

2025 Application Guidelines for Exchange Program Okayama (EPOK)

Purpose of the EPOK program

The exchange program Okayama (EPOK) (hereinafter referred to as “the EPOK program”) is a short-term study abroad program (comprising the acceptance and dispatch of students) provided by Okayama University (hereinafter referred to as “the University”). To implement the program, the University has concluded detailed operational rules about inter-university exchanges, such as those concerning exemption from tuition fees, with 60 universities in 22 countries and regions. To promote student exchanges between these overseas universities (hereinafter referred to as “the EPOK partner universities”) so as to improve individual universities’ research and education levels, and help enhance mutual understanding and friendly, amicable relations with these countries, the University accepts applications for study abroad under the EPOK program.

Details

1. Eligibility

Students who are enrolled in a regular course of the University and satisfy all the following requirements are eligible to apply for the EPOK program:

- (1) Students who are excellent in both academic achievements and personality
- (2) Students who have a definite purpose and plan of study abroad and are expected to accomplish favorable results through study abroad at the EPOK partner universities
- (3) Students who intend to continue studying at the University after completing their study abroad at the EPOK partner universities
- (4) Students who satisfy the admission requirements specified by an individual EPOK partner university or other criteria equivalent to such admission requirements
(For details, refer to the attached “List of EPOK partner universities, duration of study abroad and requirements, etc.”)
- (5) Students whose **grade point average (GPA) score is 2.0 or higher** at the time of submission of their application form
(GPA evaluation standards and calculation methods differ between Okayama University and overseas universities. Therefore, even if the GPA value on your transcript at Okayama University meets the designated standard of each partner university, your GPA will be recalculated according to the evaluation standards of the partner university, and you may not be accepted.)
- (6) Students who have been enrolled in Okayama university for at least one year at the time of starting their study abroad program.
(For first-year students, those who have completed up to the fourth semester at the start of their study abroad program.)
- (7) Students who meet any of the following language proficiency requirements at the time of submission of their application form

Type	If you would like to take classes <u>in English</u> at the EPOK partner university	If you would like to take courses <u>in a language other than English</u> at the EPOK partner university
Academic program (To take class subjects)	TOEFL-iBT® score of 60 or higher, or IELTS score of 5.5 (overall) or higher	A proficiency certificate of the foreign language specified by EPOK partner universities
Language program (To participate in language program classes)	TOEFL-iBT® score of 45 or higher, or IELTS score of 4.5 (overall) or higher, or TOEIC 500 or higher	

2. Application procedure

Application Process	① Register for instruction in study abroad under the EPOK program	Follow the Moodle instructions below to register for instruction in study abroad under the EPOK program 【EPOK Counseling Registration Moodle】 https://moodle.el.okayama-u.ac.jp/course/view.php?id=151988
	② Individual counselling	After registering for instruction in study abroad under the EPOK program, you will receive an email from the EPOK study abroad advisor. Please arrange a schedule with him or her and have an individual counselling. Complete the individual counselling at least two weeks prior to the application submission deadline. ※Make a study plan that includes your university choices and the time of study abroad before the consultation. Make your plan after carefully checking whether studying abroad will affect your moving up to the next year or your graduation, and whether there are any compulsory courses at the university during your studying abroad period.
	③ Application documents	For more information on application, check out Moodle below. 【Call for 2025 EPOK Application (Outbound) Moodle】 https://moodle.el.okayama-u.ac.jp/course/view.php?id=205948 (1) 2025 EPOK Application Form ※Downloaded from Moodle (2) Approval Email Correspondence of Guarantor and Supervisor (3) Plan of Study Abroad ※Downloaded from Moodle (4) Academic transcript issued by the University (prepared in Japanese, with your latest GPA score indicated) (5) A certificate confirming your Language proficiency ※Please check the “eligibility (7)” and submit the required application documents. 【Those who apply in the academic program】 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOEFL-iBT® Score report • IELTS Test Report Form • HSK • Test of Chinese Proficiency • TOPIK • TCF • DELF/ DALF • Test in Practical French Proficiency, etc. 【Those who apply in the language program】 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOEFL-iBT® Score report • IELTS Test Report Form • TOEIC ※Please submit certificates of any examinations taken within the last two years. ※Regardless of your nationality, country of residence and your mother language, you must demonstrate the language proficiency ※Including TOEFL-iBT® Special Home Edition and IELTS on Computer ※If the score certificate cannot be issued in time for the application deadline, a copy of the results showing the score on the web will be accepted. Submit the certificate as soon as it is issued.
	④ How to Submit	Submit application documents (1)~(5) to Moodle below. 【Call for 2025 EPOK Application (Outbound) Moodle】 https://moodle.el.okayama-u.ac.jp/course/view.php?id=205948

※Application Notes

- The application and all required materials must be completed and submitted.
- If there are any misrepresentations in the application documents, the decision regarding candidacy of the student for the program may be cancelled.
- Please keep the original application documents with you until you are notified of the selection results.

