

[Information for Japanese Universities]
Guidelines on Application for the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship
for Research Students
(University Recommendation: General, SATREPS, e-ASIA Joint Research Program)
in AY 2020

(Tentative translation by Tokyo Tech)

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan is soliciting applications for the MEXT Scholarship for Research Students in the category of “University Recommendation” under the General scheme, SATREPS scheme, and/or e-ASIA Joint Research Program.

I. Qualifications and Conditions

1. Eligibility

Applicants with outstanding academic achievements* who intend to enroll in a Japanese university as a graduate-level international students.

(*) Applicants must have a GPA of 2.30 or above and must be able to maintain this GPA throughout the scholarship period. For applicants who are currently working, the GPA from the last school attended will be considered. For applicants who are currently enrolled students, the GPA from the current school will be considered. Furthermore, applicants must meet one of the conditions for language proficiency described below in 6. Language Proficiency.

2. Nationality

Applicants must have the nationality of a country that has diplomatic relations with Japan. In principle, an applicant who has Japanese nationality at the time of application is not eligible. However, persons with dual nationality who hold Japanese nationality and whose place of residence at the time of application is outside Japan are eligible to apply as long as they chose the nationality of the other country and renounce Japanese nationality before the date of their arrival in Japan.

3. Age

Applicants, in principle, must have been born on or after April 2, 1985. Exceptions are limited to cases in which MEXT deems that the applicant could not apply within the

eligible age limit due to the situation in or circumstances of the applicant's country (military service obligation, loss of educational opportunities due to disturbances of war, etc.). Personal circumstances (financial situation, family circumstances, state of health, circumstances related to the applicant's university or place of employment, etc.) will not be considered for exceptions.

However, former participants in the Young Leaders Program who do not satisfy the above age condition are eligible to apply if they wish to enroll in a doctoral program and are within 5 years of completing the Young Leaders Program.

4. Academic Background

Applicants must qualify for enrollment in a Master's Program or a Doctoral Program at a Japanese university. (Those who are fully expected to satisfy the qualifications by the time of enrollment are eligible to apply.)

5. Field of Study

The field must be the one in which the applicant majored at university, or a related field, and be one in which the applicant will be able to do research at the admitting university.

6. Language Proficiency

Applicants must possess proficiency in either the Japanese or English language and satisfy one of the following conditions:

Japanese Language

- (1) Have passed N2 or N1 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) by the time of enrollment in the university's degree program
- (2) Have completed or be expected to complete the required curriculum at an institution where all instruction was in Japanese and which satisfies the qualifications for enrollment in a Master's or Doctoral Program at a Japanese university
- (3) Have been determined by the admitting university to possess a level of proficiency in Japanese that is equivalent to or exceeds the level indicated in (1)

English Language

- (1) Have obtained an English language proficiency test score that is equivalent to CEFR level B2 or higher by the time of enrollment in the university's degree program

- (2) Have completed or be expected to complete the required curriculum at an institution where all instruction was in English and which satisfies the qualifications for enrollment in a Master's or Doctoral Program at a Japanese university
- (3) Have been determined by the admitting university to possess a level of proficiency in English that is equivalent to or exceeds the level indicated in (1)

(*) Note that applicants who will be recommended to MEXT as “non-regular students” must meet one of the conditions for Language Proficiency in (1), (2) or (3). In addition, the admitting university must notify those selected as non-regular students that satisfaction of either Language Proficiency condition (1) or (2) (in Japanese or English) is prerequisite to application to MEXT for an extension of the scholarship period as a regular student. Condition (3) in English or Japanese will not be recognized.

(*) Both regular and non-regular students who are expected, at the time of recommendation, to graduate or complete a curriculum that meets Language Proficiency condition (2) prior to enrollment may be recommended as those who satisfy Language Proficiency condition (2).

7. Health

Applicants must be determined by the admitting university to be physically and mentally able to pursue their course of studies in Japan.

8. Arrival in Japan

In principle, applicants must be able to arrive in Japan during the period specified by the admitting university; i.e., within two weeks of the start date of the university's relevant academic term (September or October) for that year.

Excepting cases where MEXT determines that there are unavoidable circumstances, if a scholarship recipient is not able to arrive in Japan by the final day of the specified period, they must withdraw from the MEXT Scholarship. If, due to personal reasons, a scholarship recipient enters Japan outside the specified period, an airline ticket to Japan will not be provided.

9. Visa Requirement

Applicants shall, in principle, newly obtain a “Student” visa from the Japanese diplomatic mission located in their country of nationality, and enter Japan with the residence status

of “Student.” If an applicant already has another residence status in Japan (i.e., “Permanent resident,” “Long-term resident,” etc.), they must change their status and newly enter Japan under “Student” status.

