

APPLICATION GUIDELINES
JAPANESE GOVERNMENT (MEXT) SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2026
SHIGA UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATION
(RESEARCH STUDENTS)

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan offers scholarships to international students who wish to study in graduate courses at Japanese universities as Research Students (either regular students or non-regular students) under the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship Program as follows.

1. DEFINITION OF “RESEARCH STUDENTS”

Those who are enrolled in a master’s course, a doctoral course, or a professional graduate course at a graduate school, or who are conducting research in a specialized field at an undergraduate department, graduate school, institute attached to a university, etc. without the aim of completing the course, or who are receiving preparatory education in the Japanese language and other subjects prior to placement at the university.

2. FIELDS OF STUDY

Applicants should apply for the field of study they majored in at university or its related field. Moreover, the fields of study must be subjects which applicants will be able to study and research at Shiga University.

3. QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS

Applicants should satisfy the following qualifications and conditions.

- (1) Target:** Excellent graduate school level international students who are newly studying abroad.
- (2) Nationality:** Applicants must have the nationality of a country that has diplomatic relations with Japan. An applicant who has Japanese nationality at the time of application is not eligible.
- (3) Age:** Applicants, in principle, must have been born on or after April 2, 1991. Exceptions are limited to cases in which MEXT deems that the applicant could not apply within the eligible age limit due to the situation or circumstances of the applicant’s country (military service obligation, loss of educational opportunities due to disturbances of war, etc.)
- (4) Academic Background:** Applicants must satisfy any one of the following conditions for admission to either a master’s or doctoral course at Shiga University. (Applicants who will certainly satisfy any of the following conditions by the time of enrollment are also eligible.)
 - (a) Master’s course**
 - ① Applicants who have completed 16 years of school education in countries other than Japan.
 - ② Applicants who have completed a program with the standard study period of three years or more at universities or equivalent educational institutions in countries other than Japan and received a degree equivalent to a bachelor’s degree.
 - ③ Other than the above ① and ② conditions, applicants who are eligible for enrollment in a master’s course at a Japanese graduate school.
 - (b) Doctoral course**
 - ① Applicants who have been awarded with an overseas degree equivalent to a master’s degree or professional degree.
 - ② Applicants who have graduated from universities and have been involved in research study at universities or research centers (including overseas universities and research centers) for two years or more, and are recognized by the graduate school as having academic ability equivalent or superior to a master’s degree or a professional degree.
 - ③ Other than the above ① and ② conditions, applicants who are eligible for enrollment in a doctoral course at a Japanese graduate school.
- (5) Required GPA:** The GPA should be at least 2.30 on a MEXT system grade of 3.00 for all grades earned in the degree program in which the student is currently enrolled or, for those not currently enrolled, in the most recently enrolled degree program. (This must be expected to be maintained in the course of study in which the student is enrolled during the scholarship period.) How to calculate the grade point average (GPA) as defined by MEXT is as follows. If the conversion is unknown, it will be calculated based on the submitted grade information.

MEXT's official conversion chart:

System	Grades				
4-Scale System		Excellent	Good	Average	Fail
4-Scale System		A	B	C	F
4-Scale System		100 – 80	79 – 70	69 – 60	59 – 0
5-Scale System	S	A	B	C	F
5-Scale System	A	B	C	D	F
5-Scale System	100 – 90	89 – 80	79 – 70	69 – 60	59 – 0
MEXT System Grade	3	3	2	1	0

Converted GPA =

$$\frac{(\text{No. of GP3 Credits} \times 3) + (\text{No. of GP2 Credits} \times 2) + (\text{No. of GP1 Credits} \times 1) + (\text{No. of GP0 Credits} \times 0)}{\text{Total No. of credits for all registered courses}}$$

