

# 2019 MEXT Research Scholarship

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Consulate General of Japan in Syria based in Beirut)

### 1) What is the MEXT Research Scholarship?

The Ministry of Education, Culture Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT; Monbukagakusho) Research Scholarship is a Japanese government scholarship that allows non - Japanese citizens to spend 1.5 – 2 years studying in graduate courses at a Japanese university either as a non - degree student or a degree seeking student.

### 2) What are the kinds of MEXT scholarships?

There is **only one** kind of MEXT scholarships program available for Syrian citizens:

- Research Students Program .

### 3) I'm under-graduate student can I apply for the MEXT scholarship?

Unfortunately you can't apply for the MEXT scholarship (Research Students Program), the Japanese Government provides the Scholarship for post graduate students who intend to do research in Japan. Students will start studying in Japan as research students, and will be able to receive a master, moreover a Ph.D., at Japanese Universities in accordance with his/her research result in the future.

### 4) What are the benefits?

Each grantee will be provided monthly with: 143,000 yen (Students receiving preparatory education and non-regular students), 144,000yen (Regular students enrolled in master's courses or degree courses in professional graduate schools), or 145,000yen (regular students enrolled in doctoral courses). 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. However, the amount of allowance will be subject to change depending upon the annual budget of the Japanese government for each fiscal year. The scholarship shall be cancelled if a grantee is absent from the university for an extended period. **Please see Guideline #6 for more information.**

### 5) What are the stages of competition for the MEXT scholarship programs?

The first stage of the competition for the MEXT scholarship programs is the submission of applications and all required documents. Applications are screened, and later all the students who have correctly provided all documents are invited to take exams that are composed by MEXT. The applicants who get the best results in the exam are invited for the interview with the commission of International Studies Committee and the representatives of the Embassy of Japan.

The candidates selected by the joint commission should provide Health Certificates and all other missing (if there are such) documents. After that the documents are sent to MEXT for the final screening. The final decision from MEXT is received within half a year after the competition.

### 6) Where can application forms for MEXT scholarship programs be found?

Application forms for MEXT scholarship programs can be found on "Study in Japan" website (<http://www.studyjapan.go.jp/en/>)

### 7) Where can examples of previous years MEXT exams be found?

Examples of MEXT exams from previous years can be found on "Study in Japan" website (<http://www.studyjapan.go.jp/en/>)

**8) Can results of TOEFL, IELTS or other English language exam certificates recognized internationally be provided to prove applicant's English language level?**

Applying for any MEXT scholarship program, English language exam composed by MEXT is obligatory. TOEFL, IELTS or other English language exams are not considered, therefore those documents need not be provided.

**9) What fields of study are acceptable for the MEXT Research Scholarship?**

Applicants should apply for the field of study they majored in at university or its related field. And 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").

A student who majors in 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 permit from the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare under applicable Japanese laws. Majors in traditional entertainment such as Kabuki and classical Japanese dances, or in subjects that seek practical training in specific technologies or techniques at factories or companies are excluded. **Please see Guideline #2 for more information.**

**10) How do I apply?**

All applicants should send their complete papers by DHL or Aramex or any other shipping company to the temporary office of the Embassy of Japan in Syria at Beirut, or one of the Embassies of Japan in Turkey, Egypt, Jordan or Saudi Arabia.

**11) Should the documents translated into English language be validated by the notary?**

Such documents as school graduation certificate, diploma or other similar certificates SHOULD BE translated into English and validated by the notary. If there is no possibility to get other documents in English language (signed and stamped), they should also be translated into English and validated by the notary. Health Certificate should be filled in English.

**12) Should an applicant submit Health Certificate together with all the documents?**

Health Certificate should NOT necessarily be submitted together with all the documents. After the screening process, the Health Certificate must be submitted only by those applicants whose documents are sent to MEXT in Japan, for the final screening

**13) Who is eligible to apply?**

To apply through the Japanese diplomatic mission, applicants must:

- a) Syrian Nationals including Palestinian-Syrian
- b) Holders of Bachelor degree with a minimum average point of 70% (including graduates of academic year 2017/2018)
- c) Under the age of 35 (born after April 2nd, 1984)
- d) Fluent in English or in Japanese

**Please see Guideline #3 for more information.**

**14) I live abroad. Can I apply for the MEXT Scholarship?**

You can apply for the MEXT Scholarship from abroad by sending you papers by (DHL or Aramex or any other shipping company) to the temporary office of the Embassy of Japan in Syria at Beirut, or one of the Embassies of Japan in Turkey, Egypt, Jordan or Saudi Arabia.