Moreover, applicants should be aware that after expiration of their status as a MEXT Scholarship Student, if they again apply for their original resident status of “Permanent resident” or “Long-term resident,” such resident status might not be granted. Applicants should also be aware that provision of scholarship benefits will be stopped if they arrive in Japan without a newly obtained “Student” visa.

10. Non-eligibility

The following persons are not eligible for the scholarship, and if non-eligibility is identified after they are selected for the scholarship, the individual must withdraw from the scholarship:

- (1) Those who are military personnel or military civilian employees at the time of their arrival in Japan or during the period they receive the scholarship;
 - (2) Those who are not able to arrive in Japan by the last date of the period specified by MEXT or the admitting university;
 - (3) Those who have previously received a MEXT Scholarship (including those who withdrew from the scholarship after they entered Japan). However, this does not apply to the following past recipients of the scholarship:
 - Those who have academic or work experience of 3 years or longer during the period starting from the month following the end of their last scholarship to the starting month of the new scholarship;
 - Those whose the last MEXT Scholarship was received in the category of Japanese Studies Students (limited to those who graduated or are expected to graduate from their home university after returning to their home country), Preparatory Course for the "Japan-Korea Joint Exchange Program in Science and Engineering," or Young Leaders Program
- (Note that as the MEXT Honors Scholarship is not considered a “MEXT Scholarship,” recipients of MEXT Honors Scholarship are eligible.);
- (4) Those who are concurrently applying to another program under the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship system. This includes programs for which scholarship disbursements will begin in AY 2020, even if final selection results have not yet been decided;

- (5) Those who, at the time of application, are already enrolled at a Japanese university, etc. with the residence status of "Student," and those who are already enrolled at or plan to enroll at a Japanese university, etc. as a privately-funded international student, in the period from application submission until the start of the scholarship period . However, this does not apply to an applicant who, at the time of application, is a current privately-funded international student enrolled at or scheduled to enroll at a Japanese university and is certain to complete their program, return to their home country upon completion, and then re-enter Japan under newly acquired "Student" status.
- (6) Those who intend to receive a scholarship from an organization other than MEXT, including a government organization of the applicant's home country, after the start of the MEXT Scholarship disbursement period;
- (7) Those who, at the time of application, are expected to graduate from their current school or university, but who are not able to satisfy the academic background qualifications by the specified deadline;
- (8) Those who held dual nationality at the time of application and whose renunciation of Japanese nationality before the date of their arrival in Japan cannot be verified;
- (9) Those who, at or after the time of application, plan to engage in long-term research (such as fieldwork or internship) outside Japan or plan to take a long-term leave of absence from the university;
- (10) Those who do not plan to enroll in a regular degree program after completing a non-regular course of study, and those who have completed a doctoral program and have no intention of obtaining a degree.

11. Other

The MEXT Scholarship will be granted to those who are willing to contribute to mutual understanding between Japan and their home country by participating in activities at schools and in communities during their studies in Japan while contributing to the internationalization of Japan. After their graduation, (past) recipients are expected to make efforts to promote relations between their home country and Japan by maintaining close relations with the university they attended, by cooperating with surveys and questionnaires, and, after returning to their home country, by cooperating with relevant projects and events conducted by the Japanese diplomatic mission, etc. located there.

II. Scholarship Period

The scholarship period varies depending on the academic curriculum in which the recipient is enrolled after arrival in Japan.

MEXT will separately specify the scholarship period for selected individuals for whom, from the perspective of education and research guidance, the timing differs from the university's stipulated academic term start date, etc.

1. After their arrival in Japan, the scholarship period for students enrolled as Research Students, Credited Auditors, or Auditors (hereafter "Research Students, etc. (non-regular)" is, in principle, as follows:

○ Research Students, etc. (non-regular) arriving in Japan in October 2020: October 2020 to March 2022 (maximum of 1 year and 6 months)

* In case of arrival in Japan on dates other than the above, MEXT will separately specify the scholarship period.

2. After their arrival in Japan, the scholarship period for recipients enrolled in degree programs (Master's Program, Doctoral Program or Professional Degree Program) shall be the necessary period (within the standard duration of study) for their completion of the program. However, for those enrolled in a "Doctoral Program (5-year system)," the scholarship period will be treated as the Master's Program for the first and second years and as the Doctoral Program for the third to the fifth years.

