

STEPS

(Short-Term Exchange Program of Saitama University)

for Partner University Coordinators

1 Outline

STEPS (Short-Term Exchange Program of Saitama University) is a program for international students from our Partner Universities to study in Japan for one or two semesters. The following are its features:

- (1) Students will have the opportunity to study in Saitama, 30 minutes to the Tokyo metropolitan area, and to obtain experiences higher education in Japanese and in English.
- (2) Students can spend one or two semesters in Japan while enrolled in their home universities and transfer the credits they earn at Saitama University.
- (3) Students can improve their Japanese language skills through the Intensive Japanese Language Course. Japanese proficiency is not required prior to the study in Japan; however, it is highly recommended that students make an early start on learning Japanese for their smooth adjustment to the Japanese society and to the learning environment of STEPS.
- (4) Students will be learning the Japanese culture by having intercultural exchanges with the Saitama University Japanese students at both on and off campuses.

2 Objectives

STEPS is to provide the students with educational opportunities to:

- (1) improve their Japanese proficiency
- (2) learn the latest developments in a variety of academic fields in Japan
- (3) deepen their understanding of Japan
- (4) experience intercultural exchanges together with students from Japanese and other countries**

3 Requirements for Application

STEPS applicants must meet all the criteria below.

The applicant must

1.	be a full-time undergraduate student (above second year) or a graduate student at one of our partner universities
2.	maintain cumulative GPA of 2.4 or above on 4.0 scale
3.	assent to the objectives of STEPS
4.	have a clear study plan at Saitama University
5.	actively participate in international exchange activities with Saitama students
6.	have a financial supporter or sufficient funds while studying and living in Japan

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| 7. | be examined as suitable for study abroad by a physician/medical doctor for the entire duration of the program |
| 8. | respect and observe the rules and regulations of Japan and Saitama University |
| 9. | <p>meet either of the following Minimum language requirements :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS 5.5, TOEFL iBT 65, TOEFL ITP 530 (CEFR B2) or Equivalent • JLPT N2 or Equivalent <p><Note> The following are exempted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those whose first language is either English or Japanese • Those who enrolled in a university in a country where English is the first language |

4 Nomination

If you would like to nominate a student from your university, please send us your student's information from the following link. **Before nominating your student, make sure of the following:**

The applicant must

- be sent within **the agreed slots** including outbound student(s) currently studying at Saitama University in our MoU
- be enrolled in their home university while studying in Japan
- maintain cumulative GPA of 2.4 or above on 4.0 scale
- meet the language requirements mentioned above

Nomination Deadline: Oct 1st, 2025

<Nomination Online Form>

You are required to enter the information of nominated student and submit required documents via **"Speed Visa"**. If you have used Speed Visa for nominations in the past, you can log in with that account.

Speed Visa : <https://n.s-visa.com/>

*Nominations will only be accepted **from the coordinator of the exchange program at the partner institution**, not from the students themselves.

* If you have not yet registered for **Speed Visa**, please apply from the URL below.

New Registration Form : <https://forms.office.com/r/j1JfHENHdW>

Invitation from **Speed Visa** will be sent to those who applied through the above link.

To be submitted by the home university COORDINATORS via Speed Visa	
1. Official Academic Transcript	* Attach an English or Japanese translation
<p>Issued by your university. Must include the grading system and GPA of 2.4 or above to be eligible to apply.</p> <p>*If your university does not adopt 4.0 scale, please convert from the website below.</p> <p>https://www.scholaro.com/gpa-calculator/</p>	
【Please submit either 2-a or 2-b】	
2-a. Official Language Proficiency Score Copy	※1) Those whose first language is either English or Japanese or 2) Those who enrolled in a university in a country where English is the first language will be waived
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS 5.5, TOEFL iBT 65, TOEFL ITP 530 (CEFR B2) or Equivalent • JLPT N2 or Equivalent 	
2-b. Certificate of Language Proficiency	
<p>If either of the following applies to your students, an official document from your university recognizing their language proficiency may be substituted for 2-a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No score copy available • Currently enrolled in undergraduate/graduate programs taught in English 	

5 Application

Application instructions can be found below as well as in '3. STEPS Application Procedure (for Applicants)'. Original hardcopies of application documents are NOT required to be post mailed.

Application Deadline: Nov 1st, 2025

The Following are required documents to be submitted. ***When any documents are found incomplete, revised/missing documents must be submitted by 10th Nov.**

To be submitted by the NOMINATED STUDENT : Nominated students will be invited to "Speed Visa" to enter the necessary information for their CoE (visa) application and submit the required documents via "Speed Visa".	
1. Signatures of the Applicant, Advisor/Coordinator, guarantor	
Only Handwritten signature is accepted. It may be scanned and saved in PDF format.	
2. Financial Statement	* Attach an English or Japanese translation.
<p>Bank balance certificate, Bank statement (must have account holder's name, Bank name, and date stated on the document. <u>Screenshot images are not allowed</u>), scholarship award letters, or other financial documents.</p> <p><i>*Total amount must be at least 500,000 JPY for two terms (6 months, one semester) or 1,000,000 JPY for four terms (1 year, two semesters)</i></p>	

3. Reason for studying in Japan	Written by the applicant either in English or in Japanese. Applicants enter this on Speed Visa .
4. Copy of the ID page of passport	Do not make any redaction to the copy. Submit it in PDF file.
5. Digital Color Picture Photo	40mm×30mm、354×472 pixel or above, JPEG file only https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/status/photo_info_00002.html It must be taken within 3 months and meet the above passport photo requirements. Taken by smartphones is accepted. This picture will be used for CoE(Visa) application and for Student ID.
6. Recommendation Letter	Written by the applicant's supervisor either in English or in Japanese. No specific format.
7. Health Certificate	It must be issued within 3 months. Any type of test for tuberculosis is accepted (X-ray, blood test, skin test, etc.) but mandatory.
8. Medical History	Typing only. Handwritten is NOT accepted.

6 JASSO (Japan Student Services Organization) Scholarship

Starting in 2023, Saitama University's STEPS program has been qualified for the JASSO scholarship. If JASSO allocates the recruitment quota to us for 2026 as well, we will be able to provide the scholarship to some students.

We will select scholarship recipients based on JASSO's selection criteria, focusing on contributions to our university's internationalization and support for our students' international learning opportunities.

Priority may be given to students from certain countries and universities.

Please see the attached "JASSO Scholarship" for details.

Scholarship amount (per month)	Study period	Number of payments (scheduled)	Total
80,000 yen	2 Terms	4 or 5 times	320,000 or 400,000 Yen
	4 Terms	11 times	880,000 Yen

<Reference: Monthly living expenses>

Student dorm	30,500 – 35,000 Yen (Depends on room type)
Food	30,000 Yen
Other cost	20,000 Yen

*As of spring 2025. Amounts are subject to change.

6 Letter of Acceptance and Certificate of Eligibility

Once the student's application is complete and they pass the screening at Saitama University, a Letter of Acceptance will be sent. Meanwhile, the University will request the immigration office to issue a Certificate of Eligibility (CoE), which is necessary for applying for a student visa. The CoE is expected to be issued in late February and will be emailed to each student as soon as it is received by the University from the Immigration Office. Prospective STEPS students must then apply for a "Student Visa" at their respective local Japanese Embassy or Consulate before traveling to Japan.

<< Contact Information >>

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