However, if selected for an interview, you MUST sit for the interview and exams on the designated day at the embassy to which you submit the documents. Interviews must be done in person. But, in accordance with the situation, you could have an online interview. Priority will be given to applicants who are not long-term residents in Japan.

**15) I am Syrian citizen/ not resident in Syria Can I still apply?**

You can still apply for the MEXT Scholarship, but you will need to do so through the Japanese diplomatic mission responsible for your country/area (The available countries are: Amman, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Egypt) if you don't live in one of the listed countries, please apply to the temporary office of the Embassy of Japan in Syria based in Beirut. To find information about the Japanese Diplomatic mission Embassy/Consulate General/Consulate Office, please see this link:

[http://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb\\_cons/mofaserv.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb_cons/mofaserv.html)

**16) Can I apply online due to the circumstances of the civil war in Syria?**

Unfortunately, we don't accept online submission for the time being, only by post.

Please follow the instructions in the link below to find all the information:

[http://www.sy.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop\\_en/b\\_000002.html](http://www.sy.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_en/b_000002.html)

**17) Can I submit only copies not original for the request document for the scholarship due to the circumstances of the civil war in Syria?**

Unfortunately, all documents should be original. Copy of the graduation certificate or the degree certificate obtained from the last university attended is acceptable if the copy is attested by an authorized official of the university. No exception will be made.

Please follow the instructions in the link below to find all the information:

[http://www.sy.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop\\_en/b\\_000002.html](http://www.sy.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_en/b_000002.html)

**18) When and where do MEXT exams and interviews take place?**

Regarding the time and place of MEXT exams and interviews, successful candidates of the document screening will be informed by phone or e-mail personally, thus please provide CORRECT contact information in the application.

**19) For Research Studies, how can I choose which university to apply to in Japan?**

Ask your professors if they can suggest universities to apply to in Japan. If your current professor or previous professors are not able to assist you in deciding where to go, you may go to the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) website ([www.jasso.go.jp](http://www.jasso.go.jp)) where they have a search engine of all the universities in Japan. The search engine can help you find a university which offers the program of study you wish to pursue.

**20) Do I need to have admission in the three universities which I will select for the first stage?**

Only students who pass the Primary screening can be allowed to contact the Universities in Japan. So you are just required to fill in the form, NOT to contact the Universities in Japan at the application stage.

**21) When does the academic year begin and end in universities in Japan?**

The academic year in Japan begins in April and ends in March of the following year. In most cases, the year is divided into two semesters, the first lasting from April to September and the second from October to March.

**22) What is the application timeline?**

Applicants will be required to take 4 steps to pass. Those are (1) the Documentary Screening (by mid-July), (2) Language Examination (by end of July), (3) Interview (by mid-August), these steps are conducted by the Embassy, and (4) Final Screening conducted by the MEXT in Tokyo. Details regarding each step after the Documentary Screening will only be informed to successful applicants due to security reasons.

**23) The Application asks for a copy of my senior thesis; however, I did not write a senior thesis. What should I do?**

We are aware that many college students do not write a senior thesis. Instead, we ask that you submit a copy of a major paper or project you have completed that is used as basic data for evaluation of the applicant's academic ability. Besides, it would be desirable if it relates to your intended field of study in Japan.

**24) Is it necessary that I have majored in the Field of Study I intend to pursue in Japan?**

Applicants should apply for the field of study they majored in at their university, or a related field. Your field of study must be a subject which you will be able to study, and take graduate - level courses in, at a Japanese university.

**25) To what extent should I make my Field of Study and Research Program Plan?**

The Research Program Plan should be something you would feel comfortable submitting as a Research Proposal to a graduate school in Syria. While we understand research focuses may change, you should give us a specific account of your intended research topic, methodology, and how your research fits into current research being done in the field. You must also tell us why this research must be done at a Japanese university.