3. *(translation omitted)*

4. *(translation omitted)*

5. Those who wish to advance from enrollment as a Research Student, etc. (non-regular) to a regular graduate program, and those who wish to advance from a Master's Program or a Professional Degree Program to a Doctoral Program, and, with outstanding grades, meet certain criteria, may apply for an extension of their scholarship period. An extension of the scholarship period for the purpose of academic advancement may be approved by MEXT through examination, but the extension will not be granted to all who apply for it. Please note the following points:

(1) Extension of the scholarship period is conditioned on selection of the recipient's application for extension, as well as the recipient's having passed the entrance examination for enrollment as a regular student in the degree program they wish to join, and their advancement to the next level of study.

(2) Extension of the scholarship period as a Research Student, etc. (non-regular) is not possible.

(3) Scholarship benefits will be stopped for those who advance to the next level of study without having first received approval of their application to extend the scholarship period. (However, it is possible for such students to advance to the next level of study or be enrolled as a privately-financed international student.)

(4) Advancement to the next level of study at a different university, either by Research Students, etc. (non-regular) to a regular degree program, or by those advancing from a Master's Program or Professional Degree Program to a Doctoral Program, is not recognized. (However, it is possible for such students to advance to the next level of study at another university as a privately-financed international student.)

III. Scholarship Benefits

1. Stipend: The amounts listed below will be disbursed to scholarship recipients depending on the program in which they are enrolled. A supplemental regional allowance of JPY 2,000 or JPY 3,000 per month will be added to the monthly scholarship amount for recipients who are studying or conducting research in specially designated regions. Due to the situation of the Japanese Government's budget, the amount of funding may be subject to change each fiscal year. If a scholarship recipient is absent from the university for an extended period, provision of the stipend will be suspended for that period.

(1) For a recipient enrolled as a Research Student, etc. (non-regular): JPY 143,000 per month

(2) For a recipient enrolled in a Master's or Professional Degree Program: JPY 144,000 per month

(3) For a recipient enrolled in a Doctoral Program: JPY 145,000 per month

2. Travel Allowance

(1) Airline Ticket to Japan: MEXT will stipulate the travel schedule and route, and provide an airline ticket to each scholarship recipient. The airline ticket will be an

economy-class ticket for the flight from the international airport (in principle, in the recipient's country of nationality) closest to the recipient's residence to an international airport in Japan used on the normal route to the admitting university. The recipient shall bear at their own expense all costs related to domestic travel from the recipient's residence to the nearest international airport, as well as airport taxes, airport usage fees, special taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within Japan (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, and carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc. The scholarship recipient shall also bear at their own expense travel and lodging costs incurred in a third country if before coming to Japan, the recipient must travel to a third country, either for visa purposes because there is no Japanese diplomatic mission in their country of nationality, or if there are no direct flights to Japan from the recipient's country of nationality. In these cases, MEXT will provide an economy-class airline ticket from the scholarship recipient's country of nationality to a third country, and from the third country to an international airport in Japan used on the normal route to the admitting university. In principle, the address given in the space for "Your address before departure for Japan" on the application form shall be recognized as the "residence," and the airline ticket will be arranged for a flight from the international airport nearest to that address. Except for cases when the recipient must travel to a third country, such as to obtain a visa, MEXT will not, due to the recipient's personal circumstances, provide an airline ticket for travel to Japan from any country other than the recipient's country of nationality.

(2) Return Airline Ticket: Based on the scholarship recipients' individual applications, MEXT will provide an airline ticket to each recipient who will graduate from the admitting university and return to their home country by the end of the final month of their scholarship period as designated by MEXT (See 2. Scholarship Period). MEXT will provide an economy-class airline ticket from the international airport in Japan used for the normal route to and from the admitting university to the international airport (in principle, that in the recipient's country of nationality) nearest to the recipient's residence. The scholarship recipient shall bear at their own expense all costs related to travel from their residence in Japan to the nearest international airport in Japan, as well as airport taxes, airport usage fees, special taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within the country of nationality (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, and carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc. If

a scholarship recipient returns to their home country before the end of the scholarship period of scholarship due to personal reasons, or for reasons stated in 4. Suspension of Scholarship Benefits, MEXT will not provide the return airline ticket. If a scholarship recipient continues to stay in Japan after the scholarship period has ended (such as for further education, for work, or for continuing enrollment at the university), an airline ticket for the recipient's temporary return to their home country will not be provided.

3. Education Fees

University entrance examination fees, enrollment fees, and tuition will be waived by the admitting university.

IV. Cessation of Scholarship Benefits

MEXT will stop provision of scholarship benefits in the following situations. Should any of the following apply, the scholarship recipient may be ordered to return part of, or the entirety of, the scholarship benefits received up to that time. Provision of scholarship benefits may also be suspended during the period up to the decision on the disposition of the matter.

