥30,000 to ¥50,000
- room with shared bath and toilet: ¥15,000 to ¥20,000

Upon moving in, a deposit equivalent to one to two months' rent must be paid as guarantee money. Living in Yamagata, students will not only have to pay for their room rent, but also for utilities, food, transportation, internet, mobile phone and entertainment. In total, this comes to approximately ¥60,000 per month. If students do decide to work part-time, to a degree that will not harm their studies, they will have to obtain an advance permission to engage in activities outside those allowed by their visas, by submitting a special form, the *Application for permission to engage in activity other than that permitted under the status of residence previously granted* form, and then receive approval at the Immigration Office. You may obtain on-the-spot permission to work upon first entering Japan when you pass through immigration.

For housing and living costs in the Yonezawa area, please check the guidelines of STEP-YUFE at <http://yu-eng-iec.sakura.ne.jp/en/>.

### **Insurance**

Exchange students are required to join the two types of insurance outlined below.

- (I) National Health Insurance (approx. ¥21,000 per annum). International students residing in Japan and holding a student visa are required to join the National Health Insurance program. To receive medical treatment, simply show your insurance card at the hospital. Students need only pay 30% of any medical costs.
- (II) Supplementary Insurance. **Life insurance** covers injuries and illnesses, such as hospitalization, surgical procedures or outpatient treatment. **Tenant liability insurance** covers damage caused by fire or water and any repair costs related to the building or water/sewage in a student's room or apartment. **Personal liability insurance** covers damage done to other persons such as might occur in everyday life, as well as any out-of-court settlement and mediation service costs.

The insurance period must cover a student's entire planned period of stay at Yamagata University. If a student has already joined a similar scheme to (II) above, then submit a copy of the insurance policy and invoice to the Study Abroad Student Support Office immediately upon arrival. Should you not already be covered for (II), we recommend you sign up for the Yamagata University Co-op insurance (Life Mutual Insurance) and the University Co-operative International Student Insurance. The premium is approximately 20,000 yen per annum.

### **Withdrawal from the program**

Withdrawal from the STEP-YU program due to unavoidable circumstances shall be notified to the Study Abroad Student Support Office (during business hours) at least three weeks before planned departure. Residents of the International Houses or of the Seimei Dormitory may check out only during business hours. Students who live in a private apartment should consult the relevant clause in their contract. Yamagata University cannot be responsible for checking out arrangements in the case of a private apartment.

## 5. How to Apply

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The selection of candidates for STEP-YU is carried out on the basis of grade point average, plan of study and research, and two letters of recommendation issued by teachers. Students applying for the program are asked to send their complete application materials by registered mail to the address on the cover of this pamphlet, through their home university's International Studies Office or similar. Deadline for applications (Japan time) is

- November 1 2020 for students starting April 2021
- May 1 2021 for students starting October 2021

Details of required application forms, and their designated format, are shown below. Forms are available at <https://www.yamagata-u.ac.jp/en/international/programs/step-yu/>.

Form	Document	Format
1-1	Application Form	Word
	Certificate of English Language Test <b>Read Section 2 carefully before completing</b>	PDF
1-2	Plan of study or research	Word
2-1	Recommendation letter from applicant's Japanese language instructor at home institution	PDF
2-2	Recommendation letter from academic instructor at home institution who has known applicant for at least one year. <b>Form 2-1 and 2-2 must be from different instructors.</b>	PDF
3	Health Examination Report <b>If you cannot send documentation via e-mail for security reasons, regular mail is possible. Let us know in advance of application.</b>	PDF
4	Photo document	Word
n/a	Application for Certificate of Eligibility	Excel
n/a	Academic Transcript	PDF
n/a	Copy of Certificate of Japanese Language Proficiency Test or other Japanese tests if taken	PDF
n/a	Copy of passport <b>Passport should be valid for the entire length of stay at Yamagata University. Color pdf format only: no black and white.</b>	color PDF
n/a	Application Form for Residence Approval	PDF
n/a	Supplementary insurance details. <b>To be submitted after arrival in Japan.</b>	

## 6. Notification of Results

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Results of applications to Yamagata University will be sent to the office in charge of studying abroad at the applicant's home university by mid-March or late August, respectively. The Certificate of Eligibility necessary for obtaining a visa will be sent to the same office by mid-March for students planning to enter Japan in April, or by late August for those planning to enter Japan in October. Before arrival, students are asked to check the necessary procedures with their Japanese Embassy or Consulate, as well as about their travel arrangements.