

Visit to Ritsumeikan University, Japan



Dear all,

Going to write this report about my visit to Japan. The report is divided in various parts so that you can decide which part to read.

1. The Journey
2. The university and the programs it offers
3. The scholarships
4. Meeting our students
5. The team
6. The activities
7. Overall experience
8. My understanding

The Journey

The journey from New Delhi to Japan (Kyoto) is very long and tiring, you take two flights and a bus journey. But we were told by the coordinator of the trip that you won't feel tired once you reach Kyoto because of the weather and the activity planned after reaching there. So trusted her and kept watching movies throughout the journey. The bus journey from the airport to the hotel which was again of 2 hours was also enjoyable because of the beautiful landscapes. Finally after reaching the hotel we did realize that we were not all that tired. Top of that the activities for the rest of the day were shopping and dinner at 5:30 p.m. (Imagine!)

The journey back from Kyoto to New Delhi, we were told that, may appear shorter somehow. Our first stop was at Narita and we were told that one can do lot of shopping at the airport, as we'll have more than two hours. And because Japan is almost 3:30 hrs ahead of IST there was a misunderstanding that we'll reach early. Phew! So more movies 😊



2. The university and the programs it offers

Ritsumeikan Academy has two universities: 1. Ritsumeikan University and 2. Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific /university.

Our visit was planned for Ritsumeikan University, which has four campuses. We visited three campuses and we were explained about three courses which are offered in English medium. These three courses are at three different campuses.

1. Global Studies (GS)
2. Community and Regional Policy studies (CRPS)
3. Information science and Engineering (ISE)

First two courses are going on for last 2-3 years however the ISE is going to start from year 2017.

The admission process for GS and ISE starts in the month of September and the session starts in April. For CRPS the process starts in December as well as in February for sessions to be starting in the month of April and September respectively. The difficulty with the April admission courses is that Indian students either do not think of seeking admission in Indian universities or go for these courses, or if they want to take admission tests and then weigh their options they lose a year. CRPS in this situation is the only ideal course to be considered presently. (All the team members repetitively brought the attention of the faculty, the admission office staff and the Vice Chancellor to this fact)

*(It is very important for the students to learn basics of Japanese language before they leave for Japan.)



Faculty explaining about ISE program



The Vice chancellor and admission staff

3. The scholarships

Based on essays, interview and other screening processes, two types of scholarships are available presently.

One is exclusively for Indian students applying for CRPS. This scholarship is offered by Japan government which includes waiver of tuition fee and cash in hand to meet the living expenses. (Our students Sneha and Aditi both are availing this scholarship). This scholarship can be availed only till year 2017.

Second type is open to all international students. That is waiver of 20, 50, or 100 percent of the tuition fee only.

Important thing to remember here is that both types of scholarship given at the time of admission are subjected to review every year. The continuation of the scholarships is based purely on student's academic performance.

4. Meeting our students

I was excited to meet our students Sneha and Aditi. Majorly because they were part of the



school but also because the admission staff from Japan and India were full of appreciation for them. (It seems that this year they had volunteered their services to help the Indian students who applied to Ritsumeikan. So both the girls are not only being participative students but they also are keeping in touch with the admin people.). The girls knew that the team from India has come to understand the facilities of the university. So they had

prepared a nice presentation about how their day looked like, the teaching methodology, the facilities that the university offers in terms of infrastructure etc. They took us around the university campus which has latest of technology to use for teaching learning, sports facility, library, presentation hall, group discussion room.... They informed us that the faculty has lot of content knowledge and seek student participation in the learning process a lot. No scope for cutting classes, if you are absent for more than three days for a particular subject, you are failed in that.

5. The team

The team which went to Japan consisted of eleven members including Priyanka (Japan Foundation), Four Principals (Pathways school, two from The Sri Ram School, DPS Mathura road) and Six counsellors (Blue Bells, Amity, Sri Venkateshwar, DPS sonipat, St. mary's and Tagore International).

All the members in the team shared great rapport. In fact the comradery started when the Blue Bells Counsellor accidently dropped her passport from the railing and it got stuck in an enclosure made for tube lights. So it was great team work done to fish that passport out and how four team members rushed to board the plane in DDLJ style. The moto of the team was to make best out of each experience and no one left a chance.

The Ritsumeikan team was very hospitable, not only during our university visit but also during all the visits that were planned.



6. The activities

Our major activity was to know the university and its programs. Interact as much with the admission team and the Vice Chancellor for this objective. Apart from that the major activities were SHOPPING, Visit to Kinkaku ji Temple, photography and eating (In Japan! When out of eleven, seven were vegetarian, please see the photos and say if food was not interesting).





7. Overall experience

The overall experience was very satisfying etched with memories of huge university campuses and the facilities that they have. Hospitable is another term which comes to mind when I think of the whole experience. The beauty of the city and the weather added to the whole experience.





8. My understanding

The university is full of facilities in terms of infrastructure, extra-curricular activities and teacher student ratio. The government is also taking initiative to open its universities for foreign students. The advantage explained by the admission staff and professors whom we met were majorly teachers-student ratio, possibility of doing a dual degree from Japan and foreign universities and scholarships that they offer. The admission team or the students are not aware of the career opportunities that they may get after the completion of the course.