- (1) The recipient made false statement on their application;
- (2) The recipient violated an article of the Pledge to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology;
- (3) The recipient violated a Japanese law and was sentenced and imprisoned for an indefinite period or for a period exceeding 1 year;
- (4) The recipient was suspended from their university or preparatory educational institution, or received other punishment, or was removed from the university register as a disciplinary action in accordance with the regulations of the admitting university;
- (5) It has been determined that it will be impossible for the recipient to complete their program within the standard period of study because of poor academic grades or suspension or absence from the university or preparatory educational institution;
- (6) The recipient arrived in Japan without having newly acquired "Student" status, or changed their residence status to one other than "Student;"
- (7) The recipient received another scholarship (excluding those specified for research expenditures);
- (8) The recipient advanced to a higher-level educational program without first obtaining approval for extension of the scholarship period;

- (9) The recipient withdrew from the admitting university or moved to another university;
- (10) At the time of the annual evaluation, the recipient's GPA was below 2.30 or did not meet the university's specified academic standards.

V. Recommendation and Selection

1. Recommendation

Based on the results of screening by the university, the president of the university shall recommend particularly outstanding candidates in need of the scholarship to Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan. The university recommendation must be made via submission of the specified form with all necessary documents attached. Recommended candidates must be listed in the order of priority for allocated slots under each recommendation scheme (i.e., University Recommendation, General). The university should follow the procedures described in "Points to Note When Recommending Candidates for the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship for Research Students (General scheme, SATREPS scheme, e-ASIA Joint Research Program scheme) in AY 2020."

2. Selection

From among each university president's recommended candidates, a selection committee will finalize candidacies based on its own screening of the candidates, and MEXT will select the scholarship recipients and determine the scholarship period.

3. Documents to be Submitted

(1) To be submitted to MEXT

- (a) Recommendation form for MEXT Scholarship [Appendix 1]
- (b) List of recommended candidates [Appendix 2]
- (c) Evaluation form [Appendix 3]
- (d) University report [Appendix 4]
- (e) University's internal recruitment and selection plan [Appendix 5]
- (f) Application documents (with applicants' photos attached) [Appendix 6]
- (g) Field of Study and Study Program [Research Proposal] [Appendix 7]

*1: Documents (a) to (e) must be prepared by the admitting university.

Documents (a) and (c) are to be prepared for each recommended candidate, and (b)(d) and (e) are to be prepared for each recommendation scheme. Documents (f) and (g) are prepared by the applicants and must be compiled by the university.

*2: The applicant's photograph attached to the Application Form should be of good quality, taken within the last six months, and printed on photo paper. The photograph must be 4.5cm x 3.5cm, and show the applicant's upper-body and full face without a hat or head covering. The applicant's name and nationality must be written in block print on the back of the photograph. Digital photographs are accepted.

*3: The university must attach originals of the above-listed documents to the official document and submit the entire set to MEXT.

(2) Documents prepared by each applicant that must be retained at the admitting university (the university is required to keep a copy of each document):

(h) Official documents that prove the applicant's nationality (e.g., a copy of passport, a copy of their resident card or a copy of a document certifying their citizenship)

(i) Academic transcript:

For applicants who are currently working: Academic transcript issued by the last university attended (undergraduate or master's program)

For applicants who are currently enrolled students: Academic transcript issued by the last university attended (undergraduate or master's program) and academic transcript issued by their current university.

(j) Diploma from the last university attended or certification of expected graduation from the current university (undergraduate or master's program)

(k) Document proving the applicant's outstanding academic achievement at the last university attended

(l) Recommendation letter from the department head or similar official of the applicant's previous or current university (This letter must be addressed to the president of the admitting university)

(m) Thesis overview (A brief summary of the thesis)

(n) Supporting evidence (e.g., score report from TOEFL, IELTS, JLPT, etc.) of language proficiency as listed in I.6. Language Proficiency

*4: If an applicant's GPA cannot be calculated, MEXT will consider their GPA to be 2.30 or higher only if it is clearly stated in the recommendation letter (1) that the applicant is ranked in the top 30% of their class or department (1). Therefore, a copy of the recommendation letter (1) must be submitted if an applicant's GPA cannot be calculated. (Refer to "Points to Note When Recommending Candidates" VII. 4.(3).)

