

Academic Year 2027

Kobe University

Graduate School of Intercultural Studies
Master's Program

Recommendation-based Admission

Application Handbook

- Applications are to be submitted both by post and online. To make the online application, refer to the “Online Application Procedure.”
- If any changes are made to the content of this Application Handbook, information will be published on the Graduate School’s website. Please check the website regularly. In particular, it is recommended that applicants review the website immediately prior to submitting their application.

Kobe University

Introduction

(1) The type of student sought by the Graduate School of Intercultural Studies

The Graduate School of Intercultural Studies aims to cultivate individuals who have a deep understanding of other cultures and the ability to communicate in a flexible manner, as well as being equipped with substantial academic knowledge and creative research capabilities.

Based on the aforementioned educational and research objectives, the Graduate School of Intercultural Studies seeks students who have the following characteristics.

Master's Program

- A keen interest in understanding culture as a complex entity and pursuing multifaceted studies that convey the richness of intercultural relations, as well as the core capacities required to achieve these goals.
(Desired qualities: knowledge and skill; critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to communicate effectively; autonomy and cooperation; interest and motivation)
- A keen interest in understanding the dynamics of language and information communication, and addressing the various problems that confront contemporary global society, as well as the core capacities required to achieve these goals.
(Desired qualities: knowledge and skill; critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to communicate effectively; autonomy and cooperation; interest and motivation)
- A keen interest in carrying out interdisciplinary research with high standards of expertise, as well as the core capacities required to achieve this goal.
(Desired qualities: knowledge and skill; critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to communicate effectively; autonomy and cooperation; interest and motivation)

Doctoral Program

- A keen interest in investigating the complexity and dynamic, interactive nature of cultures, and taking the lead in pioneering cutting-edge cultural research, as well as the core capacities required to achieve these goals.
(Desired qualities: knowledge and skill; critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to communicate effectively; autonomy and cooperation; interest and motivation)
- A keen interest in pursuing various language and information communication issues and conducting multifaceted research focused on the increasingly globalized modern society, as well as the core capacities required to achieve these goals.
(Desired qualities: knowledge and skill; critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to communicate effectively; autonomy and cooperation; interest and motivation)
- A keen interest in carrying out cross-disciplinary research driven by an advanced level of expertise, as well as the core capacities required to achieve this goal.
(Desired qualities: knowledge and skill; critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to communicate effectively; autonomy and cooperation; interest and motivation)

The Graduate School will hold an entrance examination based on the characteristics set out above.

(2) About the learning tracks available under the master's program

There are two options under the master's program: The Researcher Track and the Career Enhancement Track. Students select one of these pathways after enrollment.

Researcher Track

This track caters to students who intend to advance on to the Doctoral Program after completing the master's program. It offers a curriculum designed to develop researchers and specialists with a high level of expertise. To complete the track, students are required to earn the requisite number of credits, based around advanced expertise seminar courses, and to submit a master's thesis or master's folio.

Career Enhancement Track

This track caters to students who intend to enter the workforce after completing the master's program. It is designed to enhance students' future careers by equipping them with broad expertise and practical applied skills. Students are able to obtain their master's degree by earning the requisite number of credits, based around special lectures and academic skill seminars, and submitting a master's research report appropriate to their career design.

1. Admission quota

Department	Division	Course	Admission quota
Cultural Interaction	Area Studies	Japanology	A small number
		Asia-Pacific Culture Studies	
		European and American Culture Studies	
	Intercultural Communication	Cultural Anthropology	
		Transcultural Studies	
		International Relations and Comparative Politics	
Culture and Globalization	Contemporary Culture and Society	Modernity Studies	A small number
		Contemporary Social Issues	
		Art, Culture and Society Studies	
	Human Communication and Information Science	Linguistics and Communication Studies	
		Human Communication	
		Computers and Communication	
	Second Language Education	Systems of Second Language Education	
		Contents in Second Language Education	

2. Eligibility and recommendation requirements

[Application requirements]

Applicants must meet one of the conditions (1) to (5) in the box below in the period from April 2026 to March 2027.

