



Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from
The University of Sheffield

1	Programme Title	Japanese Studies
2	Programme Code	LASU001
3	JACS Code	T210 (HECoS Code: 101169)
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA Hons)
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	6
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	None
6b	QAA FHEQ Level	6
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Sheffield and a Japanese University
8	Faculty	Arts & Humanities
9	Department	School of East Asian Studies
10	Other Departments providing credit bearing modules for the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	4 years, with a study year abroad in Japan between Level 2 and Level 3
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	October 2022, March 2026

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The BA degree in Japanese Studies embraces the study of the language, history, society and culture of Japan. Japan is playing and will continue to play a major role in the world, whether from the point of view of economics, politics or culture. To a considerable extent, the central task for the world system in the twenty-first century will be the accommodation of the economic, political and cultural influence of Japan and its interactions with other East Asian nations.

The BA degree in Japanese Studies is one of the programmes offered by the School of East Asian Studies, which was founded here at the University of Sheffield in 1963. Established originally as a Centre for Japanese Studies, the School has expanded over time, adding Centres for Korean Studies and Japanese Studies in 1988 and 1993 respectively. With a large number of research-active staff, who combine teaching with research at the frontiers of knowledge on subjects as diverse as business, economics, international relations, politics, film, identity, literature, migration and history, the School has grown to be one of the largest and most distinguished departments of its kind in the world.

In the case of Japanese Studies, the School's programme seeks to: bring students to a high level of expertise in the Japanese language; give them a thorough grounding in Japanese politics, culture, society and modern history; and enable them to pursue in-depth study of major areas of the subject, according to their developing tastes and interests. These areas can include: Japanese politics, history, society, culture, international relations or business. Simultaneously, it seeks to develop a broad range of intellectual and practical skills, including: collaborative working, awareness of the value of different cultural and academic perspectives on problems and issues; information and digital literacy and the ability to judge the reliability of information; use of creative media; differentiated presentation skills according to audience; reflective practice leading to continuing self-improvement; cultural sensitivity and awareness, through the experience of the study abroad year in Japan; and the ability to develop new approaches from a range of perspectives.

Graduates in Japanese Studies have always been highly employable. The influence of Japan in the world means that they are becoming sought-after across the entire spectrum of careers in business, finance, administration, communications and education. More generally, there is a strong and growing need for the

combination of analytical, cultural and linguistic expertise that our degree programme in Japanese Studies develops.

Further information is available on the School website: <http://www.seas.ac.uk/>

16. Programme aims

The programme has the following aims consonant with the Strategic Plan of the University of Sheffield:

1. To provide high-quality teaching informed and invigorated by the research and scholarship of the Department's staff and alert to the benefits of student-centred learning that fosters the development of transferable analytical and communicative skills;
2. To provide the acquisition of high-level Japanese language skills alongside a thorough awareness and understanding of the associated cultural context;
3. To sustain a culture of research and teaching that is able to foster the free pursuit of knowledge, the impartial analysis of values, and the acquisition of intercultural awareness, and of informed and professional attitudes towards Japan and Japanese;
4. To incorporate the student voice through the inclusion of student perspectives and contributions in all aspects of programme development and presentation;
5. To widen access to the extent permitted by the intellectual and linguistic aptitudes which Japanese Studies demands;
6. To enable students to maximise their potential in all aspects of their programme;
7. To assess students over a range of knowledge, understanding and skills, and to identify and support academic excellence;
8. To offer a range of student-centred forms of learning which foster transferable analytical and communicative skills.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

By the end of this programme a student will possess:

K1	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of the structures and usage of modern Japanese.
K2	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of key aspects of Japanese culture and society through the study of the cultural products of Japan.
K3	A sound knowledge and practical and critical understanding of the methodologies used to analyse language and culture.
K4	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of aspects of Japan's history, politics and institutions.
K5	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of a variety of disciplinary approaches to the study and analysis of Japan.
K6	A sound understanding of the importance of the different contributions made by a variety of disciplinary approaches and perspectives to the study and analysis of Japan.
K7	Practical knowledge of contemporary life in Japan.

