



**SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES
NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
JAPANESE@NEWCASTLE**

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MY EXPERIENCE OF JAPAN

Christopher Tempest, Graduate 2010, BA Combined Honours



Hi, my name is Chris Tempest and I was a student at Newcastle University from 2008 to 10. My original interest in Japanese started in the summer before

I entered my first year of university. At that time I was thinking about learning a foreign language and I came

across a Japanese comedy show on YouTube and was instantly hooked. Whilst many people in the UK study languages like French, Spanish and German, nobody thinks about learning an East Asian language. I started to self-study as I entered university, originally studying computer science.

Towards the end of the first semester I was so fascinated with Japanese that I changed my course to include it with my computing studies and I have never looked back. As part of my year abroad I went to the southern island of Kyushu, in a large city called Fukuoka. No words can really describe the time I had there. Japan was like a different world, my



horizons broadened and I gained so much experience. Japan has a perfect balance between traditional culture from hundreds of years ago and the modern techno hub that many may have of the country. Fukuoka University was a great place to study at. I lived in a dorm with a good mix of other exchange students and Japanese students.

I remember a time when there were a few people having some food together when my friend from South Korea pointed out that all 7 of us eating together were all from different countries across the globe and yet through Japanese we can have a link with each other and can share experiences. This made me really appreciate the true meaning of foreign language studies. I made so many



friends there and so many memories that as soon as I came back to Newcastle I was looking for any excuse to go back to Japan.



I found it with the JET program, working as an assistant language teacher in elementary

and junior high schools. This is now my fourth year in Japan since Newcastle and I have no intention of leaving. Studying Japanese and experiencing



Japan was one of the best decisions I have made and I would like to thank Newcastle University for giving me the opportunity to do what I have done and to do what I am continuing to do here in Japan.

Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme

Alistair Dale, Graduate 2013, BA Linguistics with Japanese

My name is Alistair Dale. I am a recent graduate of Newcastle University, and I'm currently living in Japan where I work as an assistant language teacher at an elementary school. At university I studied Linguistics and Japanese and had a year abroad studying at a Japanese university. After returning from my year abroad I was doing my finals when I applied to the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. Successful applicants who hold a university degree in any subject are placed in schools as assistant language teachers (ALTs), or as coordinators for international relations (CIRs) in



municipal offices throughout Japan. The programme aims to improve foreign language education and foster a positive attitude towards other cultures. Knowing Japanese is not a requirement to participate on the programme and many people come knowing nothing at all; but help is always at hand, as Japanese language courses and support are available to all participants.

I have had a lot of positive experiences so far on the JET Programme and I recommend anyone graduating from university in the future to consider applying. My colleagues and the people in my town are some of the kindest people I've ever met, and teaching at elementary school is great fun. The children are always full of energy and keen to learn more about me, and I'm given quite a lot of freedom to plan and design my own lessons. This year I really enjoyed doing Halloween classes because I got to carve a pumpkin, which many of the kids were interested in because it was the first time for many of them to see a real jack o' lantern.

I live in a town called Oarai, which is close to Mito City – the capital of Ibaraki Prefecture. The town has a famous beach that attracts a lot of tourists in the summer. There's also a great golf course, an aquarium with dolphins,



a sea museum, and many places to eat out! I live in a cosy, two-room apartment that the town's Board of Education arranged for me before I arrived. My rent is cheap and it's very close to my workplace so I often don't have to get up too early in the morning!



After JET I plan to find work translating Japanese to English or teaching Japanese back in the UK. I may go back to university to complete a master's degree before starting my new career.

UNESCO to recognize Japanese food culture

The Japan Times, 22nd Jan. Kyodo

“Washoku” traditional Japanese cuisine has been added to UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list, raising the government’s hopes of enhancing its global recognition, attracting more foreign tourists and boosting exports of the country’s agricultural products.