- (1) The person has graduated from a Japanese university, or is expected to have done so.
- (2) The person has completed a 16-year course of school education in a foreign country, or is expected to have completed such a course of education.
- (3) The person has completed a 16-year course of school education of a foreign country as a result of having undertaken, while themselves based in Japan, a correspondence course offered by a foreign educational institution, or is expected to have completed such a course of education.
- (4) The person has completed a course of study in Japan at an educational institution that is recognized as having a university course under the education system of a foreign country (provided that graduates are deemed to have completed a 16-year course of study under the education system of that country), and is designated separately by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, or is expected to have done so.
- (5) The person has received a degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree as a result of having completed a course of study of not less than three years at a university or other educational institution (provided that the institution has undergone a comprehensive review of the state of its research, educational activities, etc., by an entity accredited by the government or competent authority of the foreign country, or has been designated separately by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology as equivalent to a university) in a foreign country, or is expected to have received such a degree. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes the completion of such a course of study by a person in Japan as a result of undertaking a correspondence course offered by such a foreign educational institution, and completing the course of study at an educational institution positioned within the education system of a foreign country and designated separately as set out above.

[Recommendation requirement]

Applicants must meet the abovementioned eligibility, have an excellent academic record in previous studies, submit a Letter of Recommendation under the authority of the head of the faculty or supervising professor, and be able to make a firm commitment to enroll in the chosen course if the application is successful.

3. Application period

Please ensure that your application is received between May 1 (Fri) and May 11 (Mon), 2026 (no later than 5:00 p.m.).

- * Please complete the online application and payment of the application fee within the designated application period.
- * Please post the documents required for your application such that they will definitely arrive **within the application period. Documents brought directly to the university will NOT be accepted. Please also ensure that you send your documents by express registered mail.**

Address for application documents or for enquiries about student recruitment:

Academic Affairs, Graduate School of Intercultural Studies, Kobe University
1-2-1, Tsurukabuto, Nada-ku, Kobe, JAPAN 657-8501

Please write the following, in red ink, on the front of the envelope: **Kobe University, Graduate School of Intercultural Studies Master's Program—Application Documents for Recommendation-based Admission Enclosed.**

4. How to apply

Please apply both by post AND on the Online Application Website. Please make PDF files of the documents required for the online application (except for the digital photo of the applicant, which should be in jpg, png, bmp, or heic format) and upload them to the website.

Only ONE PDF file can be uploaded for each item to be uploaded. If it is necessary to upload two or more PDF files for the same item, please combine the PDF files into one PDF file for uploading.

Online Application Website: <https://e-apply.jp/ds/kobe-u/>



If you experience difficulties when using the Online Application Website, please contact the Graduate School's Academic Affairs department.

Submission by post is required in addition to submission through the Online Application Website for the documents marked with an asterisk (*) in the table below. (Letters of Recommendation may be submitted by post only.)

Documents submitted by post must be the original documents. Photocopied documents are not acceptable. If any documents are written in a language other than Japanese or English, please also attach a translation into Japanese or English. If the applicant's name has changed, due to marriage or any other reason, such that it is no longer identical to the form written on a certificate, please include a certificate from a public institution as evidence of the change of name.

	Documents for submission	Summary
(1)	Digital photo	<p>Please follow the instructions on the Online Application Website to upload your digital photo. (Your photo must show the upper half of your body without a head covering (unless for religious or medical reasons), you must be facing forward and looking straight at the camera, the photo must be taken against a plain light-colored background, must be clear and in focus and contain no other people, and must have been taken no more than three months before the application. The digital photo must be in jpg, png, bmp or heic format.)</p> <p>It is not permitted to alter the digital photo using computer software.</p>
(2)	Application for Enrollment and curriculum vitae	<p>Please enter all required items on the Online Application Website.</p> <p>* Please ensure that you enter ALL items pertaining to your personal history (including research student and language school background, etc.).</p>

