

INFORMATION BOOKLET

Konan University Year-in-Japan Program 2026-27

Table of Contents

Program Guidelines	p.1-3
Curriculum & Academic Components	p.3-6
Student Interaction & Activities	p.6
Accommodations	p.7
Scholarships	p.8

January 28, 2026

Dear Prospective Year-in-Japan Program Students,

Thank you for your interest in the Year-in-Japan (YiJ) Program at Konan University. The YiJ program is a unique opportunity to study the Japanese language and experience Japanese culture. Konan University is nestled between the mountains and the inland sea, near the ancient capitals of Kyoto and Nara as well as the vibrant cities of Osaka and downtown Kobe. Just minutes from campus, you can hike in the mountains or shop for the latest clothing, anime, and manga goods. Konan University is also in close proximity to several UNESCO World Heritage sites in Kyoto, Nara, Wakayama, and Himeji.

As a YiJ student, you will have opportunities to interact with people from the local Japanese community. On campus, you can enjoy spending time with Japanese students at various intercultural events or simply hanging out in the “Global Zone *Porte*,” the hub of intercultural activity at Konan University. Some YiJ students also join student clubs or “circles.”

Many YiJ students live with homestay families in the Kansai area. The homestay experience gives you an authentic perspective of life in Japan with a local family. Homestay families live within a reasonable commuting distance from campus and most have many years of experience hosting international students from different countries. The Konan University staff work closely with the families to ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience. For other students, there are dormitory facilities that afford you the opportunity to live independently.

In this booklet we have enclosed more detailed information about additional features of the YiJ program, including our curriculum, study tours, and the Tomodachi (Friends) Partners program that connects you with Konan students before you arrive. We hope you will look over this information carefully and also take a look at our website as you prepare your application: [KONAN International Exchange Center](#)

I encourage you to consider submitting an application for the YiJ Program. If you have any questions about the program, feel free to contact me or your campus Study Abroad representative and we will be happy to supply you with additional information. The entire staff of the Konan International Exchange Center (KIEC) welcomes your application to this well-established program for the study of Japanese language and culture!

LUFT, Stephen David

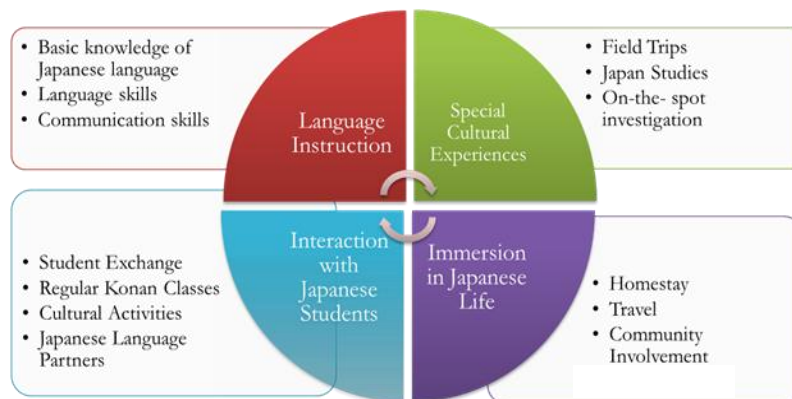
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen David LUFT', with a stylized, flowing script.

Resident Director,
Year-in-Japan Program 2025-2026

Konan University YiJ Program 2026-27

Guidelines

Konan University welcomes international students to the Year-in-Japan Program each year and offers both full academic year and single-semester non-degree programs of study at Konan University. The main purpose of this program is to give undergraduate international students the opportunity to take courses in Japanese language intensively and in a wide range of Japan-related fields. Students explore life in Japan through a well-balanced structure of academic and cultural experiential opportunities.



A private institution of higher education, Konan University serves approximately 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The university is located in Kobe, Japan's 7th largest city. Kobe is known for its international culture and unique style and atmosphere. As a flourishing port city, Kobe has been influenced by foreign cultures and has a rich history of international exchange. Kobe is geographically located near Osaka, the economic capital of the Kansai region, and Kyoto, the center of Japanese culture and tradition.

