

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES  
JAPANESE GOVERNMENT (MEXT) SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2019  
(RESEARCH STUDENTS)**

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan offers scholarships to international students who wish to study in graduate courses at Japanese universities as Research Students (either regular students or non-regular students) under the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship Program as follows.

**1. DEFINITION OF “RESEARCH STUDENTS”**

Those who are enrolled in a master’s course, a doctoral course, or a professional graduate course at a graduate school, or who are conducting research in a specialized field at an undergraduate department, graduate school, institute attached to a university, etc. without the aim of completing the course, or who are receiving preparatory education in the Japanese language and other subjects prior to placement at the university, etc. (Excluding the Young Leaders Program students or Teacher Training Students.)

**2. FIELDS OF STUDY**

Applicants should apply for the field of study they majored in at university or its related field. Moreover, the fields of study must be subjects which applicants will be able to study and research in graduate courses at Japanese universities. The fields of study may be restricted to particular fields by the Japanese Embassy/Consulate General (hereinafter referred to as the “Japanese diplomatic mission”) in the applicant’s country. Traditional entertainment arts such as Kabuki and classical Japanese dances, or subjects that require practical training in specific technologies or techniques at factories or companies are not included in the fields of study under this scholarship program. A student who studies medicine, dentistry or welfare science will not be allowed to engage in clinical training such as medical care and operative surgery until he/she obtains a relevant license from the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare under applicable Japanese laws.

**3. QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS**

MEXT accepts applications from international students for study in Japan who satisfy the following qualifications and conditions. Our aim is to foster human resources who will become bridges of friendship between the grantee’s country and Japan through study in Japan and who will contribute to the development of both countries and the wider world.

**(1) Nationality:** Applicants must have the nationality of a country that has diplomatic relations with Japan. 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 of Japan are eligible to apply as long as they choose the nationality of the other country and renounce their Japanese nationality by the date of their arrival in Japan. The First Screening must be conducted at the Japanese diplomatic mission in the country of which the applicant chooses the nationality.

**(2) Age:** Applicants, in principle, must have been born on or after April 2, 1984. Exceptions are limited to cases in which MEXT deems that the applicant could not apply within the eligible age limit due to the situation 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 applicant’s university or place of employment, etc.) will not be considered for exceptions.

**(3) Academic Background:** Eligible applicants satisfy the qualification requirements for admission to a master’s degree course or a doctoral degree course at a Japanese graduate school. (Includes applicants who are certainly expected to satisfy the requirements by the time of enrollment.)

Students must satisfy any one of the following eligibility criteria.

**1. Master’s program / Doctoral program (first phase)**

- ① Japanese university graduates.
- ② Students that have been conferred their bachelor’s degree through the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE).
- ③ Students who have completed 16 years of school education in countries other than Japan.
- ④ Students who have completed a program with the standard study period of three years or more at universities or equivalent educational institutions in countries other than Japan and received a degree equivalent to a bachelor’s degree.
- ⑤ Students who have completed 16 years of education at education institutions in Japan recognized as having overseas undergraduate programs.

- ⑥ Students who have completed designated professional training college courses.
- ⑦ Students recognized as having academic abilities equivalent to or better than university graduates in an individual entrance qualification examination conducted by a graduate school, and who have reached 22 years of age.

## **2. Doctoral program (second phase)**

- ① Students with a Japanese master's degree or students with a Japanese professional degree.
- ② Students who have been awarded with an overseas degree equivalent to a master's degree or professional degree.
- ③ Students who have completed graduate programs at education institutions in Japan recognized as having overseas graduate programs and who have obtained a degree equivalent to a master's degree or professional degree.
- ④ Students who have graduated from universities and have been involved in research study at universities or research centers (including overseas universities and research centers) for two years or more, and recognized as having academic competency equivalent to persons with a master's degree by the graduate school.
- ⑤ Students recognized as having academic abilities equivalent to or better than master's degree or professional degree holders in an individual entrance qualification examination conducted by the graduate school, and who have reached 24 years of age.