※Deadline※

【Spring Semester Study Abroad Program】

Individual counselling : June 13 (Thu.), 2024

Submission of application document : 12:00 (noon), June 27 (Thu.), 2024

【Fall Semester Study Abroad Program】

Individual counselling : December 6 (Fri.), 2024

Submission of application document : 12:00 (noon), December 20 (Fri.), 2024

3. Period of dispatch (study abroad), host universities and number of students

【Start of Study Abroad】 (Spring Semester) January ~ March, 2025

(Fall Semester) July ~ October, 2025

【Period of dispatch (study abroad)】 More than one trimester or one semester but within one year

※For spring semester study abroad, some partner institutions may have restrictions on study permission

For details of the duration of study abroad at the EPOK partner universities, refer to the attached “List of EPOK partner universities, duration of study abroad and requirements, etc.”

【Host universities】 See the attached “List of EPOK partner universities, duration of study abroad and requirements, etc.

※Depending on the circumstances of the host university and other factors, it is not necessarily possible for you to study at the university of your choice.

【Number of students】 Depends on the time of dispatch. For details, please ask EPOK study abroad advisors.

4. Expenses

Students will be exempted from official examination fees, admission fees, and tuition fees of the EPOK partner universities. However, a student whose foreign language proficiency (TOEFL-iBT® or IELTS score) does not meet the prescribed requirements set by the EPOK partner university may be required to take language courses at a designated language school for a certain period of time as a prerequisite for acceptance. In such a case, the tuition fees at the language school may be borne by the student.

Students will cover the student visa application fee, travel expenses, and dormitory fees. Students will pay the tuition fee to the University during the period of study abroad as usual.

5. Scholarships

Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) Overseas Study Abroad Support System (agreement-based dispatch of students)

If you will be studying at an EPOK partner institution, you may apply for a scholarship (60,000-100,000 yen/month, depending on the destination area) under the "Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) Overseas Study Support Program (Dispatch by Agreement)". If you wish to apply, please carefully read and understand the following, then check "Yes" box in the "JASSO Scholarship" column of the EPOK Application Form. (There are no separate documents to be submitted at the time of application).

Students who can understand and fulfill the following will be recommended to the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) as recipients of the scholarship

This scholarship aims to support the partial expenses of studying abroad to cultivate individuals who can contribute to the global society and enhance the internationalization and competitiveness of our country's universities. **Under this principle, Okayama University pledges to return the study achievements of dispatched students to the local community as added value and has acquired this scholarship. Recipients of this scholarship are required to actively participate in activities promoting study abroad.**

Furthermore, only applicants who have Japanese nationality or permanent resident status and a grade evaluation coefficient of 2.30 (out of 3.00) in the previous academic year are eligible to apply. For details on the evaluation coefficient, please refer to the following.

<https://intl.okayama-u.ac.jp/outbound/scholarships/jasso/>

Since the amount of the scholarship allocated to the University is fixed, not all applicants may receive the scholarship. After screening, etc., as necessary, the scholarship recipients will be notified in May for fall study abroad programs and in October for spring study abroad programs. Applicants must be Japanese citizens or permanent residents of Japan.

Other Scholarships

Please check the HP below.

<https://intl.okayama-u.ac.jp/outbound/scholarships/>

6. Schedule from selection to after study abroad (tentative)

Spring Semester	Fall Semester	Contents
Mid- July	Mid- January	Application and interview screening
Late July	Late January	Results notification
Early August	Mid- February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EPOK guidance for the Study Abroad Candidates •Determination of your host university
August ~ September	February ~ March	Recommendation to your host university
October ~ December	April ~ June	Receive Letter of Acceptance from your host university
October ~ December	May ~ July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study abroad procedures • Prior guidance programs (the risk management guidance program, the intercultural understanding guidance program, and the preparatory guidance program.) • Submission of the Written Pledge • Entry into the Overseas Travel Registration System to submit an overseas travel notification
January ~ March	July ~ October	Departure
During study abroad		(End of every month) Submission of Monthly Report
After study abroad		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of Study abroad report (within 2 weeks after returning to Japan) • Submission of Course report (as soon as your department/graduate school completes the credit approval process) • Participation in the Presentation of study abroad (Conducted in February or July)

7. Student status during the period of dispatch

The period of dispatch, approved by the dean of the faculty or the graduate school of the student concerned, is considered as the duration of “study abroad” in accordance with the university regulations or the graduate school regulations of the University, and is included in the period of attendance at the University.