■ Program Criteria

- 1) Those who are officially nominated by a partner university and who will hold student status at the partner university both when they apply for and when they finish our program.
- 2) Those who are motivated and eager to study Japanese language intensively, have an interest in Japan, and want to continue to deepen their understanding after coming to Japan, and who have the ability to adapt to everyday life in Japan.
- 3) Those who have been determined by a physician (as reported on our program's Health Report form) to be physically and mentally able to participate successfully in our program.
- 4) Those who are in good academic standing with a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA on a 4-point scale, or its equivalent, at the point of application.

*If you have a GPA of 2.5 to 3.0, please consult with Konan International Exchange Center to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances that may make you admissible.

- 5) For fall semester entry, prior completion of Japanese language courses is not required at the time of application. However, because Japanese is the sole language of instruction, to ensure their success in the program, students should commit to completing a study program of introductory-level Japanese before they arrive in Japan. Students who are unable to enroll in an introductory-level Japanese language course prior to the beginning of the program will be provided with materials to study in preparation for their participation in the program.

For students who have already completed any Japanese language courses at the time of application, a grade of C or above in the most advanced class is required.

For spring semester entry, prior completion of Japanese language courses is required. Students are required to have completed at least some beginner-level Japanese study at the time of application and a minimum of a full year (two semesters) of Japanese language study to be ready for pre-intermediate-level courses by the beginning of the program. Additionally, a grade of C or above in the most advanced class is required.

*Please consult with KIEC to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances that may make you admissible.

6) Those who meet one of the following three criteria with regard to English language proficiency:

- ① You are enrolled at a partner university in the United States of America, Canada (except for Quebec), United Kingdom, or Australia
 - ② You have an official test result demonstrating English proficiency equivalent to CEFR B2 or higher, or equivalent score on other tests
 - ③ You have a recommendation letter by a faculty member of a partner university certifying that the applicant has an English proficiency level equivalent to CEFR B2 or higher
- ← If you qualify under criteria ② or ③, you are required to fill out and submit our ["English Language Proficiency Form"](#).

■ Program Schedule (subject to change)

Fall Semester 2026	Date
Designated Arrival Date	Sep. 2, 2026
Mandatory Orientation and Japanese Placement Exams	Sep. 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9
First Day of Classes	Sep. 10
Overnight Study Tour	Nov. 5 - 6
Last Day of Fall Semester	Dec. 22
Winter Break (for Full Academic Year students)	Dec. 23 - Jan. 18, 2027

Spring Semester 2027	Date
Designated Arrival Date (for Spring Only Students)	Jan. 13, 2027
Mandatory Orientation and Japanese Placement Exams	Jan. 14, 15, and 18
First Day of Classes	Jan. 19
Overnight Study Tour	Mar. 4 - 5
Spring Break	Apr. 29 - May 5
Last Day of Spring Semester	May 13
Farewell Event	May 14

* This is a one-off event. Attendance is compulsory

■ Application Process & Important Dates

Applicants must be nominated by their home/sending institutions. Students should submit all application materials to the exchange coordinator at their home institution. Please check to determine whether your home university has an earlier application deadline for the YiJ Program. For the details, please refer to the separate sheet "Application Procedures".

Fall Entry (for Fall Semester Only Students and Full Academic Year Students)

Nomination Deadline: March 15, 2026

General Application Deadline: March 26, 2026

Additional Personal Information Deadline: April 26, 2026

Spring Entry (for Spring Semester Only Students)

Nomination Deadline: September 18, 2026

General Application Deadline: September 29, 2026

Additional Personal Information Deadline: October 23, 2026

<For Fall Entry>

Important Notices & Deadline	Date
Receive Confirmation Letter for Visa Application	Early July
Receive Invoice	Late July
Receive Certificate of Eligibility	Late July - Early August
Receive Host Family/Dormitory Information	Early August
Payment Deadline	Late August
Designated Arrival Date*	September 2, 2026

*The details of arrival information will be announced at a later date.