Skills and other attributes:

By the end of this programme a student will be able to:

S1	Display a high level of competence in writing and speaking modern Japanese.
S2	Display a high level of competence in understanding the written and spoken forms of modern Japanese.
S3	Demonstrate a high level of intercultural awareness, derived from the study of language and culture and the experience of the year abroad, and leading to tolerant, professional and informed attitudes to Japanese language and culture.
S4	Locate and acquire information about Japan from a variety of sources, including teachers, native speakers, newspapers, broadcasts, books and works of reference, and digital sources in both English and

	Japanese.
S5	Critically analyse and evaluate information about Japan gained from primary and secondary sources in both English and Japanese, <u>including</u> digital, archival and textual materials.
S6	Conduct individual study and research on, or in, Japan, based upon a self-determination of their needs.
S7	Work collaboratively in small or large groups to plan study and research on Japan, and carry out the resultant activities effectively and efficiently.
S8	Present the results of research or study on Japan in written English or Japanese appropriate to a range of audiences and contexts.
S9	Present the results of research or study on Japan in spoken English or Japanese appropriate to a range of audiences and contexts.
S10	Utilise a range of digital and other technologies to support the conduct, analysis and presentation of research and study about Japan.
S11	Synthesise knowledge from a variety of sources to produce new approaches to activities, and study in Japan.
S12	Assess personal risk in relation to activities conducted in and about Japan.
S13	Apply qualitative methodological skills from the humanities and social sciences, and understand common disciplinary approaches in the field of Japanese studies

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

1. **A core academic year module** at Level 1 provides a linked combination of content and skills training to: enable students to make the transition from school to university education; understand and reflect on the purposes of different types of teaching and learning activities (S6); and develop core academic skills in information and digital literacy (S4); critical thinking (S5); and academic writing (S8). This will be linked to pastoral and personal tutoring, individually and in groups to develop understanding of peer-learning and peer-support (S7).
2. **Formal Lectures** are used in order to impart essential knowledge (K1-K6).
3. **Seminars**, which may be either staff-led or student-led, are used throughout the programme for both language classes and modules devoted to culture, literature, history, politics, institutions and linguistics/philology. Their use is extensive beyond Level 1 and is designed to reinforce information imparted through formal lecturing by allowing students to work through, analyse, understand and respond to that information (K1-K6). Seminars devoted to Japanese language acquisition may take the form of classes devoted to reading or listening comprehension, written and spoken language production, translation both from and into Japanese, or the teaching of formal grammar backed up by exercises and drills (K1-K3). In all cases the aim is to expose students to as much authentic material in Japanese as possible, both written and spoken. Language seminars may therefore be conducted partly in Japanese (S1, S2, S4-S5, S8, S9). Seminars in thematic subjects also contribute both to the achievement of knowledge and understanding (K1-K6) and to the development of key skills (S4-S13).
4. **Tutorials** are meetings arranged between a tutor and an individual student in order to clarify a particular problem experienced by that student in the understanding of material or in the process of preparation for a seminar or an assessment. Tutorials are especially important at Level 3, when students are engaged in a piece of extended research which culminates in the writing of a dissertation. By means of discussion and staff feedback on drafts of the dissertation, Level 3 tutorials in particular play a crucial role in developing knowledge and understanding (K1-K6) and in the development of key disciplinary skills from the humanities and social sciences including digital, archival and textual analyses (S4-S11, S13).
5. **Independent study** is essential to the successful completion of the programme. New students are introduced to study skills through: focussed introduction to a progression of skills in the core academic year module, reinforced by explicit linking to assessment and practice in other Level 1 modules. The amount of independent study broadly expected for each module is clearly set out in the programme information, although it is recognised that this will vary from student to student. Independent study is generally geared towards the assimilation and further clarification of material gleaned from lectures, preparation for seminars, preparation for written assessments, the broader development of knowledge of the field of study, and reflection on, and identification of, individuals' own learning and development needs. Independent

study thus contributes to the development of all the programme learning outcomes, but is especially important in refining skills S1-S11, S13. It is also crucial for the completion of project work, including the final dissertation.

