

## 學校簡介

山形大學的小白川校區位於日本東北，冬天的氣溫低至約-4 度，夏天卻可以高到約 35 度。由於位於內陸，周圍被許多山圍繞，形成冬天乾燥、夏天悶熱的氣候。

在小白川校區有人文社會科學學院、地域教育文化學院、理學院，是山形大學主要校區。其他則還有米澤校區、鶴岡校區、飯田校區總共四個校區。許多山形大學的學部學生一年級時是在小白川校區，但升上二年級後就會依據自己的學系到其他校區。而短期留學生的話主要都是在小白川校區。

## 推薦課程

### 一、日文課程

在開學以前學校會有日文能力分班測驗，依據日文程度分為「初級 1/2」、「中級 1/2」、「上級」。每個級數被安排的日文課程不同，以學分跟時數來說，初、中級課程最多，而上級最少。但以時間心力來說，上級的單堂課程在課後所需的時間是最多的。

在新生訓練時學校會給一張表格告訴你所屬的級數、與該班級對應的日文課程。這些課程雖說不是必修，但我會建議這些學校安排的課程都修會比較好。第一是因為山形大學的日文課我覺得品質真的很好，老師都非常認真用心。第二是跟日文語言學校比起來，交換學生完全不用負擔學分費，可以在普通的大學上日文課，甚至有 N2 的同學還可以去修一般學部生的課，我覺得真的是不可多得的資源。

另外山形大學跟政府也有關於留學生的學分規定，選課期間向山形大學的國際交流課詢問清楚比較好。

### 二、基盤課程

除了基礎的日文課程以外，JSP 會有關於日本的基盤課程，也就是類似於通識課。絕對必修的一定是日本文化體驗課。這堂課程的老師是台灣出身的尤老師，基本會有茶道、和服、清水燒等等的體驗，老師有時候也會帶大家去小小的修學旅行。我覺得所有課程中最令人驚豔的就是和服體驗，因為老師請的是真正的在地和服專家，還會幫忙簡單的妝髮，跟大家一起穿和服拍照是很棒的體驗。

其他基盤課程我推薦ボートゲーム，這堂課的老師非常喜歡麻將跟許多日本的桌遊或紙牌遊戲。基本上每個禮拜都會玩一種遊戲，所以除了有趣以外，還可以學習到新的日本桌遊，如：日本將棋、花牌、日本麻將、圍棋…等等。

## 課外生活學習

### 一、打工

在台灣時我就已經決定到日本以後一定要打工，第一是我準備的錢非常緊繃，第二是我認為到當地打工才能學習到這邊的工作環境、規則、還有在職場的日文用語。

由於我原本是申請半年，但到了這邊以後跑了許多手續才延長成一年。為了支付留學延長所產生的所有費用(山形的延長學分費與生活費為大宗)，我總過打過三份工，幾乎冬天整個假期都在打工中度過。最後結算時發現，打工所賺到的薪水竟然支付了我留學花費總額的 1/4。

我的第一份工作在藏王的中央纜車，這是透過尤老師所找到的工作。工作內容是在站內幫忙導流、案内，有時候在賣店幫忙結帳，或是幫忙賣玉こんにゃく(醬油蒟蒻丸)。不過最主要是幫忙口譯或製作多語言告示，因為講中文跟英文的遊客非常多，每天需要幫忙的人真的很多。冬季到藏王滑雪的人非常多，每天早上 6 點天未亮就要起床，7 點以前就要提早到巴士搭乘處等 7:40 的車。在寒冷下雪的冬天早起真的非常辛苦，但是在這邊大家都很照顧我，也真的得到很多寶貴經驗。像是我學會滿多山形方言、知道煤油暖爐怎麼使用、結帳賣東西常用的日文，甚至最後同事教我雙板以及單板滑雪，還跟幾位同事變成了非常好的朋友。

第二份工作是サイゼリヤ(薩莉亞)，這是我自己找的工作，跟藏王同時從 12 中開始，做到回來以前。由於藏王的工作只有冬天限定，但是我的留學到夏季結束，因此如果只有靠藏王的話生活費是不夠的。另外就是我本來就一直很想到日本餐廳打工看看。聽說我在我工作的分店是第一位被錄取的外國人，也是店長在他的薩莉亞生涯中第一位錄取的外國人，但這跟山形很鄉下也有關係，因為像仙台就有外國人店員。在薩莉亞學到了很多日本人的工作精神，真的跟在台灣打工經驗差很多，有些部分一開始不太習慣，但有許多規則與精神我覺得真的滿值得學習的。例如嚴謹的 SOP、進廚房或通過他人時一定要打招呼才不會危險、親切的對客人招呼、加班會被感謝、以分鐘為單位算薪水不會被壓榨…等等。當然這與薩莉亞是連鎖店所以制度較完善有關係。