(3) * [Upload your academic transcript] [By post]	<p>Upload the document that certifies the applicants' eligibility to apply, converted to a PDF file, via the "Upload your academic transcript" on the Online Application Website. The document must be issued by a university or other relevant institution (hereafter referred to as the applicant's "Qualifying University") in which the applicant is currently enrolled.</p> <p>* If you only have a paper transcript(s), please scan the transcript(s) to a PDF file for uploading. Do not make a PDF file from a digital photo of your transcript(s), as that will not be sufficiently clear.</p> <p>Please ensure that you also submit the original document(s) by post.</p>
(4) * [Upload your Certificate of Completion (or Expected Completion)] [By post]	<p>Upload the certificate issued by your Qualifying University, converted to a PDF file, via the "Upload your Certificate of Completion (or Expected Completion)" on the Online Application Website.</p> <p>Please ensure that you also submit the original document by post.</p> <p>Note: If the period of study at the Qualifying University is of a shorter duration than the standard period, please submit a separate document providing evidence with respect to the rest of the period of study. For example, an applicant who transferred to their Qualifying University for their third year of study should provide a certificate of enrollment from the university attended prior to the transfer.</p>
(5) * [File upload 1] [By post]	<p>[Applicants who are currently enrolled at Chinese Universities and are expecting to graduate]</p> <p>Online Verification Report of Student Record (English).</p> <p>The Report of Student Record must be verified by the China Higher Education Student Information (CHSI). Please register on the CHSI website (https://www.chsi.com.cn/xlcx/bgvs.jsp) to obtain the relevant documents in PDF format. Upload it via "File upload 1."</p> <p>The validity of the online certification must extend for a period of not less than one month from the time of application. If the Graduate School is unable to perform online verification due to the expiration of the validity period, or any similar reason, the application will be treated as incomplete.</p> <p>Please ensure that you also submit the original document by post.</p>
(6) [File upload 2]	<p>Please download the Research Proposal template from the Graduate School's website and complete the document in either Japanese or English. (Please use A4-sized paper printed on one side only and attach one page as a cover. The proposal must be about 3,000 to 4,000 characters in Japanese or about 1,800 to 2,400 words in English.)</p> <p>Please upload the Research Proposal, converted to a PDF file, via the "File Upload 2" on the Online Application Website.</p> <p>* The Research Proposal template can be downloaded from the following URL: http://web.cla.kobe-u.ac.jp/master</p>

(7) *	Letter of Recommendation (Designated form) [By post]	<p>Using the designated form downloaded from the department's website, please submit by post the Letter of Recommendation prepared by the head of faculty or supervising professor of the Qualifying University, which should be submitted in a sealed envelope.</p> <p>[Regarding the sealed envelope] The author of the Letter of Recommendation should place the letter, printed on both sides of A4-sized paper, in an envelope and seal it using an appropriate glue. As proof of sealing, the author should stamp or sign the envelope, bridging the flap and the main body of the envelope, with the same stamp or signature used in the space for the author of the Letter of Recommendation.</p> <p>* The form for the Letter of Recommendation can be downloaded from the following URL. URL: http://web.cla.kobe-u.ac.jp/master</p>
(8)	Language Test Certificate [File upload 3]	<p>Please upload ONE OR MORE of the following (1), (2) or (3), converted to a PDF file, to the Online Application Website [File Upload 3]. It is also permissible to submit this certificate as the web page of the online test result converted to a PDF file.</p> <p>(1) A language test certificate of the language used in the Research Proposal.</p> <p>(2) The score on an English qualification or test (e.g. TOEIC, TOEFL, IELTS, etc.). Further, limited to the case of a test taken at this university, test scores from the TOEFL-ITP, TOEIC L&R IP test, or TOEIC S&W IP test are also recognized.</p> <p>(3) (Applicants with the “Student” status of residence only.) “Notification of Test Result” (which includes the score) of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (Level N1 or, in the case of a test taken before academic year Heisei 21 (2009), Ikkyu (First Class)).</p>
(9)	Application fee (JPY30,000)	<p>Complete the payment procedure on the Online Application Website. (The examinee must bear any handling charges incurred with respect to the payment of the application fee.)</p> <p>* The application fee need not be paid by applicants who, at the time of application, are Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship students and who continue to be eligible to apply for an extension from April 1, 2027, following the expiration of their current scholarship period.</p>

The following should be submitted only by certain applicants, as set out below.