*5: Regarding supporting evidence (n), if the admitting university determines that the applicant's language proficiency satisfies the language proficiency condition under I.6. Language Proficiency, Japanese(3) or I.6. Language Proficiency, English(3), the admitting university must state its reason in section (c) of the Evaluation form [Appendix 3] and submit the form to MEXT, along with the supporting evidence on which the university's determination was based. However, for Research Student applicants who satisfy the Japanese or English language proficiency condition under I.6.(1) or I.6.(2), the admitting university should retain the supporting evidence (n) instead of submitting the documents to MEXT.

[Notes on (1) and (2) above]

- Documents must be prepared in Japanese or in English. A Japanese translation must be attached to documents prepared in other languages. Where possible, documents must be prepared using word processing software, and all documents must be unified in A4 format.
- Submitted documents will not be returned.
- The university is responsible for confirming the contents of submitted documents. If the above application documents are not completed in full with accurate information, or if any supplementary documents are missing, the application will not be examined. (If incomplete documents or false statements are found after final selection, the selection results may be canceled.)
- MEXT will not accept any documents that arrive after the submission deadline.
- In some countries, certification of graduation, etc. may be issued by a government agency, etc., but the admitting university should be sure to confirm the details of each certification, such as by verifying the accuracy of

the contents with the relevant university, etc.

- The university should retain documents properly, so that they can be submitted to MEXT upon request.

VI. Submission Period and Result Notification

Submission period: March 16 (Mon) to March 26, 2020 (Thu)

Result notification: June 2020 (estimated)

[Note]

- Submission of documents after the submission period, replacement of documents after submission, withdrawal of applications, additional applications and requests to change the order of recommendation are not permitted.
- The results will be sent to the university president. MEXT will not notify applicants.

VII. Precautions

1. Before international students come to Japan, the admitting university must notify them of the scholarship period, terms and conditions of the scholarship, timing of arrival in Japan (including procedures to obtain the “Student” visa), and necessary procedures to enroll at the university.

In addition, prior to students’ arrival, the university must encourage them to learn the Japanese language, and make them aware of the climate, customs, and differences in the legal systems between Japan and their home countries and in the systems of Japanese universities.

2. The admitting university must provide sufficient guidance in advance regarding the handling of academic matters at the university.

3. As the first installment of the scholarship stipend will be made from one month to 1.5 months after the recipient’s arrival in Japan, the recipient is recommended to bring with them to Japan approximately USD 2,000, at minimum, to cover immediate living expenses and other necessary expenses. (If there are any additional costs due to local or university circumstances, the university should be sure to inform them.)

4. Scholarship recipients must join National Health Insurance (*Kokumin Kenko Hoken*) upon arrival in Japan.

5. The admitting university is responsible for preparing dormitories and Japanese language education for scholarship recipients.
6. The admitting university should stay updated on the situations in the countries of newly arriving scholarship recipients, as it may not be possible for some to leave their home countries due to local circumstances. (Especially for recipients coming from China, Russia, Myanmar, Turkmenistan, and countries without Japanese diplomatic missions, the university should be aware that it may take a considerable amount of time for incoming scholarship recipients to obtain departure permits and passports.)
7. Universities must notify successfully selected applicants of the following information:
 - Information regarding MEXT Scholarship Students (name, gender, date of birth, nationality, admitting university/graduate school/undergraduate school, field of study, period of enrollment, career path after completion of scholarship, and contact information [address, telephone number, email address] may be shared with other relevant government organizations for the purpose of utilization for international student programs (support during study in Japan, follow-up surveys, improvement of the international student system) implemented by the Japanese Government. Information (excluding date of birth and contact information) may also be included in publicity materials prepared by the Japanese Government for promoting the acceptance of international students in Japan, particularly in order to introduce former MEXT Scholarship Students who are playing active roles in countries around the world.
 - These matters are included in the Pledge, stipulating rules and regulations with which MEXT Scholarship Students must comply, which recipients will submit after having been selected for the scholarship. In principle, only those who accept the provisions of the Pledge will become MEXT Scholarship Students.
8. The university is warned that if it recommends a candidate who has previously been deported from Japan, the individual will not be able to obtain “Student” status by the date of their arrival in Japan, and their selection as a scholarship recipient will be rescinded.
9. MEXT will instruct the provision of necessary conveniences and preparations for MEXT Scholarship recipients when they apply for the “Student” visa at the Japanese Embassy or consulate located in their country of nationality. In this case, the admitting university does not need to prepare the Certificate of Eligibility (COE). However, if an applicant will apply for the “Student” visa at a Japanese Embassy or consulate located in a country other than that of their nationality, the admitting university is responsible for preparing the COE.

10. The university should refer to “Points to Note When Recommending Candidates” for additional details and important information regarding recommendation.
11. Other issues regarding the MEXT Scholarship that are not covered in these guidelines will be determined separately by the Japanese Government.