## **3. Doctoral program (faculties of medicine, dentistry, veterinary sciences and certain pharmaceutical programs)**

If you apply to a program in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or certain pharmaceutical sciences, you are required to confirm directly with the school of your choice before applying.

**(4) Japanese Language Ability:** Applicants must be willing to learn Japanese. Applicants must be interested in Japan and be willing to deepen their understanding of Japan after arriving in Japan. Applicants must also have the ability to do research and adapt to living in Japan.

**(5) Health:** Applicants must submit a health certificate in the prescribed format signed by a physician attesting that the applicant has no physical or mental conditions hindering the applicant's study in Japan.

**(6) Arrival in Japan:** An applicant must choose and fill in in the Application Form either of the arrival periods specified below. In principle, a change in the arrival period is not permitted after the submission of the Application. If the applicant cannot arrive in Japan specified period below for personal reasons, travel expenses to Japan will not be paid. Excluding cases of unavoidable circumstances, the applicant must withdraw from this scholarship program if the applicant cannot arrive in Japan by the end of the designated period.

① April term: The arrival date should be, in principle, during the period from 1 April to 7 April, 2019. Departure from the home residence should be on or after 1 April.

② October term: The arrival date specified by the accepting university during the period within two weeks before the starting date of the relevant academic term (September or October) for that year set by the accepting university.

**(7) Visa Requirement:** An applicant shall, in principle, obtain a "Student" visa at the Japanese diplomatic mission located in the applicant's country of nationality, and enter Japan with the residence status of "Student." Accordingly, even if the applicant already has other residence status ("Permanent resident," "Long-term resident," etc.), the applicant must change it to the "Student" status and re-enter Japan. Moreover, the applicant should be aware that after expiration of the status as a MEXT Scholarship student and even if the student again applies for their original resident status of "Permanent resident" or "Long-term resident," the such resident statuses might not be necessarily granted.

**(8) Non-eligibility:** those who meet any one of the following conditions are ineligible. If identified ineligible after being selected as a scholarship student, he /she 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 of the payment of the scholarship;

② Those who cannot arrive in Japan by the period designated by MEXT or the accepting university;

③ Those who are previous grantees of Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship programs (including those who withdraw from the scholarship program after the arrival in Japan), but does not have educational research experience exceeding more than three years from the month following the final payment of the previous scholarship to the month when the payment of this scholarship begins. This does not apply to the past grantees of Japanese Studies scholarship nor Japan-Korea Joint Government Scholarship Program for the Students in Science and Engineering Departments who have graduated or are going to graduate from universities in their home countries and past participants in the Young Leaders Program. The MEXT Honors Scholarship is not one of the MEXT Scholarship Programs;

- ④ Those who are already enrolled in a Japanese university with a residence status of “Student,” or who are going to be enrolled, or plan to enroll, in a Japanese university as a privately-financed international student from the time of application to the MEXT scholarship program in their home country until the commencement of the period for payment of the MEXT scholarship. However, this stipulation does not apply to privately-financed international students who, even though they are enrolled, or are planning to enroll, in a Japanese university, verifiably complete their studies before the start of the scholarship payment period, return to their home country at the time of the scholarship application, and newly acquire the “Student” residence status and come to Japan
- ⑤ Those who are planning to receive scholarship money from an organization other than MEXT (including a government organization of their home country) on top of the scholarship money provided by MEXT after the start of the scholarship payment period ;
- ⑥ Those who are expected to graduate at the time of application and cannot satisfy the qualifications and the conditions related to academic background by the deadline given;
- ⑦ Holders of dual nationality at the time of application who cannot verify that they will give up Japanese nationality by the time of the arrival in Japan; or
- ⑧ Those who change their residence status to that of other than “Student” after their arrival in Japan.
- ⑨ Those whose main aim is to engage in fieldwork or an internship in a country other than Japan after submission of Application;
- ⑩ Those who have completed a doctoral course and have no intention to obtain a degree.
- (9) Others:** MEXT Scholarship will be granted those who are willing to contribute to mutual understanding between Japan and their home country by participating in activities at schools and communities during their study in Japan while contributing to the internationalization of Japan. They shall also make efforts to promote relations between the home country and Japan by maintaining close relations with the university attended after graduation, cooperating with the conducting of surveys and questionnaires, and cooperating with relevant projects and events conducted by Japanese diplomatic missions after they return to their home countries.