	Documents for submission	Summary
(10)	Copy of the Residence Record (住民票の写し) [File upload 4]	<p><u>To be submitted by foreign nationals</u></p> <p>The document must have been prepared no more than 30 days prior to the date of submission. Applicants are to submit a Copy of the Residence Record (住民票の写し) without omission of any information relating to nationality or region, status of residence, or period of stay.</p> <p>Applicants residing overseas at the time of application should submit this document at the time of enrollment.</p> <p>Please upload the Residence Record, converted to a PDF file, via the “File Upload 4” on the Online Application Website.</p>

(11) Certificate of MEXT Scholarship Student and a letter by the applicant stating their intention to apply for an extension of the MEXT Scholarship [Certificate of MEXT Scholarship Student]	<p><u>To be submitted by Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship students</u></p> <p>A certificate issued by the university at which the applicant is enrolled stating that the applicant is a MEXT Scholarship Student AND a letter (free format) by the applicant stating their intention to apply for an extension of the MEXT Scholarship Student's scholarship.</p> <p>Please upload the two documents mentioned above, converted to ONE PDF file, via the [Certificate of MEXT Scholarship Student] on the Online Application Website.</p>
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* The documents necessary for your application must be submitted via the Online Application Website AND by post by the designated deadline date for applications. However, if there is some unavoidable reason why you are unable to upload your documents to the website, please contact the Graduate School's Academic Affairs Department.

5. Selection procedure

Selection is based on an examination of submitted documents to determine pass or fail.

6. Admission notice

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 24, 2026 (provisional)

Kobe University Graduate School of Intercultural Studies website: <http://web.cla.kobe-u.ac.jp/>

Successful applicants will be notified via the Online Application Website system on this day.

Please note that we are not able to respond to inquiries by phone or other means.

7. Enrollment process

(1) Enrollment process

Documents relating to the enrollment process will be sent to successful applicants in early February 2027. Details concerning enrollment process dates, documents to be submitted, and the enrollment process itself will be provided when the enrollment documents are sent to successful applicants.

Successful applicants should return their Examination Admission Ticket and enrollment documents, and pay the following fees.

(2) Fees

Fee Category	Amount	Summary
Admission Fee	JPY282,000	1. The amounts set out here are from the 2026 academic year.

Tuition Fee	First semester: JPY267,900 Annual tuition fee: JPY535,800	2. The fees for students enrolling in the 2027 academic year will be provided separately, once they have been determined. 3. Once paid, the admission fee cannot be refunded for any reason.
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Note: If the tuition fee is revised while a student is enrolled, the revised fee will apply from the time of revision.

Information for reference: Admission fee exemption or deferral, and tuition fee exemption

Details concerning the admission fee exemption or deferral, and tuition fee exemption, as well as the corresponding processes, will be published on the website of Kobe University once they have been determined (Campus life → Tuition and Fees; URL: <https://www.kobe-u.ac.jp/en/campus-life/tuition/>).

Should you have any questions concerning the information published on the website, please refer to the following contact information.

