

EXCHANGE TO JAPAN

WITH AIIU



INFORMATION BOOKLET

EXCHANGE TO JAPAN

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

ABOUT AIIU

AIIU (Australian Institute of International Understanding Limited) is a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, established in 1987, which aims to foster friendship and international understanding through educational and cultural exchange. AIIU specialises in reciprocal secondary school exchange programs with Japan.

AIIU is a registered student exchange organisation in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. At the time of publication, its outbound exchange program to Japan is open to students enrolled in schools in those States. Eligibility depends on the State in which the student is enrolled.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMS TO JAPAN

AIIU's exchange programs to Japan are offered as 3-month, 5-month and 10-month (Academic Year) programs, subject to availability in each year. The Academic Year Program is aligned with the Japanese school year. The program offered for 2027 is set out below.

Successful applicants are highly motivated students who are committed to becoming cultural ambassadors for AIIU and Australia. Students with demonstrated leadership, a commitment to international understanding and a sound academic background are encouraged to apply.

Students on the 10-month program may sit the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) in Japan in July or December. The JLPT is also available in Australia. Further information is available on the JLPT website:

http://www.jlpt.jp/e/application/domestic_index.html

PROGRAM FEES (2027)

5 Month Exchange Program (March Departure)

For 2027, AllU has **two places available** on our March departure 5-month exchange program to Japan.

This program is ideal for students who want an immersive cultural experience while minimising time away from their Australian schooling.

Participants live with a carefully selected host family, attend a local Japanese high school, and develop their language skills through everyday life and full participation in their host community.

Program fee: \$19,660

Items not included in the program fee are listed under “What’s not included” below.

Future program options may vary from year to year, subject to availability.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM FEE?

The program fee includes:

- Placement with one or more carefully selected Japanese host families, and a local high school
- Support with visa application procedures
- Translation of required documentation and application processing
- Pre-departure orientation in Australia and arrival orientation in Japan
- Medical and travel insurance
- Return international airfare between Australia and Japan (airports cannot be changed or rerouted)
- Applicable departure taxes

- Accommodation and meals during the Welcome Orientation in Japan
- Return domestic travel in Japan between Tokyo and the host community (on arrival and departure)
- Ongoing support and assistance from our Japanese partner organisation, **JFIE**, throughout the exchange
- Ongoing support from the AllU team for students and parents throughout the exchange
- Ongoing welfare support and regular progress reports for parents

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

The following costs are not included in the program fee and are payable separately:

- Application fee of \$100, which is one-off and non-refundable and is payable with the Application Booklet (Full Application)
- Personal spending money — see “Spending Money” below
- School uniform, textbooks, school excursions and other school-related costs, which are advised before departure
- Daily travel to and from school
- Travel and associated costs to attend the compulsory Pre-Departure Orientation, where it is not held online
- A valid passport and associated costs
- Medical examinations, and any charges of the partner organisation that are payable separately
- The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (optional)

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

When available, AllU scholarships and bursaries are generally limited to eligible applicants undertaking a 10-month exchange program. As AllU is offering a five-month program only in 2027, scholarship and bursary applications will not be accepted for this departure.

Future scholarship and bursary opportunities may be available for eligible students where a 10-month exchange program is offered.

PROGRAM DATES AND DURATION

All dates are approximate and will be confirmed at your interview.

For 2027, AllU is offering **one 5-month student exchange program** to Japan.

Students will depart Australia in **late March 2027**, arriving in Japan in time to commence the Japanese school year, which begins in early April.

The exchange concludes in late August 2027. Students return to Australia during Australian Term 3 and should discuss with their Australian school how the exchange fits with their Term 2 and Term 3 studies.

The program choices and approximate return dates are as follows:

Approx Departure Date	10 Month Program		5 Month Program		3 Month Program	
	Approx Date	Return	Approx Date	Return	Approx Date	Return
Late March		N/A		Late August		N/A

WHO CAN APPLY?

To be eligible for the AllU Japan Student Exchange Program, applicants must:

- Be aged **15-17 years** at the time of departure and have completed **Year 9, 10 or 11**.