**26) Can the MEXT Research Scholarship lead to a degree?**

Applicants can choose to apply for either (a) a non - degree Research term (b) a Master' s degree (c) a PhD or (d) a professional degree such as a JD or MBA. Please note that applicants who apply for a degree program may need to take an additional entrance exam by their desired university/faculty at their own expense. Alternatively, applicants can apply for the non - degree Research term and then, while at the university in Japan, apply for a Master's, doctoral or professional degree program at that university. If accepted into a degree program, the MEXT Scholarship will then extend to cover the degree program.

**27) What is the difference between an Embassy Recommendation and a University Recommendation?**

University Recommendations for the MEXT Scholarship are when a university in Japan recommends a student for the scholarship. This is a separate application and acceptance track from the Embassy/Consulate recommendations. You will need to directly contact a university in Japan to inquire about university recommendations.

**28) What is the recommendation by the Embassy of Japan to get MEXT scholarship and how to receive that recommendation by the Embassy of Japan?**

The recommendation by the Embassy of Japan is one of the ways to receive Japanese MEXT government scholarship. In order to get the recommendation by the Embassy of Japan a person must participate in the MEXT competition announced by the Embassy of Japan. Competition consists of the application to desired type of scholarship which meets the qualifications of the applicant, examination composed by MEXT, and participation in the interview. The best applicants are recommended to the MEXT by the Embassy of Japan.

IMPORTANT: the final screening and decision regarding scholarship are made by MEXT.

**29) Is there minimum average point?**

Yes. Holders of Bachelor degree with a minimum average point of 70% (including graduates of academic year 2017/2018). For more information regarding the GPA scale please review the below table:

Quality of Performance	Letter Grade	Grade point	Percentage
Excellent	A	4.0	94 – 100%
Excellent	A-	3.7	90 – 93%
Very Good	B+	3.3	87 – 89%
Very Good	B	3.0	83 – 86%
Very Good	B-	2.7	80 – 83 %
Good	C+	2.3	77 – 79%
Good	C	2.0	73 – 76%
Good	C-	1.7	70 – 72%
Satisfactory	D+	1.3	67 – 69%
Satisfactory	D	1.0	60 – 66%
Failure	F	0.0	0 – 59%

**30) Do I have to provide both recommendation letters from previous academic teacher in Syria and from my current work manager?**

If possible, yes. If not, please provide us with only a recommendation letter from your current work manager.

**31) Where can I find information about universities/professors in Japan?**

You can begin by searching or browsing the Research Map of Japan (<http://researchmap.jp/search/>) which lists researchers in Japan by name, field, university, and location. You can also look at the Program for Leading Graduate Schools (<http://www.jsps.go.jp/j-hakasekatei/saitaku.html>; in Japanese), which lists programs endorsed by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (it also promotes humanities and social science programs).

**32) What exams must be taken for the Research Scholarship?**

Please see Guideline #8.2 for more information.

**33) Do I need to know Japanese to get the scholarship?**

Applicants must be fluent in English or in Japanese. If you wouldn't know Japanese at the application stage, you are kindly advised to start learning Japanese after you succeed in the final exam.

**34) Do all Scholarship recipients take the 6 - month intensive Japanese language course upon arrival in Japan?**

Your university in Japan will decide whether they want you to take the Japanese language course before beginning your research term or not.

### **35) Can I take my family with me?**

Yes, Research Scholarship recipients may bring their families with them. However, most universities will be unable to provide or arrange housing for families, so you will need to find housing on your own. Additionally, we strongly encourage you to have your family join you a month or so after your own arrival, so you can be ready for arranging housing and other arrangements for your family. Kindly note that any special allowance for family members will not be provided.

### **36) Can I have my application materials returned to me?**

Unfortunately, NO. Once application materials have been submitted to us at the Japanese diplomatic mission, they cannot be returned under any circumstances. We encourage you to make copies of all your application materials.

### **37) Do medicine students in dentistry or welfare science have to obtain a permit from the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare under applicable Japanese laws during the application stage to engage in clinical training such as medical care and operative surgery?**

Applicant doesn't need such permission at the application stage, orientation will be held after visiting Japan.

### **38) How many copies of the application materials do I need to submit?**

Please see Guideline #9 for more information about the required materials and how many originals vs. copies we require of each document. Please refer to the check sheet on our Web page. Successful applicants will possibly be required to submit additional documents.