#### **4. PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP**

##### **(1) Non-regular students:**

- April term: maximum of two years from April 2019 until the end of March 2021.
- October term: from September or October 2019 until the end of March 2021.

In either case, the above-mentioned period of scholarship includes a 6-month period of Japanese language training for those who require such training. In cases of arrival in Japan in other months than those specified above, MEXT will decide the period of scholarship separately.

##### **(2) Regular students enrolled in master’s, doctoral, or professional graduate courses:**

- Regardless of the date of arrival, the scholarship period shall be the necessary period for the completion of the regular program of the respective courses (see “12. UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT AND ACQUIRING DEGREES (4) to (6)” for the standard period of study for each course). For those requiring preparatory education, a 6-month preparatory education period will be separately added.

#### **5. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP**

Non-regular students wishing to advance to a regular course in a graduate school as a regular student or students wishing to proceed to a doctoral course from a master’s course or a professional graduate course may apply for an evaluation screening for the extension of the scholarship period for advanced study if the students meet the prescribed standards with outstanding academic records.

Followings are other conditions to note:

- ① Non-regular students cannot extend the scholarship period as they stay in non-regular courses.
- ② Students who are admitted to advanced courses without applying for and being approved by evaluation screening for extension of the scholarship period for advanced study cannot be granted extension. (In such cases, it is possible for the student to be accepted and enrolled in advanced courses as privately-financed student.);
- ③ Non-regular students are not eligible to apply for extension of the scholarship period if they cannot proceed to a master’s or a doctoral course as regular students by the end of the scholarship period. However, if they wish to enter regular courses in April 2021 and withdraws their request for returning travel expenses to their home countries, they are eligible to apply for extension of the scholarship period. Those students who enter master’s or a doctoral courses in April 2021 and return to their home country within the fixed period after the expiration of the scholarship are provided an airline ticket for returning as stated in “6. SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS (3) ② \_\_\_\_\_”below.

## 6. SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS

**(1) Allowance:** The amounts listed below shall be paid depending on the course enrolled in. Due to the situation of the Japanese Government's budget, the amount of payment may be subject to change each fiscal year. The scholarship shall be cancelled if a grantee is absent from the university for an extended period.

① Students receiving preparatory education and non-regular students: 143,000 yen per month

② Regular students enrolled in master's courses or degree courses in professional graduate schools: 144,000 yen per month

③ Regular students enrolled in doctoral courses: 145,000 yen per month.

\*A supplemental regional allowance of 2,000 or 3,000 yen per month will be added to the monthly scholarship amount for the grantees studying or conducting research in specially designated regions.

**(2) Education fees:** Fees for the entrance examination, matriculation, and tuition at universities will be paid by MEXT. The entrance examination fee will not be paid by MEXT if the grantees cannot proceed to the master's or doctoral course or cannot be admitted by the university.