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- Be highly motivated to immerse themselves in Japanese culture by attending a local Japanese high school and living with a carefully selected Japanese host family.
- Have studied Japanese, or be willing to undertake tutoring prior to departure, to achieve a minimum language standard equivalent to **one year of formal Japanese study**.
- Be in good health, and disclose in full any medical, mental health, learning or other support needs on the Medical and Special Needs Disclosure Form. Disclosure does not in itself prevent participation: AllU and JFIE consider each student individually, including any reasonable adjustments, before a placement is confirmed.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Applying for an AllU student exchange is straightforward. Simply follow the steps below:

1. **Submit a Preliminary Application**

Submit your online Preliminary Application on our website
www.aiiu.com.au

2. **Complete the Full Application**

Eligible applicants will be invited to complete a detailed Full Application. The completed application should be returned to outbound@aiiu.com.au. Once received, your application will be assessed by AllU and, with your consent given in the application, forwarded to our Japanese partner organisation, JFIE, for consideration.

3. **Attend an Interview**

Following the application closing date, shortlisted applicants and their parents will be invited to attend an interview, either **online or in their nearest capital city**.

The interview provides an opportunity for us to get to know you better and assess your motivation, adaptability and readiness for a high school exchange in Japan. It is also an opportunity for you and your family to ask any questions about the program.

- ### 4. If successful, your application will then be presented to prospective host schools and host families in Japan.

WHEN DO I APPLY?

Application closing dates are as follows:

Departure	Preliminary Application - year prior	Full Application (Application Booklet) - year prior
Late March	July 31 st	August 31 st

Late applications: contact outbound@aiiu.com.au to request consideration after the closing dates.

NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE

Our office will notify you 2 to 4 weeks after your interview of your acceptance. AIIU will send you a formal letter of acceptance and an agreement for you to sign, with an invoice for a \$2,000 non-refundable deposit.

PRE-DEPARTURE PREPARATION

AIIU Pre-Departure Orientation

Approximately **six weeks prior to departure**, students and their parents will be invited to attend a compulsory Pre-Departure Orientation. The orientation is generally held online; however, depending on participant numbers, some families may be required to travel. Travel and associated costs are the responsibility of participants.

This is an excellent opportunity to:

- Meet other students participating in the program
- Hear from AIIU returnees about their exchange experiences
- Learn what to expect during your exchange



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- Receive practical advice to help prepare for life in Japan
- Review important program information, including AllU's policies and guidelines relating to student safety and wellbeing

Following arrival in Japan, students will participate in a **two-day Welcome Orientation** near Tokyo before travelling to their host family and host school.

YOUR HOST SCHOOL

Students attend a local Japanese high school in either an urban or regional area of Japan.

Host school placements are determined by our Japanese partner organisation, and while preferences may be considered where possible, AllU cannot guarantee placement in a particular location.

Most Japanese high schools require students to wear a school uniform. Information about uniform costs and other school-related expenses (such as textbooks, excursions and school activities) will be provided prior to departure.

Students are also responsible for their daily travel to and from school. Depending on the location, this may involve travelling by train, bus or bicycle.

YOUR HOST FAMILY

Students live with carefully selected volunteer host families who have been approved through a thorough screening and selection process. Many of our host families are connected with the local host school and enjoy sharing their culture and daily life with international students.

Depending on the exchange placement, students may stay with more than one host family during their exchange. Some students in the 10-Month program may experience up to six different host families, providing a unique opportunity to experience a variety of family lifestyles, traditions and perspectives within Japan.

SUPPORT DURING EXCHANGE

AllU and our Japanese partner organisation, **Japan Foundation for Intercultural Exchange (JFIE)**, provide ongoing support for both students and parents throughout the exchange.

Students are supported by a network of experienced staff, including:

- AllU staff in Australia
- JFIE staff in Japan, available 24 hours a day for emergencies
- A school-based counsellor or support teacher, who is often an English teacher
- A JFIE counsellor allocated to each student, who is in personal contact — in person or by telephone — with the student and the host family at least once a month

JFIE's head office is located in Tokyo. JFIE is a Japanese not-for-profit exchange organisation that began its activities in 1992.

Progress Reports

Throughout the exchange, JFIE reports to AllU on each student's wellbeing and progress, and AllU shares those reports with parents.

Child Safety

AllU is committed to the safety and wellbeing of every student. Before a student is accepted, parents receive written information on the child protection laws that apply in Japan and how to report a concern there. At orientation, students are told who they can contact if they are worried about anything, including people outside their host family, and are given emergency contact details for AllU, JFIE and Japanese emergency services (police 110, ambulance and fire 119).

If you have a concern about AllU, you can raise it through AllU's complaints process, which is explained at orientation. You may also contact the student exchange registration authority in your State, whose details are provided at orientation.

SPENDING MONEY

You will require approximately AUD \$80-\$140 per week for your everyday living expenses. This amount varies according to the amount of public transport you require and of course how carefully you monitor your own

spending. This cost will cover your daily transportation, school lunches and some spending money for clothes, souvenirs etc. Approximately AUD \$5,000 is an estimated spending amount for a 10-month program and varies with each student.