Curriculum & Academic Components

The academic year for exchange students consists of two semesters, the first running from September to December and the second from January to May. Our Year-in-Japan Program comprises more than 180 hours of Japanese language courses, plus over 75 hours of related Japan Studies classes. Students attend Japanese language classes in the morning Monday through Friday. Japan Studies courses are held in the afternoon, each meeting for 90 minutes twice a week. All Japan Studies courses offered through the program are taught in English. The normal course load for all students consists of one Japanese language course (approximately 14 hours per week, 10 credits) plus two Japan Studies courses (3 hours per week each, 3 credits each) per semester. An official transcript of the grades is forwarded to each student's home university after the end of each semester. Students should inquire with the appropriate office at their home university about transferring credits earned at Konan University.

■ **Japanese Language Courses (10 credits)**

The YiJ Program offers instruction in the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in an integrated curriculum. The Japanese language curriculum provides 5 levels of courses suitable for students from beginning to advanced. (For spring semester, we don't offer the complete beginners' class.) The size of each class is limited to approximately 10 students in order to maximize individualized instruction. At the beginning levels and pre-intermediate levels, oral performance and the interactions that students have in their daily lives in Japan are emphasized in instruction. As students progress to intermediate and advanced levels, reading and writing receives increasingly more attention. At the advanced levels, academic discourse is a focus of instruction, as students learn to read and write essays and other academic texts.

At all levels, Japanese is the medium of instruction. However, limited support in English can be provided as needed.

Audio-visual materials are used in in-class activities and out-of-class assignments to help students improve their command of spoken Japanese. Textbooks, as well as tailored handouts, short stories, newspaper articles, and other materials, are also used in instruction. Konan University student volunteers occasionally attend classes to provide students with additional opportunities to interact with native speakers. YiJ students are encouraged to use the sentence structures, vocabulary, etc. that they have learned in class and through out-of-class interactions with their homestay families, friends, KIEC staff, etc. The Global Zone *Porte*, located next to KIEC offices, provides students with additional opportunities to meet and interact with Konan University students.

Throughout the school year students are assessed through quizzes, tests, and final exams. Both oral and written quizzes, tests, and exams may be used. Students also demonstrate their newly acquired language skills in participation in structured events such as presentation days, through interactions with native speakers outside of class, and during study tours and cultural workshops.

- **Placement**

Students are placed in instructional levels based on their background in Japanese language learning and the results of placement tests. Before arriving in Japan, students take an online interview. The results of this interview are used to determine the approximate number of students in each level and for other planning purposes. After they arrive, students take the Placement Exams: a written exam and an oral interview. Students are then assigned to the most appropriate class based on the results of these exams and their background in Japanese language learning.

- **Japanese Language Courses**

Japanese Language Courses	Language Proficiency Goal
Japanese I* ¹ (Beginning Japanese)	Students will be able to understand and use fundamental phrases and expressions that are regularly used in daily life in Japan.
Japanese II (Pre-intermediate Japanese)	Students will be able to understand and exchange information with others using basic personal information and other high frequency patterns and expressions.
Japanese III (Intermediate Japanese)	Students will be able to understand and converse with friends and others on topics they are familiar with using standard Japanese.
Japanese IV (Pre-advanced Japanese)	Students will be able to understand and confidently express complex ideas on both concrete and abstract topics.
Japanese V* ² (Advanced Japanese)	Students will be able to understand and discuss content related to social, academic, and professional topics. In discussing these topics, they will be able to express themselves in ways that are sensitive to those they speak with.

*1: Japanese I is offered only in the Fall Semester.

*2: Japanese V is not offered in the Fall Semester and is offered only in the Spring Semester.

- **Overnight Study Tours** (Subject to change)

The YiJ Program includes two supervised study tours during the program year, as part of its Japanese language program. Each study tour provides students with opportunities to

see different regions in Japan. Study tour itineraries are carefully planned to offer students a culturally rich and diversified experience of contemporary Japan, while also incorporating traditional activities that are unique to the particular regions visited. Study tours provide students with opportunities to apply what they have learned in their Japanese language classes through interactions with local community members in each region. These study tours offer excellent opportunities for students to learn in-depth about Japan.

Overnight Study Tour 1: Koya-san

Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Koya-san is a historic Buddhist sanctuary in Wakayama Prefecture and one of the most rewarding places to visit in the Kansai Area. You'll stay in a shared room at a temple, experience a Japanese-style public bath, eat vegetarian food, and maybe have the opportunity for early morning and/or evening meditation.