### **(3) Traveling Expenses**

① **Transportation to Japan:** In principle, MEXT stipulates the travel schedule and route, and provides an economy-class airline ticket for the flight from the international airport closest to the grantee's residence (in principle, the country of nationality) to Narita International Airport or to any other international airport used on the normal route to the accepting university. The grantee shall bear at his/her own expense all costs related to domestic travel from the grantee's residence to the nearest international airport, airport taxes, airport usage fees, special taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within Japan (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc. The grantee shall also bear at his/her own expense travel and lodging costs incurred in a third country if the grantee must travel to a third country before coming to Japan for visa purposes because there are no Japanese diplomatic missions in his/her country, or if there are no direct flights from the grantee's country of residence to Japan. MEXT will provide an economy-class airline ticket from the grantee's country of residence to the said third country, and from the third country to Narita International Airport or to any other international airport used on the normal route to the accepting university. In principle, the address given in the space for "Residence before arrival in Japan" on the application form shall be recognized as the "residence," and the airplane ticket will be arranged for a flight from the international airport nearest to that address. Except for cases when the grantee must travel to a third country to obtain a visa, MEXT will not provide an airline ticket for cases of travel to Japan from a country other than the grantee's country of residence due to the grantee's personal circumstances.

② **Transportation from Japan:** Based on the Application by the grantee, MEXT will provide an airline ticket to, grantees graduating the accepting university and returning to the home country by the end of the final month of the period of scholarship (Section 4 above) designated by MEXT. MEXT, in principle, shall provide an economy-class airline ticket from Narita International Airport or the international airport used for the normal route to and from the accepting university to the international airport (in principle, in the country of nationality) nearest to the returning grantee's residence. The grantee shall bear at his/her own expense all costs related to travel from the grantee's residence in Japan to the nearest international airport, airport taxes, airport usage fees, special taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within the country of nationality (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc.

Note 1: In principle, travel expenses to the home country are not paid if the student desiring admission in April 2021 fails to proceed, or withdraws from the course, to a regular graduate course for a degree from a non-regular student course, or to a doctoral course from a master's course or a professional graduate course, despite applying for extension of the scholarship period, as stated in "5. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP ③," so please note this when applying for such an extension.

Note 2: If a grantee return to the home country before the end of period of scholarship due to personal circumstances, or reasons stated in "7. SUSPENSION OF PAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP", MEXT will not pay for the returning travel expenses.

Note 3: If a grantee continues to stay in Japan after the scholarship period has ended in cases such as being employed in Japan, he/she will not be paid travel expenses for a temporary return.

## 7. SUSPENSION OF PAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP

Payment of the scholarship will be stopped for the reasons given below. Should any of the following reasons apply, the grantee may be ordered to return a part of, or all of, the scholarship paid up to that time. Payment of the scholarship may also be stopped during the period up to the decision on the disposition of the matter.

① A grantee is determined to have made a false statement on his/her application;

- ② A grantee violates any article of his/her pledge to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology;
- ③ A grantee violates any Japanese laws and is sentenced and imprisoned for an indefinite period or for a period exceeding 1 year;
- ④ A grantee is suspended from his/her university or preparatory educational institution or receives other punishment, or is removed from enrollment; in accordance with school regulations of the accepting institution
- ⑤ It has been determined that it will be impossible for a grantee to complete the course within the standard time period because of poor academic grades or suspension or absence from the university;
- ⑥ A grantee came to Japan without newly acquiring the “Student” residence status, or changed his/her residence status to one other than “Student”;
- ⑦ A grantee has received another scholarship (excluding those specified for research expenditures);
- ⑧ A grantee proceeds to a more advanced level of education without receiving approval for an extension of the period of the scholarship.

## **8. FIRST SCREENING**

(1) The Japanese diplomatic missions will conduct the First Screening of applicants by means of examination of submitted application documents, written examinations of language proficiency and interviews.

(2) Written examinations of language proficiency will be English and Japanese language tests. Both language examinations must be taken by all applicants.

Note 1: The result of the Japanese language examination will be used as reference data for the Japanese-language preparatory education to be provided after the grantee’s arrival in Japan.

(3) The following policy will apply to each stage of screening:

① Examination of submitted application documents: Must show that the applicant’s academic achievement at the university that he/she last graduated from equaled to or exceeded a certain level, and state the applicant’s desired research program in a detailed and concrete manner.

② Written examination of language proficiency: Must show that the applicant obtained scores that clears the fixed cut-off level in either Japanese or English.