DO I NEED TO SIGN ANY AGREEMENTS?

Yes. Once accepted into the AllU Japan Student Exchange Program, the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s) will be required to sign an **Acceptance Agreement** outlining the terms and conditions of participation.

The program fee is payable as follows:

- **Acceptance Deposit:** A non-refundable deposit of **\$2,000** is payable within **two weeks of acceptance** to secure the student's place.
- **Final Payment:** The remaining balance of **\$17,660** is payable in full **two months prior to departure**.

Families are welcome to pay the remaining balance in instalments leading up to the final payment due date. AllU is happy to discuss a payment schedule that works for your family.

Total program fee: \$19,660

CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS

Cancellation and refunds are governed by the AllU Exchange Program Cancellation / Refund Policy, which is provided with the Acceptance Agreement before you sign. In summary:

- If you cancel more than 10 weeks before departure, the \$2,000 deposit is forfeited, and you may be responsible for other non-refundable costs AllU has already incurred on the student's behalf.
- If you cancel 10 weeks or less before departure, the \$2,000 deposit is forfeited, a \$500 cancellation fee applies, and you are responsible for non-refundable costs already incurred or committed, such as airfares, insurance and partner organisation fees.
- Once the program has begun, program fees are not ordinarily refunded, and the costs of an early return are payable by the family.
- Where AllU recovers a third-party cost, that amount is not retained as a cancellation cost.

HOW DO I CONTACT AIIU?

**CONTACT THE AIIU OUTBOUND TEAM
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN STUDENT EXCHANGE TO
JAPAN!**

Email: outbound@aiiu.com.au

Phone: 0456 394 042

Postal Address: PO Box 3728 Loganholme QLD 4129

Website: www.aiiu.com.au

Facebook: AIIU Student and Cultural Exchange

Instagram: [aiiu_homestays](https://www.instagram.com/aiiu_homestays)

WHY CHOOSE AIIU?

Over 38 Years of Experience

Since 1987, AIIU has been helping Australian students experience life-changing educational and cultural exchanges. We are committed to continually improving our programs to ensure students and families receive the highest level of support before, during and after their exchange.

Specialists in Japan

Japan isn't just one of our destinations—it's our speciality.

Since 1987, AIIU has run exchange programs with Japan, working with schools and host families and, today, with its Japanese partner organisation, JFIE, to provide reciprocal student exchange programs.

Australian Not-for-Profit

AIIU is an Australian not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, registered as a company in Queensland. We understand Australian schools, families and students, and we are committed to providing personalised support every step of the way.

Personalised Support

Every exchange student is different.

From your first enquiry until you return home, our team works closely with you, your family and our Japanese partner organisation to ensure you feel informed, supported and confident throughout your exchange journey.

Trusted Support in Japan

Our Japanese partner organisation, Japan Foundation for Intercultural Exchange (JFIE), provides in-country support to AIIU students under a written agreement with AIIU.

Working together, AIIU and JFIE provide ongoing support throughout your exchange, helping students settle into school and family life while providing reassurance for parents back home.



Discover New Worlds

You're Never Just a Number

We intentionally keep our programs small so we can get to know every student and family personally.

From your first enquiry until you return home, you'll deal with people who know your name, understand your goals and genuinely care about your experience.

What Your Fee Covers

Our program fee includes many of the major costs of an overseas exchange, including return flights, insurance, host family placement, school placement, orientation and ongoing support. What is and is not included is set out in full earlier in this booklet.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the benefits of a student exchange?

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

- Gain a deeper understanding of Japanese culture through everyday life with a host family and attendance at a local high school.
- Develop Japanese language skills through genuine daily immersion.
- Build independence, resilience and problem-solving skills by adapting to a new environment.
- Develop a broader understanding of global issues and different cultural perspectives.
- Students who continue to tertiary study often find they are more confident in diverse environments and benefit from enhanced language and intercultural communication skills.

PERSONAL BENEFITS

- Grow in confidence, independence and self-awareness.
- Develop resilience by overcoming challenges outside your comfort zone.
- Build lifelong friendships and meaningful international connections.

- Improve communication, adaptability and interpersonal skills.
- Return home with a greater appreciation of different cultures—and your own.
- Gain a sense of achievement that encourages continued personal growth and confidence in tackling future challenges.