For inquiries concerning the admission fee exemption or deferral, and tuition fee exemption:

Kobe University Academic Affairs Department, Student Support, Scholarship Support Group (Exemptions)

Phone: 078-803-5431 E-mail: stdnt-shogakushien@office.kobe-u.ac.jp

8. How we handle your personal information

- (1) Personal information held by the University will be handled with the utmost care, in strict compliance with the Act on the Protection of Personal Information and other relevant laws and regulations, and in accordance with the Guidelines on Management of Personal Information Held by Kobe University.
- (2) Personal information such as examination scores and the like will be used for the purposes of the selection of applicants (the processing of applications and the entrance examination), announcing successful applicants, enrollment processes, and surveys and research to improve future examination processes and university education. The information will be processed such that individuals are not identifiable when such surveys and research, or their results, are published.
- (3) Personal information about an applicant provided at the time of an application will be used solely for purposes of post-enrollment student support (including health management, the tuition fee exemption, or scholarship applications), academic affairs (including student registration and academic counseling), or other such matters of an educational objective or concerning fees, or other related services.
- (4) Some services may be outsourced to a contractor by the University. In such instances, personal information will be provided to the contractor only to the extent required to perform the services in question, and the contractor will be instructed to maintain strict confidentiality with respect to such personal information.

9. Framework for extending the period of study

Document submission deadline: Friday, February 5, 2027

This framework allows students who would have difficulties earning the credits required for completion of the course in a period of two years, due to reasons such as professional commitments, to apply at the time of enrollment to obtain the necessary credits and complete the course over a period exceeding two years, in a manner planned from the outset. If Kobe University approves the application, the student may remain enrolled for a period exceeding two years, while paying tuition fees equivalent to that of a normal two-year period of study.

The annual tuition fee will be calculated by dividing the total tuition fee for a normal two-year period of study by the number of years approved for the student's extended period of study. However, if the tuition fee is revised while a student is enrolled, the revised fee will apply from the time of revision.

To be considered for an extension under this framework, the student must satisfy one or more of the following criteria, making it difficult to complete the course of study within the normal period of time:

- (1) The person has a profession and is employed (including those who are self employed or temporarily employed [but excluding casual part-time work]).
- (2) The person has household, childcare, or nursing care responsibilities, or responsibilities of a similar nature.
- (3) The person is recognized by the Dean of the Graduate School as eligible for consideration under this framework for other reasons.

Even if the student is employed, etc., the framework is subject to certain conditions. Applicants who intend to take advantage of this framework will be instructed as to the documents they will be required to submit, and are therefore advised to contact Academic Affairs, Graduate School of Intercultural Studies, by email promptly after notice of their successful application.

10. Important information

- (1) Once an application has been processed, we are unable to accept any changes to the information recorded in the application documents.
- (2) We are not able to return application documents once received, nor are we able to refund the application fee.
- (3) An enrollment may be cancelled if false information has been provided in the application, even after the enrollment has been processed.
- (4) Any person staying in Japan with a status of residence when they enroll must have a status of residence that does not impede enrollment at a graduate school under the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act (Cabinet Order No. 319 of 1951).
- (5) We are not able to respond to any inquiries regarding the arrival of application documents.
- (6) Enrollment at this university may not be permitted if you do not submit the original copies of your application documents.

11. Reference

Applicant numbers, etc.

The numbers of applicants, etc. for the Kobe University Graduate School of Intercultural Studies Master's Program Recommendation-based Admission for the 2026 academic year were as follows.

The 2026 academic year Master's Program Recommendation-based Admission

Department	Spaces available	Applicants	Successful applicants
Cultural Interaction	A small number	6	5
Culture and Globalization	A small number	9	3

Total	A small number	15	8
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The numbers of applicants, etc. for the Kobe University Graduate School of Intercultural Studies Master's Program for the 2025 academic year were as follows.

The 2025 academic year Master's Program

Department	Spaces available	Applicants	Successful applicants	Students enrolled
Cultural Interaction	18	53	20	19
(special selection for adult applicants)		(3)	(2)	(2)
(special selection for international students)		(28)	(4)	(4)
Culture and Globalization	29	80	31	27
(special selection for adult applicants)		(1)	(1)	(0)
(special selection for international students)		(50)	(12)	(11)
Total	47	133	51	46
(special selection for adult applicants)		(4)	(3)	(2)
(special selection for international students)		(78)	(16)	(15)

Note: The figures in parentheses refer to the number of applicants undergoing special selection for adult applicants and the number of applicants undergoing special selection for international students.