- 6. The period of residence abroad**, during the second year of the programme, is spent at a leading Japanese university. It is an essential part of the learning experience (K7), providing unrivalled opportunities for creative contact with native speakers, for the sustained exercise and development of both productive and receptive linguistic skills to a level appropriate to embark upon final year study at level 3 (S1, S2, S8, S9), for the development of practical intercultural awareness to set alongside the theoretical awareness derived from the study of culture (S3), for the development of personal resourcefulness and adaptability likely to enhance employability (S7-S11, S13). Assessment is by language examination at the host university in Japan combined with a reflective project. Failure, when it occurs, results in an opportunity for resit on return to Sheffield.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

Regular formative assessment – usually in the form of periodic tests or exercises designed to reinforce knowledge and skills such as vocabulary acquisition, language production (written and spoken), language comprehension (written and spoken), translation to and from Japanese – is used at all levels to monitor carefully the student's progression through the core language programme and to pick up and rectify areas of potential weakness in linguistic competence (K1, S1, S2, S8, S9).

Summative assessment of Japanese-language knowledge and skills uses a variety of methods across all levels, combining formal examination, aural skills testing, continuous assessment of oral skills, formal assessment of oral/aural skills through presentations and exercises of specific types (academic presentation, group presentation, job interview); and coursework (translation) geared to replicate real-world practice in employment and elsewhere. Unseen examination comprises around 50% of assessment at all levels.

Assessment of modules in thematic subjects (politics, culture, history, etc.) uses appropriate combinations of the following:

- written examinations designed to test subject knowledge (K2, K4, K5);
- essay writing to test subject knowledge, information literacy, critical and analytical thinking, and academic writing and argumentation (K2, K4, K5);
- project work designed to test subject knowledge and skills development across the entire programme, and allow for autonomy in student learning (K2, K4-K6; S3-13). Project work is broadly defined to include the production of a range of written, oral and media materials, or combination of these and incorporates key disciplinary skills from the humanities and social sciences including digital, archival and textual analyses;
- presentations, both individually and in groups, designed to test organisational and communicative skills; and develop group working and peer-support (S7, S9);
- a level 4 **dissertation** assesses the ability of a student to successfully complete an in-depth piece of research using primary and secondary materials in both English and Japanese (S2-S6, S8-S13), and their understanding of the particular topic chosen (K1-K6), demonstrating key disciplinary skills from the humanities and social sciences including digital, archival and textual analyses.

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

The research interests of departmental staff and the research strategy of the School of East Asian Studies;

The Sheffield Graduate Attributes

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sheffieldgraduate/studentattributes>

Subject Benchmark Statements

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Area-Studies-16.pdf>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2014)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2843>

University Strategic Plan

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/strategicplan>

20. Programme structure and regulations

Students must take 120 credits each year made up as follows:

- at Level 1 four core Japanese Language modules (two 20 credit modules on Literacy and Writing, and two 10 credit modules on Oral and Aural Skills); the core academic year module providing East Asian Studies content and skills training, and a critical reading module based on the assimilation, analysis and interpretation of a focussed body of literature in the Japanese social sciences or humanities plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department;
- at Level 2, four core Japanese Language modules (two 20 credit modules on Literacy and Writing, and two 10 credit modules on Oral and Aural Skills); one of two approved 20 credit modules on either *Gender and Identities in East Asia* or *Mass Culture and Digital Society in East Asia*; modules amounting to the value of 20 credits chosen from a range of Japanese modules offered by the Department which cover the political, social, historical and cultural features of modern and contemporary Japan, plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department;
- a year spent in Japan at Level 3, acquiring practical experience of the country and developing advanced language skills;
- at Level 4, two core Japanese Language modules, a 40 credit dissertation requiring the use of Japanese language sources, and modules up to the value of 40 credits from a range of modules offered by the Department focussing on the current research activities of Department staff.