LONG-TERM BENEFITS

- Overseas exchange experience is highly regarded by employers across a wide range of industries.
- Develop valuable intercultural communication skills that are increasingly important in today's global workplace.
- Demonstrate initiative, adaptability, resilience and independence—qualities that universities and employers actively seek.
- Gain experiences and memories that will continue to shape your personal and professional life for years to come.
- Students often return with a renewed appreciation for their education, family and opportunities at home, having experienced life from a completely different perspective.

WHEN SHOULD I GO?

Students must be **15-17 years of age at the time of departure** and have completed **Year 9, 10 or 11**.

For 2027, AllU is offering a **5-month exchange program departing in March**. Students begin the Japanese school year in April and return to Australia in late August.

Many students choose to participate before their final years of secondary school, allowing them to return with improved Japanese language skills, greater confidence and valuable intercultural experience that can benefit their future studies.

WHY A 5-MONTH PROGRAM?

Our 5-month exchange provides the ideal balance between language development, cultural immersion and time away from Australian schooling.

During the program, students typically:

- Build meaningful relationships with their host family, classmates and local community.
- Develop the confidence to communicate in Japanese in everyday situations.
- Become increasingly independent and adaptable as they settle into life in Japan.
- Gain a genuine understanding of Japanese culture by living it every day—not simply visiting as a tourist.

By the end of the program, many students no longer feel like visitors. They become part of everyday life in their host family, school and local community, often finding themselves viewing Japan through the eyes of a local rather than a tourist.

WHAT IS THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST?

The **Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)** is an internationally recognised qualification that measures the Japanese language ability of non-native speakers.

Students participating in AllU's 2027 **March departure** may have the opportunity to sit the **July JLPT** while in Japan, depending on test registration dates and availability.

The JLPT is administered in Japan by **Japan Educational Exchanges and Services (JEES)** and internationally by **The Japan Foundation**.

For further information, visit:

http://www.jlpt.jp/e/application/domestic_index.html

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TAKING THE JLPT?

Preparing for the JLPT provides students with a clear language-learning goal during their exchange and can be a rewarding way to measure their progress.

An internationally recognised JLPT qualification may also:

- Support future study of Japanese at university.
- Strengthen applications for future university exchange programs.

- Demonstrate Japanese language proficiency to future employers.
- Provide a recognised benchmark of language achievement.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE THE JLPT?

No. The JLPT is **completely optional**.

Whether or not a student chooses to sit the test has **no impact** on their participation in the AllU exchange program or their standing as an exchange student.

IS MY CHILD TOO YOUNG TO BE ON EXCHANGE?

Age alone is not a barrier to a successful exchange.

Students who are curious, adaptable, open to new experiences and willing to embrace another culture often thrive during their exchange. AllU applicants must be **15-17 years of age** and have completed **Year 9, 10 or 11** at the time of departure.

Our careful selection process helps ensure students are well prepared for the experience, and both AllU and our Japanese partner organisation provide ongoing support throughout the program.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT MY CHILD BEING AWAY FROM HOME

It's completely normal to feel this way.

For many families, the first few weeks are the hardest as everyone adjusts to a new routine. As students settle into life with their host family and school, parents often find reassurance in seeing their child's confidence and independence grow through regular updates and progress reports.

Many families tell us that the five months pass much more quickly than they expected.

I'M WORRIED MY CHILD WILL BE HOMESICK

Most students experience occasional homesickness, particularly during the early weeks of their exchange or if they become unwell. These feelings are a normal part of adjusting to a new environment.



Students quickly become busy with school, family life, clubs and new friendships, which helps them settle into their new routine. Throughout the exchange, AllU and JFIE remain available to support both students and parents whenever needed.

HOW SAFE IS JAPAN?

Japan is widely recognised as one of the safest countries in the world and has long been a popular destination for international students.

Students are encouraged to take the same sensible precautions they would anywhere in the world, and to speak with their host family, school, JFIE counsellor or AllU if they ever have concerns about their safety or wellbeing. JFIE staff are available 24 hours a day in an emergency.

WHAT OUR FAMILIES SAY

"It was the most challenging experience of my life—but also the most rewarding. Living in Japan changed the way I see the world and gave me confidence I'll carry with me forever."

— **AllU Exchange Student**

"An experience my son will treasure forever and one we hope inspires others to take the same opportunity. Thank you for making it possible."

— **Parent of an AllU Exchange Student**

"From the beginning, AllU's genuine commitment to helping young people experience Japan stood out. I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity and for the support I received throughout my exchange."

— **AllU Exchange Student**

"Thank you, AllU, for providing a program where parents can feel confident knowing their children are being cared for every step of the way."

— **Parent of an AllU Exchange Student**

Testimonials are published with the written consent of the student and parent, and without identifying details.

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