

Program at UQ: Bachelor of Arts (Japanese)

Very soon after I arrived in Japan, my host city Kyoto greeted me with her renowned cherry blossom scenery.

Kyoto is also famous for her kaleidoscopic sceneries in four seasons and I felt privileged to have the opportunity to explore them all during my twelve-month stay in Japan. It was wonderful to experience this in real life, rather than being restricted to appreciating them from pictures in a calendar. Natives of Kyoto are very proud of their identity as a Kyoto person. The spirit of the residents putting time and effort into protecting their heritage is remarkable and admirable. The well-preserved historical sites with their incumbent artefacts create a surreal atmosphere at the premises, where I could not help but imagine the historical events happened at that time and I had great joy in confirming the Japanese history that I had studied before.

The lessons at Kyoto University of Foreign Studies are intensively loaded with homework and tests every week. The curriculum is designed in an informative manner for overseas students to understand and practise in both language and culture. Although I found that getting used to the Kansai accent was a challenge, discovering the differences in regional intonations was quite an interesting experience.

Living in a normal apartment gave me great chance to mingle with the locals and forced me to use my limited Japanese to complete daily errands. Kyoto people are very friendly and keen to help foreigners settling in. For my part, I was grateful to be able to introduce Australian affairs and culture to the people in Japan. The lasting friendship I have formed with people in Kyoto is something very precious and I am truly thankful for that.

I will recommend the exchange program to everyone-- it is one of the most wonderful memories of my life.