Overnight Study Tour 2: Hiroshima & Miyajima Island

Hiroshima is a major city of western Honshū, an old castle town, and the first community in the world to suffer atomic bombing. Students visit the Memorial Museum and the Peace Park, then head to Miyajima Island to visit Itsukushima shrine (a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

■ **Japan Studies Courses (3 credits each)**

Japan Studies are elective courses focused on a range of subjects related to Japan. Course topics vary somewhat from year-to-year depending upon the interests of students and the areas of research of current English-speaking faculty members.

2026-2027 Japan Studies Course List (Subject to change)

Fall 2026	Category	Theme
Japan Studies 3	Linguistics, Literature, Education	Storytelling and Witness in Modern Japanese Literature
Japan Studies 5	History, Religion, Geography	Introduction to Japanese History
Japan Studies 7	TBA	TBA
Japan Studies 10	Art, Culture, Society	Japanese Society from a Cross-Cultural Perspective
Japan Studies 13	Joint Seminar*	Japan 360°

Spring 2027	Category	Theme
Japan Studies 4	Linguistics, Literature, Education	Introduction to Noh Drama: Living, Dead, and Beyond
Japan Studies 6	History, Religion, Geography	Contemporary Japanese Society from a Ritual Perspective
Japan Studies 8	TBA	TBA
Japan Studies 9	Art, Culture, Society	Introduction to Japanese Food Culture
Japan Studies 11	International Relations, Law, Politics	Disaster Management in Japan
Japan Studies 14	Joint Seminar*	Glocal Leadership

* Joint Seminar is a Japan Studies course that offers an opportunity for students on the Year-in-Japan Program and Konan students to meet and share their views about global topics in a formal classroom setting. Students participate in group discussions. Essays and other assignments in English or Japanese are also required for the course. Joint Seminar encourages academic interaction between students to develop cultural awareness and international perspectives while also improving skills in their target languages. The course meets less frequently than other Japan Studies courses, and is taken in addition to two other Japan Studies Courses. (2 credits)

● **Regular Konan Courses (Fall semester only)**

Students with sufficient Japanese language ability and proper faculty approval may audit regular Konan University courses in Japanese. Participation in regular Konan classes is another way for program participants to become involved in the University community.

- **Second Language Classes** (Fall semester only)

The University offers German, French, Chinese and Korean language classes. Students should consult with KIEC if they are interested in taking a foreign language class other than Japanese. These courses may be taken on a non-credit basis.

- **Physical Education Classes** (Fall semester only)

Students have a chance to join regular physical education (PE) classes offered to Konan students. Enrolling in a PE class on campus is a great way to keep fit and an excellent way to make friends with Konan students who have the same interests in sport and physical fitness. For administrative purposes, students must inquire with KIEC before attending PE classes.

* Details about regular Konan courses, second language and physical education classes will be announced during orientation. Interested students should inquire at KIEC before attending classes due to administrative procedures.

Student Interaction & Activities

Student life at Konan University is enriched by a wide array of student exchange activities with Konan University students. The Konan International Exchange Center (KIEC) organizes programs and encourages on-campus student exchange. These activities give students the opportunities to practice language skills, heighten cultural awareness, and develop their global perspectives.