第三份打工是為期一週的霞城公園的桜祭り，這份打工也是尤老師邀請的。在這邊主要是幫忙屋台的食物製作跟販售。好處是邊看櫻花邊打工，但忙起來的時候真的是連抬頭的機會都沒有，等到回過神已經過了好幾個小時，也因為人潮絡繹不絕，賣東西一直維持同個姿勢所以超級腰酸背痛。但這邊最快樂的是，想吃什麼喝什麼都可以免費拿。最有成就感的大概是一起工作的同事過了三天才發現我是外國人。

## 二、部活

我從高中以來就一直有在打籃球，所以我在第一學期到山形大學後馬上就到社團的辦公室詢問關於山形大學女籃的資訊。後來直接在練球時間進到球場詢問，就直接加入了。

我覺得加入社團或校隊的好處是，透過運動或活動可以更快速的認識其他人，且有共同興趣的人聚在一起也會較有話題，比參加其他日本人與外國人的交流活動更來的有用且快速。但要說缺點的話，就是一開始需要一些勇氣，並且克服緊張跟尷尬的階段。但說真的，因為我們是外國人，大部分的年輕日本人，尤其是女生會覺得很新鮮。只要你表達出善意，可以的話有一些日文能力，加入是不會太難的。那如果你的日文能力剛好不錯且運氣夠好的話，是真的可以交到好朋友的！

以我在中山女籃裡認識的兩個日本人的好朋友，以及其他來中山的留學生為例。他們身邊一起前來台灣的留學生大部分都沒有加入社團，因此許多人都少了很多跟台灣人交流的機會，中文能力的進步幅度經過半年一年後真的差了非常多。所以我真的推薦主動去參加社團活動！

## 三、社交活動

除了與日本人的交流非常重要以外，我認為跟其他留學生的交流也是不可忽略的。派對是一個很好認識跟自己不同圈留學生很好的機會。尤老師常常舉辦各種派對，大家會準備自己的一道菜，所以在派對上可以吃到許多各國料理。認識其他留學生的好處是，當有困難時大家就會互相幫忙，且上課都是跟留學生在一起的，所以其實自然而然地感情會變得非常好。經過一年以後我甚至發現我的英文聽力跟口說進步了，對我來說是很意外的收穫。

另外我也很喜歡一個人騎腳踏車到處逛逛。我很常去一間溫泉，甚至認識了那邊的歐巴桑，每次去都會跟他聊天，偶爾她還會給我一些家鄉食物，離開前她加了我的 line 還送了我很多小禮物。另外我也跟郵局的一個行員常常聊天，最後也加了 ig。這些緣分可遇不可求，但我覺得我很幸運遇到了很多很棒的人。

## 在國外如何解決困難

老實說，最後回想起來我並沒有特別覺得遇到什麼很大的困難。我覺得這跟我們與日本人長相差距不大有一些關係。當我自己一個人，或是跟日本朋友一起時，通常別人不會馬上發現我是外國人，所以不會被異樣眼光或特別對待。但是像其他的歐美的朋友，因為臉孔的關係，他們單純只是走在路上也會被多加

注意，當然我覺得這有好有壞。好的地方是，只要你會說一些日文，很多日本人就會非常開心，也很容易交朋友。但不好的地方是，如果你個性較容易害羞，可能就會受不了被注目的感覺。

有一次跟荷蘭的留學生如往常一樣到宿舍附近的健身房的時候，我們像平常一樣的使用器材，等對方時就滑個手機。中間可能因為我也用英文跟朋友講話的關係，所以在我們對面一直看我們的阿伯應該發現了我也是外國人。過沒多他就突然走過來用很兇的語氣對我們說「動画撮らないでください（請不要拍影片）。」但我們明明只是普通在等下一輪時各自滑手機，傻眼之餘回了他「撮ってないですよ（我們沒有在拍影片喔）。」但他一句道歉也沒有講就頭也不回的走掉了。以上還只是「差別事件」多件中的一件而已。這樣的情況在台灣留學生們單獨來健身房時從來沒有遇到過，但是歐洲留學生卻在健身房常常遇到許多類似的差別待遇，我認為可以說是歧視了，留學生們在健身房明明比任何日本人都還要守規矩。這部分日本朋友也表示說，可能許多日本中老年人不習慣外國人，不太適應世界的變化，也沒辦法改變他們。像這樣的事情我覺得只要遇到一次心情就大受影響，實在無法想像常常遇到的歐洲留學生朋友如何調適心情。但現在想起來，這些在健身房的差別事件教會我的就是，無論如何都不應該一開始就對他人抱持成見，還有學習到該怎麼做才不會無意間傷害他人。