The government’s proposal was formally approved Wednesday at a meeting of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee in Baku, the Cultural Affairs Agency said, adding that the panel valued the spiritual tradition of respecting nature associated with washoku.



The move comes as the country faces a low food self-sufficiency rate of around 40 percent on a calorific intake basis as

well as the spread of Western eating habits. Washoku became the 22nd Japanese asset to be listed on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list, which also includes kabuki, noh and bunraku.

“We are truly happy,” Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said of the UNESCO recognition in a statement released Thursday morning. “We would like to continue passing on Japanese food culture to the generations to come . . . and would also like to work harder to let people overseas appreciate the benefits of washoku.”



Kiyotoshi Tamura, an official of the Organization to Promote Japanese Restaurants Abroad, expressed hope that efforts will be made to advertise Japanese foods, saying: “The recognition of Japanese cuisine will definitely increase.”





MANGA

By our students

Lornafay Dickinson

BA Japanese and Cultural Studies



Rebecca Cranston

BA Japanese and Cultural Studies



Marcus Forrester

BA Modern Languages

Year Abroad in Japan

Anna Mihejeva, Graduate 2013, BA Combined Honours

Year Abroad in Japan is the most exciting part of the Japanese language course for most students. But how to choose a host university that suits one best, and prepare for a new life in this mysterious country without succumbing to panic and frustration?

The "Year Abroad in Japan" community was created to help answer these vital questions. Utilizing a convenient Blackboard platform, it aims to provide concise and helpful information about available university choices, based on previous students' experience, covering such important aspects as accommodation, pricing, academic workload, city environment and opportunities to interact with the locals. This means, for example, that students looking for intensive Japanese courses are less likely to end up doing an English-based program, and those on the lookout for culture exchange can pick an institution offering the widest range of trips and events.

Also, the community offers hints and tips on daily life in Japan, as well as strategies for learning the language effectively. But the main idea is to encourage student contribution, be it submitting photos of university life, posting observations on local culture, or suggesting useful study applications. It is this continuous involvement that will help the community grow and enable subsequent student generations to enjoy their Japan experience to the full!



Newcastle University's Anglo-Japanese Society



By Rachael Levitan
BA Combined Honours

When I first arrived at Newcastle University, I was keen to practise my Japanese skills that I had picked up the previous year whilst volunteering abroad. I joined the Anglo-Japanese Society and was amazed to find out what a vibrant Japanese community there was in Newcastle. I didn't need to worry about my Japanese skills being low, either, as the society welcomes all members, from those who have a slight interest in the Japanese culture, to those who are studying it as a degree course. Joining the society broadened my horizons and made my first year a lot less daunting!

This year, as the president, I am happy to say the society is still going strong, if not stronger. We have around 100 members, quite a few who are

held twice weekly in a bar and also a café. We also have a fancy annual winter ball, where everyone enjoys the chance to dress to their best and enjoy a four-course meal, and an annual boat party, which takes place in Durham, with a chance to view this picturesque town from the river.

Other events include day trips, barbecues, cultural tastings and quiz nights among others. We aim to host as many activities as possible to make sure that there is something for everyone. The society is especially useful for students studying Japanese who wish to prepare for their year abroad, and for giving the Japanese students a



Japanese, and great turnouts to all events. Our main events include weekly 'oshabarikais' or 'chat socials', where students can come to practise their English, Japanese or simply socialise. These are

chance to practise their English skills and meet local students. We are passionate about making links and broadening the society's potential, so we often join up with other societies, including Durham University's Anglo-Japanese Society, and Newcastle's Anglo-Chinese Society.

The society is truly diverse, with students from all over the world attending, so you're sure to learn about many different cultures alongside Japanese. If you're interested in Japanese culture, language, meeting Japanese people or simply making friends you will never forget, then AJS is the perfect society for you.

Contact us

For information about admissions please contact Lesley Sherrin
Tel: 0191 222 5082, e-mail: sml@ncl.ac.uk
or visit <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/sml/research/subjects/eastasian/>