<i>Tomodachi Program</i>	<i>Global Zone Porte</i>
The <i>Tomodachi</i> Program matches Konan student volunteers with students who have been accepted to the YiJ Program. <i>Tomodachi</i> from Konan will email international students before they arrive to introduce themselves. They will meet their Konan <i>tomodachi</i> during the orientation week and show them around the campus and surrounding areas.	All YiJ students are welcome to join any of the activities held daily at Global Zone Porte. A meeting place for internationally-minded students, Global Zone Porte is comprised of 3 areas; the Ajisai Room, the KONAN Language LOFT, and the Global Learning Commons. It is centrally located on campus and considered by many to be the hub of international events and activities for students. Students participating in the YiJ Program have a chance to work as student tutors at the KONAN Language LOFT, the university's self-access learning center, to help Konan students improve their communication skills in English by facilitating interaction and encouraging active participation in games and activities. It's a great opportunity to develop cross-cultural understanding and global competence while making friends at Konan University.
<i>Circles & Clubs</i>	
There are many student-organized clubs focused on sports and cultural themes as well as student activity circles on campus. Joining a club or circle is a good way to make friends with Japanese students. Belonging to a group and becoming involved in the student community enriches the overall study abroad experience.	
<i>Language Partner</i>	
The Language Partner program is an ideal opportunity for students to meet one-to-one and help each other practice the language they are studying while learning about each other's culture. KIEC matches participants of the YiJ Program with a Konan student, and the partners meet at their own convenience. Each student has the opportunity to broaden his or her cultural perspectives through friendship with their language partner.	
<i>Manatomo program</i>	
In our Manatomo Program, Konan students join Japanese language classes as assistants. These Minamoto volunteers participate in classes for international students in order to help with their Japanese language studies. They mainly act as conversation partners and engage in a variety of activities, such as teaching about Japanese culture and helping students come up with presentation topics.	

Accommodations

◆ Homestay

A Japanese homestay is an excellent way for students to significantly improve their Japanese language skills and prompts a much deeper understanding of Japanese culture and traditions than otherwise possible. The homestay experience is highly valued by past students, who cherish the friendships they were able to make with their host families. This experience has proven to be an invaluable part of the program and adds immensely to the study abroad experience long after students return to their home countries. Host families' homes are of all types. Some live in apartment buildings. Others have modern wood-frame homes. Students are provided a private room furnished with Japanese futon or regular bedding, two meals a day (breakfast and dinner) on weekdays, and three meals on weekends and national holidays.

In the application, students will be asked to provide information that will help KIEC in matching them with host families. Please be aware that KIEC cannot guarantee that students will be matched with a host family that meets all of their preferences. Please be sure to fill out all questionnaires carefully and provide KIEC with any additional information that will help in matching selection.

<Important>

- Matching of the student with a host family will be determined based on dietary and health needs, preferences, and a host family's situation. A limited number of the host families may also affect our matching process. In the event that we are unable to place a student in a homestay, they will be offered the option to stay in a dormitory. We will let you know as soon as possible in that case. Your final housing arrangements will be communicated by the beginning of August.
- We are generally unable to find homestay families for students with vegan and vegetarian diets. Vegan and vegetarian students should choose the dormitory option. Those who have strict dietary restrictions and/or severe allergies also may choose the dormitory option.
- KIEC is unable to guarantee whether or not there are other students living in the host family home (though most families host only one student).

◆ Dormitory (off-campus)

Dormitory managers live on the premises in each dormitory to address student needs immediately and offer assistance with adjusting to life in a dormitory. Breakfasts and dinners (except for 3rd and 5th Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, and other designated holidays) are included in dormitory fee. For more information, refer to "[Dormitory Information 2026-27](#)". Unlike what you may be used to in partner universities' dorms, these facilities are privately run dorms whose residents can range from high school students to adult company employees.

- ※ The dorms have basic cooking facilities in the public kitchen of your room and/or shared cooking area in the dorm.
- ※ You cannot opt out of a meal plan. Vegetarian, vegan or allergy free menus are not available in the dorm.

KIEC reserves the right to decide which students will be placed in which dormitory. Depending on the availability, other dorm facilities may be assigned. If that happens, the dorm fees may become higher than the Estimated Costs.

Program Fee

https://www.konan-u.ac.jp/kiiec/file/Estimated_Costs_2026-27_NonConso

Scholarships

Students accepted to the YiJ program are eligible to apply for internal Konan scholarships. Each scholarship has its own application procedure, requirements, and limit for the number of accepted applicants. For further details, please check the information sheet "[Scholarship Information 2026-27](#)".

Konan International Exchange Center (KIEC)

KONAN UNIVERSITY

8-9-1 Okamoto, Higashinada, Kobe 658-8501 JAPAN

TEL: +81 (0)78-452-1641 Fax: +81 (0)78-435-2557

E-mail: kiiec-in@adm.konan-u.ac.jp

HP: <http://www.konan-u.ac.jp/kiiec/>