總結來說，我覺得在日本生活難免會遇到一些意想不到的困難，不一定是實務上的，也可能是心境上的。這時候向其他留學生、日本朋友、甚至老師們抒發或尋求意見是很好的選擇。

## 文化衝擊的應對

印象最深刻遇到的第一個文化衝擊就是跟同樣說中文的留學生，對於台灣的概念的不同所受到的衝擊。因為剛到一個禮拜，有點不知道自己該怎麼應對，結果反而因為跟大家討論了這件事，跟台灣還有其他歐美留學生變好了，就不那麼在意了。

關於生活的部分，跟歐洲留學生一起洗碗後發現，他們不會把洗碗的泡泡全沖乾淨，而是用布擦乾淨或直接晾乾。但對於亞洲人來說真的非常衝擊。因為很有趣就變成我們的話題，雖然到現在還是沒有解開。

還有一件事是，台灣人通常換衣服不會在別人面前換，即使是同性也一樣。但是到了球隊跟體育課時，所有的女生都在同一間更衣室換衣服，一開始真的很不習慣很害羞。後來發現根本沒有人在意，才慢慢習慣。現在反而不習慣台灣健身房沒有集中的更衣室，還有溫泉需要穿泳衣這件事了。

## 交換具體效益

1. 日文大幅進步
2. 確認未來到日本就業的計畫
3. 結交許多知心好友並遇到好伴侶
4. 對於如何在日本「生活」有更進一步的了解
5. 認識了不同國家間的文化差異，學會用不同視角來了解他人
6. 入門了滑雪的世界
7. 雖然很喜歡，但發現自己不適合住在太乾燥的地方，這對於未來選擇居住地時有很大的幫助

## 海外生活歷練帶給我的成長

1. 了解到台灣醫療真的很方便，提醒自己不可濫用
2. 學習了別的文化值得學習的地方，並且帶回家鄉實踐
3. 學會管理金錢、分辨需要與想要

## 整體感想

剛到山形時，馬上就被山形的寬廣、美麗，還有人們的慢活親切所吸引。山大的老師教學也很認真，當時感覺到可以學習跟體驗到非常多，所以不到一個月就馬上詢問延長的辦法。現在仍然覺得我做了一個非常正確的決定，感謝當初生活費不夠仍一頭衝的自己，以及鼓勵我的國際處徐小姐跟家人朋友們。在這邊體驗了一生難以體驗到的生活，現在回想起來還是覺得很不可思議。

在這裡遇到的人事物，改變了我對未來道路的規劃。到日本工作跟生活從原本只是一個念頭，到現在變成正在努力實踐的目標。而因為遇到各個地方來的人，也了解了自己所認知的世界不過是一隅而已，不知道的事情還有很多，該學習的事情還有很多。

之前看到來台灣留學的日本朋友回國時都是難過、不捨的回去的。我也以為我在回去時會很難過，可是退宿到上飛機前，我想起在這邊所有努力還有盡力享受的過程，覺得這一年沒有白費，而且知道有一天自己還會回來的，所以是非常開心、輕鬆地回國的。現在想想，當初選擇了山形大學真的是太好了。

## 其他建議

1. 宿舍的房間鑰匙要很小心保管，只要弄丟的話他們會換整組鎖，真的很貴。所以我會建議好好保管「原本」的鑰匙，因為那一把上面是有編號的，包括大門的磁卡也是有編號的，入退宿他們都會核對。
2. 推薦一定要買腳踏車，沒有腳踏車我自己覺得生活不易，另外也少了很多探索的機會。
3. 可以申請一年的話建議直接一年。一年與半年的體驗相差非常大，且說是半年，其實也不過四個月，一年卻可以待滿至少 11 個月。當初考慮到預算及未來進入職場的事情，沒有直接申請一年一直是我覺得很後悔的事情。但幸好經過許多努力成功延長成一年了，雖然也付出相當大的代價，但覺得非常值得。



圖一、日本文化課的和服體驗



圖二、霞城公園的桜祭り打工



圖三、尤老師所舉辦的派對



圖四、尤老師開的台灣華語課程為擔任助教的台灣留學生舉辦歡送會



圖五、藏王中央纜車線山頂-鳥兜站，往藏王樹冰高原眺望的景色

## School Introduction

Yamagata University's Kojirakawa Campus is located in the Tohoku region of Japan. In winter, temperatures can drop to around -4°C, while in summer they can rise to about 35°C. Since the campus is inland and surrounded by many mountains, the climate is dry in winter and humid in summer.