- (6) Japanese Language Proficiency:** Applicants must have a good working knowledge of Japanese (JLPT N2 or equivalent).
- (7) Health:** Applicants must not have physical or mental conditions hindering the applicant's study in Japan.
- (8) Arrival in Japan:** Applicants must arrive in Japan and report to Shiga University no later than a date designated by Shiga University in late September 2026.
- (9) Visa Requirement:** An applicant shall, in principle, newly obtain a "Student" visa at the Japanese diplomatic mission located in the applicant's country of nationality, and enter Japan with the residence status of "Student." The scholarship will be cancelled if he/she arrived in Japan without a newly obtained "Student" visa.
- (10) Non-eligibility:** Those who meet any one of the following conditions are ineligible. If identified ineligible after being selected as a scholarship student, he/she must withdraw from the scholarship.
- ① Those who are military personnel or military civilian employees at the time of their arrival in Japan or during the period of the payment of the scholarship;
 - ② Those who cannot arrive in Japan by the last date of the period specified by Shiga University;
 - ③ Those who are previous grantees of Japanese Government (MEXT) scholarship programs (including those who withdraw from the scholarship program after the arrival in Japan);
However, this does not apply to those who have at least three years of academic or work experience between the month following the last month of scholarship and the month of the start of scholarship.
Even if you have received the MEXT Honors Scholarship in the past, you can still apply for it because it does not fall under the category of Japanese Government (MEXT) scholarships for international students.
 - ④ Those who are currently also applying to another program under the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship system that will begin offering scholarships in 2026.
 - ⑤ Those who are already enrolled in a Japanese university or other institution with a residence status of "Student," or who are going to be enrolled, or plan to enroll, in a Japanese university or other institution as a privately-financed international student from the time of application to the MEXT scholarship program in the applicant's country until the commencement of the period for payment of the MEXT scholarship. However, this stipulation does not apply to privately-financed international students who, even though they are enrolled, or are planning to enroll, in a Japanese university or other institution, verifiably complete their studies before the start of the scholarship payment period, return to their home country at the time of the scholarship application, and newly acquire the "Student" residence status and come to Japan;
 - ⑥ Those who are planning to receive scholarship money from an organization other than MEXT (including a government organization of the applicant's country) on top of the scholarship money provided by MEXT after the start of the scholarship payment period;
 - ⑦ Those who are expected to graduate at the time of application and cannot satisfy the condition

- of academic background by the deadline given;
- ⑧ Those who change their residence status to that of other than “Student” after their arrival in Japan;
- ⑨ Those who plan to, from the time of application for the MEXT scholarship program, engage in long-term research (such as fieldwork or internship) outside Japan or plan to take a long-term leave of absence from the university;
- ⑩ Those who have completed a doctoral course and have no intention to obtain a degree.

4. PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP

Non-regular students:

The scholarship period will last from October 2026 until the end of March 2028.

The scholarship payments will begin in October 2026.

5. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP

Non-regular students wishing to advance to a regular degree course in a graduate school as a regular student, or regular students in a master’s wishing to proceed to a doctoral course, with outstanding academic achievement that meets certain criteria may apply for extension of the scholarship period for advanced study and may have the scholarship period extended upon a successful examination by MEXT.

Followings are some points to note:

- ① The extension of the scholarship period will be permitted only if the successful student has passed an entrance examination for a regular degree course at a graduate school in which they wish to enroll and expresses his/her intention to enroll in the course.
- ② Non-regular students cannot extend the scholarship period as they stay in non-regular courses.
- ③ Students who are admitted to advanced courses without receiving approval for the extension of the scholarship period for advanced study cannot be granted the extension of the scholarship period. (In such cases, it is possible for the students to be enrolled in advanced courses as a privately-financed student.)
- ④ Non-regular students wishing to advance to a regular degree course **at Shiga University** as a regular student, or regular students in a master’s course wishing to proceed to a doctoral course **at Shiga University** may apply for the extension of the scholarship period.

6. SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS

(1) Allowance: The amounts listed below shall be paid depending on the course enrolled in. A supplemental regional allowance of 2,000 yen 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. Due to the situation of the Japanese Government’s budget, the amount of payment may be subject to change each fiscal year. If a grantee is absent from the university for an extended period, the scholarship shall be suspended for that period.

- ① Non-regular students: 143,000 yen per month
- ② Regular students enrolled in master’s or professional degree courses: 144,000 yen per month
- ③ Regular students enrolled in doctoral courses: 145,000 yen per month.

(2) Tuition fees at Shiga University: Exempt

(3) Accommodations: International House (located in Hikone Area, available only for first year)

(4) Traveling Expenses:

- ① **Transportation to Japan:** MEXT will stipulate the travel schedule and route, and provides an airline ticket to grantees who will arrive in Japan during the specified period stated in “3. (8) Arrival in Japan”. Grantee will be responsible for all other travel expenses such as airport tax and excess baggage charges.
- ② **Transportation from Japan:** Based on the application by the grantee, MEXT will provide an airline ticket to grantees who shall graduate the accepting university and return to the home country by the end of the final month of the period of scholarship.

7. SELECTION AND RESULT NOTIFICATION

- (1) Shiga University will hold an interview with applicants via Zoom or telephone.
- (2) Each candidate is required to prepare application for 2026 and additional documents by the date designated by Shiga University.
- (3) Shiga University will select preliminary candidates from among applicants by means of an interview

and a review of documents.

- (4) MEXT will conduct a final selection based on the results of the preliminary selection and notify scholarship recipients to Shiga University ***mid-June, 2026 (planned)***.

*Please note that not every applicant who has passed the preliminary selection will pass the final selection by MEXT.

- (5) Shiga University informs the result to the grantee's home institution. The applicant is required to submit the **PLEDGE** by the designated date.

8. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Each applicant must submit the following documents to Shiga University (ORIGINAL format) by ***January 18, 2026***.

Be sure the name you fill in on your application is your full legal name. This must be the name that appears on your passport.

(1) Application Form (Form 6 / **DOUBLE SIDED PRINTING**)

Photograph (4.5×3.5cm) taken within the past six months. (Full-faced photograph from the waist up. The applicant must not wear a cap or hat. The applicant must write his/ her name and nationality on the back of each photograph and paste them on the application form.) You may insert a digital photo on Application form.

(2) Field of study and Research Plan (Form 7)

(3) **Letter of Recommendation** to the President of Shiga University (Ph.D. Akimichi Takemura) from the president or the dean of the department.

(4) **Academic Transcript** of the last university attended.

(5) **Graduation Certificate or Diploma** of the last university attended.

(or attested document certifying that the applicant will graduate from the school, where applicable).

(6) **Official Academic Grade Record** (GPA or Order of Merit)

(7) **Abstract of your Academic Thesis**

(8) **Language Proficiency Certificate**

Results of Japanese Language Proficiency Test

(9) **Passport Copy**

(10) **Information for Advisor at Shiga University (Attached form)**

*These documents must be written in either Japanese or English. A document written in any other language must be attached with a Japanese or English translation.

*The academic transcripts of the last university attended should be prepared to show the grade scale applied and the grades earned by the applicant on all the subjects studied for each year studied at a university /faculty and a graduate school.

*For abstracts of the theses, abstracts of the graduation thesis and presented papers will suffice. Please note that these abstracts will be used as basic data for evaluation of the applicant's academic ability.

9. NOTES

A grantee will be deprived of his/her scholarship in any of the following cases:

- A false statement has been made in the application.
- S/he violates any article of his/her pledge to the Monbukagaku daijin (the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)
- S/he has been subjected to disciplinary action by the university or has no prospects for academic improvement.
- His /her visa status has been changed to the one other than "Student"
- S/he has received scholarships from other institutions including his/her own government.

Please note that lectures at Shiga University are conducted and taught in Japanese (except for a small number of courses), thus students need to have a sufficient level of Japanese proficiency for graduate courses.