③ Interview: Must reveal that the applicant has a clear sense of purpose relating to his/her study in Japan and has gathered information about Japanese universities. The interview must also reveal that the applicant has sufficient Japanese or English language ability to communicate with his/her academic adviser in Japan. If the applicant desires to study a subject that requires advanced Japanese language proficiency, the interview must show that the applicant has a considerable degree of Japanese language proficiency.

(4) The date and time of the notification of the results of the First Screening will be specified separately by the Japanese diplomatic missions in the applicant’s country; the reasons for the results of the screening will not be disclosed. Those who pass the First Screening will not necessarily be selected as grantees of the MEXT Scholarship.

(5) The results of the First Screening will be used as reference for the Second Screening and the university placement.

## **9. SECOND SCREENING AND UNIVERSITY PLACEMENT**

(1) MEXT conducts the Second Screening based on the results of the First Screening conducted by the Japanese diplomatic mission in the applicant’s country, and selects the applicants as the MEXT Scholarship Students as long as their placement to universities have been decided. An application may be rejected if it arouses concern over proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and related items, e.g. a case where it is highly possible that the applicant will receive the technology that is controlled pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolutions, or that any WMD-related technologies will be transferred to an applicant who belongs to (an) organization(s) on the End User List published by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.

(2) An applicant who successfully passes the Second Screening will, in principle, be placed at the university from which the applicant has received an admission letter. MEXT will hold consultations with the three preferred universities listed in the applicant’s Placement Preference Form and place the applicant at the university that approves the admittance as result of the consultation. However, should the applicant wish to enter either a public or a private university and not a national university, the applicant’s preference order specified in the Placement Preference Form may not be met due to restrictions on the Japanese government’s budget preventing the covering of higher tuition and other costs at such universities. Any objection by the applicant to the decision on the university placement will not be accepted.

(3) Applicants who receive admission letters for admittance to the regular course at a graduate school will be directly placed in the said regular course without going through the period of the non-regular student.

(4) If an applicant is judged by the accepting university, based on the results of the written language test given in the First Screening, not to have adequate Japanese language proficiency to understand lectures or research guidance for experiments or practical training at the university, the applicant will be placed in a Japanese-language training course at an institution designated by the university of placement or MEXT for the first six-month period after the arrival in Japan. Upon completion of the Japanese language training, the grantee will enter the university of placement for advanced education. However, if the grantee's record of achievement in the language course is poor and the grantee is judged to be incapable of receiving advanced education, the scholarship payment will be stopped. (See "4. PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP.")

(5) If a grantee is deemed by the accepting university to have sufficient Japanese language proficiency to conduct his/her research, the grantee may directly enter the university of placement as a regular student or a non-regular student.

(6) Applicants will be notified by the Japanese diplomatic mission of the final results of the Second Screening and the result of the university placement for successful candidates from November to February the following year. Any objections to the decision on the university of placement will not be accepted.

## **10. UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT AND ACQUIRING OF DEGREES**

(1) If a grantee desires to move on to a regular course for a degree from a non-regular student course, or to a doctoral course from a master's course or a professional graduate course, he/she needs to take an entrance examination administered by the relevant university and pass it. To continue receiving the MEXT scholarship after advancing to a higher level, the grantee must undergo another screening examination and be awarded an extension of the scholarship. (See "5. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP.") A grantee cannot apply for an extension of the scholarship period while enrolled as a non-regular student.

(2) If a grantee desires to advance to a regular course for a degree from a non-regular student course, in principle, he/she must move on to the graduate school of the university at which he/she is studying as a non-regular student. If proceeding to the graduate school is deemed to be inappropriate given the grantee's major field or ability, he/she may be allowed to transfer to another graduate school, provided that, he/she is admitted to it.

(3) While the entrance examinations to graduate school vary depending on universities, assessment of the applicant's foreign language competence, grasp of the specialized subject for study, plans for the graduation thesis, etc. are normally included.