The Kojirakawa Campus houses the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Regional Education and Culture, and the Faculty of Science, making it the university's main campus. In addition, Yamagata University has three other campuses: Yonezawa, Tsuruoka, and Iida. Many undergraduate students spend their first year at Kojirakawa, but from the second year onward, they move to other campuses depending on their faculty. This is quite different from the system in Taiwan. Short-term exchange students, however, are mainly based at the Kojirakawa Campus.

## Recommended Courses

### 1. Japanese Language Courses

Before the semester begins, the university conducts a placement test to determine Japanese proficiency. Students are divided into levels: "Beginner 1/2," "Intermediate 1/2," and "Advanced." Each level is assigned different courses. In terms of credits and weekly hours, beginner and intermediate levels have more, while advanced has fewer. However, advanced courses demand significantly more time and effort outside class.

During orientation, students receive a chart indicating their placement and the courses corresponding to that level. Although these courses are not mandatory, I strongly recommend taking all of them. First, the quality of Yamagata University's Japanese courses is excellent, with teachers who are highly dedicated. Second, unlike private language schools, exchange students do not need to pay tuition for these classes, making them an invaluable resource. Some students with JLPT N2 proficiency can even take regular undergraduate courses, which is a rare opportunity.

It is also advisable to check with the International Exchange Office about course registration, as there are credit requirements for international students set by both

the university and the government.

## 2. Foundation Courses

In addition to Japanese language courses, JSP (Japan Studies Program) offers foundation courses related to Japanese society and culture, similar to general education classes. One required course is “Japanese Cultural Experiences,” taught by Professor You, who is originally from Taiwan. Activities include tea ceremony, kimono wearing, and pottery making, as well as occasional small study trips. The kimono experience was particularly impressive, as a local expert was invited to help with proper dressing and simple hairstyling, allowing everyone to take memorable photos together.

Among other foundation courses, I recommend “Board Games.” The professor is passionate about mahjong and various Japanese board and card games. Each week, we played a different game, such as shogi, hanafuda, Japanese mahjong, and go. The course was both enjoyable and educational, providing insight into Japanese traditional games.

## Extracurricular Learning

### 1. Part-time Work

Before arriving in Japan, I had already decided to take up part-time work. First, my budget was tight, and second, I wanted to experience the local working environment, rules, and workplace Japanese.

Originally, I applied for a half-year program, but later extended it to a full year after completing several administrative procedures. To cover the additional costs (mainly tuition for the extension and living expenses), I worked three part-time jobs, spending almost the entire winter vacation working. In the end, I realized that my part-time income covered about one-fourth of my total study abroad expenses.

#### I. First Job: Zao Central Ropeway

This job was introduced by Professor You. My tasks included guiding visitors, assisting at the ticket counter or souvenir shop, and selling tama konnyaku (soy-sauce flavored konjac balls). However, the main responsibility was interpreting and preparing multilingual signs, as there were many Chinese- and

English-speaking tourists. During the busy ski season, I had to wake up before dawn at 6 a.m. to catch the 7:40 bus. Early mornings in the snowy winter were tough, but my colleagues were very kind, and I gained valuable experiences. I learned some Yamagata dialect, how to use kerosene heaters, useful Japanese phrases for cashier work, and even skiing and snowboarding from colleagues, some of whom became close friends.

## II. Second Job: Saizeriya

I found this job myself, and it overlapped with the Zao job from December. Since the Zao position was seasonal, I needed another job to sustain my living expenses. Working at a Japanese restaurant had always been something I wanted to try. I was reportedly the first foreigner hired at that branch, and even the manager's first foreign hire in his Saizeriya career. This may be because Yamagata is more rural compared to places like Sendai. At Saizeriya, I learned about Japanese work ethics, which were very different from part-time jobs in Taiwan. Although some practices took time to get used to, I found many aspects admirable: strict SOPs, greeting others when entering the kitchen or passing behind them for safety, politeness toward customers, appreciation for overtime, and precise payroll down to the minute. These experiences were invaluable.

## III. Third Job: Kajo Park Cherry Blossom Festival

This was a one-week job also offered by Professor You, helping with food stalls during the cherry blossom festival. The highlight was working while surrounded by cherry blossoms, although it was so busy that hours passed without realizing. Standing in one position for long hours was tough, but one perk was being able to eat and drink freely. The most satisfying moment was when coworkers only realized after three days that I was a foreigner.