8. Credits earned from class subjects at the EPOK partner universities

Pursuant to the provisions set forth by each faculty and graduate school, credits earned from class subjects at the EPOK partner universities may be deemed as credits acquired by completing class subjects at the University, to an extent not exceeding 60 credits. Because approval of credits earned varies by faculty/graduate school, be sure to confirm the details in advance.

Subjects that can be taken at the EPOK partner universities are specified on the official websites of the individual EPOK partner universities; confirm the details in advance.

※ Individual partner universities’ official website addresses are indicated in the attached “List of EPOK partner universities, duration of study abroad and requirements, etc.

9. Credit for “Study Abroad II ”

EPOK students will receive credit for " Study Abroad II " after completing the program.(Only for undergraduate students)

Registration is not required.

10. Registration and auditing of class subjects in the EPOK program

As an opportunity to have prior hands-on experience of study abroad, those who have been selected as a student to be dispatched under the EPOK program are advised to take or audit class subjects (liberal arts class subjects conducted in English only) intended for EPOK international students as much as possible. The classes are held in English.

11. Purchase of overseas travel insurance

As a necessary preparation for study abroad, students are required to subscribe to the overseas travel insurance designated by the University. You may also be required to purchase insurance as specified by the EPOK partner university.

12. Safety Control and Caution

Due to unexpected natural disasters, international situations, or pandemics, the student exchange program may be suspended or altered. The students at the host universities should be urged to return to Japan. Note that all the expenses at the host university and in the return travel are fundamentally the student’s responsibility.

The University determines safety and viability of the exchange program based on the Safety Hazard for Oversea Travel released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

13. EPOK study abroad adviser and clerical staff for EPOK

※ Reception hours 8:30-12:00 a.m. / 1:00-5:00 p.m. (Saturday, Sunday and holidays are closed.)

(1) EPOK study abroad advisors

[1] Takao Inamori, an associate professor of the Institute of Global Human Resource Development
Tel: 086-251-7270 Email: takaoinamori@okayama-u.ac.jp

Countries/areas: The UK, The US (east coast, the South, The Midwest), Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos

[2] Junko Obayashi, an associate professor of the Institute of Global Human Resource Development
Tel: 086-251-8935 Email: j_obayashi@okayama-u.ac.jp

Countries/areas: The US (west coast including Guam), Australia,

[3] Saida KHALMIRZAEVA an associate professor of the Institute of Global Human Resource Development
Tel: 086-251-8447 Email: pu6h2ipe@okayama-u.ac.jp

Countries/areas: Canada, China, Korea, Taiwan, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Finland

(2) EPOK clerical staff

International Student Division, International Affairs Department (1F, Building C, General Education Building)

Tel: 086-251-8552 Email: ryugaku@adm.okayama-u.ac.jp

14. Information about TOEFL- iBT® and IELTS

【TOEFL- iBT®】

The official website of TOEFL URL: <https://www.toefl-ibt.jp/>

【IELTS】

Eiken Foundation of Japan URL: <http://www.jsaf-ieltsjapan.com>

Japan Study Abroad Foundation (JSAF) URL: <http://www.jsaf-ieltsjapan.com>

The British Council URL: <https://www.britishcouncil.jp/exam/ielts>

If you wish to study at a British university, you must take the IELTS (Academic Module), which is available at the three institutions listed above. The IELTS for UKVI test is administered by the British Council and the Eiken Foundation of Japan. The IELTS for UKVI exam is administered by the British Council and the English Language Proficiency Test Association of Japan. If you do not have a sufficient academic course score, you will need to submit your score if you wish to participate in a pre-enrollment course (for a fee). If you have any questions, please contact your EPOK advisor.

Please confirm the latest information on the TOEFL-iBT® and IELTS test schedule, fees, etc. on the website.