The programme structure is designed to provide a context in which students can achieve all of the programme learning outcomes.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/>

21. Student development over the course of study

At Level 1, the programme provides: (a) a core of language modules which develop skills in Japanese from beginner's level; (b) a core academic year module designed to aid the transition from school to university, place the study of Japan in an East Asian context and provide a spine of training in key academic skills; and (c) critical reading to provide an initial disciplinary perspective, develop a Japan-focus and reinforce the skills training from the material covered in the core module. A key feature of the year will be four gatherings, at the beginning and end of each semester, when students will gather in personal tutor groups with students from other levels to share and reflect upon the content, experience and learning outcomes of the programme as a whole. These latter are designed to provide students with an overview of the full range of topic areas which make up the discipline as conceived by the Department and nationally, to enable them to make informed choices for the future course of their studies, and their own individual skills' development needs.

At Level 2, the language modules build on the Level 1 modules and provide skills required for the Year Abroad, extending grammatical competence, exploring advanced translation, extending essay skills and oral competence with four language modules totalling 60 credits. Students choose one Japan-specific 20 credit module. Students will also have 40 Guided Module Choice credits which can be used to study modules offered outside the Department or further China/Japan/Korea/East Asia-related options. The wide choice of 20 credit modules offered by the Department will provide students with a solid grounding in disciplinary approaches and methodologies used for answering questions about Japan and the wider East Asia area. The options introduce students to the core disciplinary approaches required for the study of history, politics and the other specialist fields covered and relate these to Area Studies, further develop their critical and analytical skills; and provide training in key academic and transferable skills such as presentation and group working. A key feature of the year will be four gatherings, at the beginning and end of each semester, when students will gather in personal tutor groups with students from other levels to share and reflect upon the content, experience and learning outcomes of the programme as a whole. These latter are designed to provide students with an overview of the full range of topic areas which make up the discipline as conceived by the Department and nationally, to enable them to refine their choices for the future course of their studies, and their own individual skills' development needs.

The Year Abroad is taken in Year Three. Students study at one of Japan's leading Universities. The Year Abroad consolidates all language skills, promotes intercultural awareness and understanding, develops self-reliance and confidence in the use of Japanese, encourages students to reflect on their own linguistic competence and develop as autonomous learners. On the studies side, it provides practical experience of theory and content covered in the course to date, and also gives an opportunity for students to develop their Japanese-based research skills through the acquisition of material and experience to contribute to the final dissertation.

Level 4 builds on all the previous levels of the programme. The language modules build on the advanced competence in areas of the written and spoken language gained in earlier study and the Year Abroad, and focus on the development of the key language skills most likely to be used in employment and the seeking of it (translation, reading comprehension and summarisation, report writing and written communication (letters, emails) and formal oral communication (interviews and presentations). The options, which are strongly focused on areas of current staff research, are designed to deepen students' understanding of the specialist fields covered and of the methodologies the investigation of them entails, and to enhance further their analytical skills, their intellectual sophistication, and their abilities in written and oral expression. Students also write a dissertation on a Japan-related topic, for which some use of Japanese language sources is required. A key feature of the year will be four gatherings, at the beginning and end of each semester, when students will gather in personal tutor groups with students from other levels to share and reflect upon the content, experience and learning outcomes of the programme as a whole. These latter are designed to reflect on their personal and academic development throughout the programme, provide peer support and advice to students at earlier stages of the programme, refine their choices of post-graduation destination, and reflect upon their continuing development needs.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

The School teaches Japanese from beginner's level, and no prior language knowledge is required.

Detailed information regarding admission to programmes is available from the University's On-Line Prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/courses/>

23. Additional information

For further information students are directed to the School web pages at www.seas.ac.uk

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.