## 2. Club Activities

Since high school, I had played basketball, so I quickly inquired about Yamagata University's women's basketball team upon arrival. I joined after directly asking during practice.

Joining a club is a great way to meet people quickly through shared interests. Although it requires courage to overcome initial nervousness, most Japanese students find it refreshing to have foreign members. With some Japanese ability and a friendly attitude, it is not too difficult to make friends. For example, I made two close Japanese friends through basketball, while many other international students who did not join clubs missed opportunities to interact with locals and thus progressed slower in their language skills. I highly recommend joining a club or team.

### 3. Social Activities

Interacting with Japanese people is important, but so is connecting with other international students. Parties are a great way to meet people from different backgrounds. Professor You often organized potluck parties where students shared dishes from their home countries. Such events not only broadened friendships but also created a strong support system when challenges arose. Spending time with international classmates also improved my English listening and speaking, which was an unexpected benefit.

I also enjoyed exploring the city by bicycle. I frequently visited an onsen where I befriended a kind lady who often shared homemade food with me. Before I left, she even exchanged contact information and gave me gifts. I also became friendly with a local post office clerk, and we eventually followed each other on Instagram. These encounters were precious and unforgettable.

## Overcoming Difficulties Abroad

Looking back, I did not face major difficulties. One reason may be that, as Taiwanese, we resemble Japanese people physically, so I was not treated differently in most situations. In contrast, some European students attracted attention simply by walking down the street. This could be positive, as Japanese people were delighted when they spoke Japanese, but it could also be uncomfortable for shy individuals.

For example, once at a gym with a Dutch friend, an older man suddenly scolded us, accusing us of filming, simply because we were speaking English and using our phones between sets. Even after we explained, he left without apologizing. Such incidents were

common for European students but not for Taiwanese students, and many of us felt it was discrimination. Experiences like this taught me not to hold prejudices against others and to be mindful of actions that might unintentionally hurt people.

In short, challenges abroad are not always practical but sometimes emotional. Reaching out to friends, other international students, or professors for advice is always a good way to cope.

## Coping with Culture Shock

One of my first culture shocks came from differing views on Taiwan among Chinese-speaking students. Initially, I did not know how to respond, but discussing it helped me bond with Taiwanese and Western students, making it less stressful.

Another surprise was dishwashing habits. European students often left soap residue on dishes, wiping them with cloths instead of rinsing thoroughly. For Asians, this was shocking, but it turned into an amusing topic of conversation.

I also struggled with changing clothes in front of others. In Taiwan, people rarely change in front of others, even of the same gender. However, in Japan, everyone changed together in the locker room during basketball practice and PE. It was uncomfortable at first, but I eventually got used to it and even began to appreciate the practicality.

## Benefits of Exchange

1. Significant improvement in Japanese proficiency
2. Clearer career plans to work in Japan
3. Gained close friendships and even met a partner
4. Deeper understanding of daily life in Japan
5. Broader cultural perspective and ability to see through multiple lenses
6. Introduction to skiing
7. Realization that overly dry climates do not suit me—useful for future living decisions

## Personal Growth from Overseas Experience

1. Appreciation of Taiwan's convenient healthcare, while learning not to overuse it

2. Adoption of positive aspects from other cultures to bring back home
3. Improved money management and ability to distinguish needs from wants

## Overall Impressions

Upon arriving in Yamagata, I was immediately captivated by the vast landscapes, natural beauty, and warm hospitality of the people. The professors were dedicated and passionate, making me eager to extend my stay. Less than a month in, I asked about extending my program—and I am still grateful for that decision.

The experiences and people I encountered here changed my future plans. Living and working in Japan is no longer just an idea, but a concrete goal. I also realized how limited my worldview was and how much more there is to learn.

While many international students I met in Taiwan feel sad when leaving, I felt content and happy. Looking back at the efforts I made and the experiences I embraced, I knew the year was worthwhile. I also felt assured that I would return someday. Choosing Yamagata University was one of the best decisions I have ever made.

## Additional Notes

1. Take good care of your dormitory keys. If lost, the entire lock set will be replaced at great cost. Keep the original numbered key safe, along with the numbered entry card.
2. Buying a bicycle is highly recommended. Without one, daily life and exploration are much more difficult.
3. If possible, apply for a full year instead of a half-year. A year-long stay provides a vastly deeper experience, while a half-year program lasts only about four months. I initially regretted not applying for a year, but after much effort, I successfully extended it. Although it came with significant costs, it was absolutely worth it.