(4) Under the educational system of Japan, a typical master's degree course lasts for two years subsequent to graduation from a university (i.e. after completion of 16 years of school education), and a typical doctoral degree course lasts for three years after completion of a master's course. If a student has completed such a two-, or three-year course, obtained the necessary credits, and passed the final examination after submitting his/her graduation thesis, he/she will be granted the relevant degree.

(5) In the fields of medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, and pharmacy which is based on a 6-year course at a department or faculty, most of the universities offer only 4-year doctoral courses. For admission to such a doctoral course an applicant is required to have completed 18 years of school education. If an applicant completed 16 years of school education, he/she is required to have engaged for two or more years in research activities at universities or research institutions subsequent to completion of the 16 years of education, and to be deemed by a graduate school in Japan as being academically equal to an applicant who completed 18 years of formal education.

(6) Professional graduate schools were opened in 2003 with the aim of developing individuals with deep knowledge and outstanding ability in their field in order to support professions that require sophisticated expertise. The standard required duration of study is two years. In some fields of study, the duration is less than two years but more than one year. Upon completion of the course a master's degree (specialized occupation) is conferred. Among the professional graduate schools are "graduate schools of law." These schools require a standard duration of study of three years. Upon completion of the course a student will be granted the degree of "Doctor of Law (specialized occupation)."

## **11. NOTES**

(1) The grantees are advised to learn, before departing for Japan, the Japanese language and to acquire information about Japanese weather, climate, customs, university education, and conditions of the university to attend in Japan, as well as about the difference between the Japanese legal system and that of his/her home country.

(2) As the first installment of the scholarship payment will be made from one month to one and a half months after the grantee's arrival in Japan, the grantee is recommended to bring at least approximately US\$2,000 with him/her to Japan to cover immediate living expenses and other necessary expenses.

**(3)** The scholarship payments will be transferred to the bank account opened by each grantee after the arrival in Japan. These bank accounts have to be opened at a Japanese financial institution designated by MEXT.

**(4)** Grantees must enroll in National Health Insurance (NHI) upon arrival in Japan.

**(5)** Accommodations:

① Residence halls for international students provided by universities:

Some universities have residence halls for international students. The grantees enrolled at such universities may reside at these residence halls under certain conditions. However, due to the limited number of rooms, some of these facilities may be unavailable.

② Private boarding houses or apartments:

Those who are unable to find accommodation in the aforementioned facilities may live in regular dormitories of the university or in private boarding houses/apartments. It is difficult for grantees with dependents (spouse and children) to find appropriate housing in Japan. The grantee is requested to arrive in Japan alone first to secure housing before having his/her dependents come to Japan.

**(6)** Information regarding the MEXT Scholarship Students (name, gender, date of birth, nationality, accepting university/graduate school/undergraduate school, field of specialty, period of enrolment, career path after completion of scholarship, contact information [address, telephone number, e-mail address]) may be shared with other relevant government organizations for the purpose of utilization for international students programs implemented by the Japanese Government (support during period of study in Japan, follow-up survey, improvement of the international student system). Information regarding MEXT Scholarship Students (excluding date of birth and contact information) may 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 terms and conditions are included in the Pledge stipulating rules and regulations which MEXT Scholarship grantees must comply with and submit when they have been granted the Scholarship. Excluding exceptional circumstances, only those concurring with these conditions will be accepted as MEXT Scholarship grantees and will be granted the Scholarship.

**(7)** The English texts attached to the Application Guideline and the Application Form are for complementary use only. The Japanese versions of the Application Guideline and the Application Form take precedence, and any English expressions do not change the Japanese content.

**(8)** If there are any questions about the content of the written text or any other matters, applicants/grantees should inquire the Japanese diplomatic mission in the applicant's country and follow their instructions.

**(9)** In addition to the regulations stipulated in this Application Guideline, those that are necessary to implement the Japanese Government Scholarship programs shall be determined by the Japanese Government.