

Programme specification 2012/2013

School of Oriental and African Studies

The following information forms the programme specification at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. It gives definitive information relating to a programme of study and is written for a public audience, particularly prospective and current students. It is also used for other purposes such as initial programme approval, and is therefore produced at the start of the programme development process. Once approved, it forms the base-line information for all statements relating to the programme and is updated as approved amendments are made.

CORE INFORMATION

Programme title	BA Japanese
Final award	BA Honours
Intermediate awards	n/a
Mode of attendance	Full-time
UCAS code	T210 BA/J
Professional body accreditation	n/a
Date specification created/updated	20 March 2011

WHY CHOOSE THIS PROGRAMME?

Why study at SOAS?	SOAS is unique as the only higher education institution in the UK specialising in the study of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The School also has the largest concentration of specialist faculty concerned with the study of these areas at any university in the world. SOAS is consistently ranked among the top higher education institutions in the UK and the world and it also offers a friendly, vibrant environment for students in a diverse and close-knit community.
What is special about this programme?	This programme offers students the opportunity to study Japanese language and culture in-depth. The programme prides itself in having a most rigorous language course and in having a broad range of expertise in Japanese subjects across the School. If you want to learn Japanese language and culture/society in depth, then this programme offers you many opportunities. We have experts and course offerings in traditional and contemporary Japan, including the popular arts, as well as politics and

	<p>economics.</p> <p>In the most recent national assessment of university research, the Japan and Korea Department was rated, with other Asian Studies Departments at SOAS, as the number one centre for research on Asia.</p>
Who would it suit?	<p>This course is aimed at those who are fascinated by Japanese culture and want to understand it deeply, and to learn to speak and read Japanese. It is for students who want to be challenged to achieve. The range of expertise in Japanese at SOAS offers specialists in almost all humanities and social science areas. Our students follow a wide variety of career paths, and many spend time after graduation in Japan and/or working in areas related to Japan. The range of career options open to graduates is vast. Besides those who go into research, many graduates use their subject directly in subsequent employment. Examples include journalism, business and commerce, teaching overseas, the Civil Service (especially the Foreign Office), or NGOs. However, even if you choose not to stay in a related field, employers are often impressed by the initiative you've displayed to tackle a difficult language. Our recent graduates have also gone into banking, marketing, law, and one worked with a rock music promotion company in Japan, and then became a patent lawyer, now also working with Japanese clients in London.</p>
Programme structure	<p>You will study Japanese language intensely for the first two years, half the course load. The other half is focused on Japanese culture/society courses, including about both contemporary and traditional Japan. The third year is spent at one of the twenty-plus Japanese universities that we have exchange programmes with. During the year in Japan you will study Japanese language as well as courses of your choice on Japan, and be able to have an important adventure in your life. The final year you will explore a topic of your choice in an Independent Study Project (final-year</p>

	thesis), and two other courses that use Japanese sources from the Japan and Korea Department, and have a choice of another subject.
Assessment summary	Courses will be assessed in a variety of ways. Some are assessed by essay or coursework only; others will have a mixture of coursework and final exam assessment.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

SOAS has general minimum entrance requirements for registration for an undergraduate degree and these can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/admissions/ug/entryreq/>)

- **A Levels:** AAB
- A Level language preferred
- **IB:** 36 (6/6/6)

- **BTEC:** DDM
- **Scottish Highers:** AAABB
- **Scottish Advanced Highers:** AAB
- **Irish LC:** 340 points from 5 Higher level subjects at grade C1 or above
- **Advanced Placement:** 4 4 5 (Two semesters - UCAS Group A) plus US HSGD with GPA 3.0
- **Euro Bacc:** 80%
- **French Bacc:** 14/20
- **German Abitur:** 2.0
- **Italy DES:** 80/100
- **Austria Mat:** 2.0
- **Polish Mat:** 75%

Minimum Entry Requirements: No preliminary knowledge of the language is required but a foreign language at A-level or equivalent is preferred.

Interview Policy: In principle all mature students, and all Japanese nationals and all students one of whose parents is Japanese are invited for interview. Students with experience in Japan or in Japanese language may be invited for interview.

PROGRAMME AIMS

What will this programme give the student an opportunity to achieve?

1. To develop knowledge and understanding of the cultural, artistic and intellectual history of Japan from multidisciplinary approaches.
2. To achieve a high level of competence in Japanese language.
3. To learn transferable skills in researching topics, and in writing essays to communicate the findings.

PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

What will the student learn?

Knowledge

1. Advanced active and passive competence in modern Japanese
2. Advanced competence in a discipline of the Humanities such as literature, history or linguistics, especially in its relation to Japan
3. Understanding of the linguistic structures of Japanese
4. Thorough ability in reading and translating modern Japanese texts in different styles and genres
5. Detailed knowledge of the history, development and current state of Japanese culture.
6. Good general knowledge of Japanese history and society
7. Basic understanding of pre-modern Japanese language

Intellectual (thinking) skills

1. Ability to critically engage with Japan studied from a number of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, including cultural studies, film and media studies, history, linguistics and literature
2. Ability to compare and contrast the appropriateness of different disciplinary approaches in an examination of the area studied
3. Ability to use and critically interrogate a range of primary and secondary written and/or oral and/or visual sources, in their original language, where appropriate
4. Critical reasoning, from a non-eurocentric perspective
5. Oral and written application of linguistic, literary and philosophical concepts, as well as of the concepts central to the discipline studied as a second subject
6. Written formulation of problems, hypotheses, methods of inquiry and conclusions
7. Demonstration and exercise of independence of mind and thought.

Subject-based practical skills

1. Ability to use modern Japanese language for research.
2. Ability to understand and make use of the methodologies of a particular discipline.
3. Retrieve, sift and select information from a variety of sources
4. plan, undertake and report both bibliographically-based and fieldwork-based research
5. Understand, speak, read and write modern Japanese at a high level of proficiency
6. Experience daily life and study in Japan

Transferable skills

Ability to analyse a problem or topic, to formulate research questions, explore the topic and to write an essay or report to communicate the findings.

The programme will encourage students to:

1. Adopt a non-eurocentric perspective and foster intercultural awareness and understanding
2. Structure and communicate ideas effectively both orally and in writing
3. Participate constructively in groups

4. Work independently
5. Find information and use information technology
6. Be self-reliant
7. Assess the relevance and importance of the ideas of others

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR GAINING AN AWARD

How will the student's study be structured? How will they achieve an award?

Structure, duration and requirements for gaining an award

SOAS has standard requirements relating to the structure and duration of undergraduate programmes and for the award and classification of these programmes. Details can be found at

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degreeregulations/file60378.pdf>

Programme structure diagram

Below is a structure diagram for this programme.

Level	Year of study	Course code	Course title	Credit	Status	Notes
4	1	155901195	J1: Elementary Japanese	60	Core	
4	1	155901199	Aspects of Japanese Culture 1	15	Compulsory	
4	1	155901200	Aspects of Japanese Culture 2	15	Compulsory	
4	1	n/a	open option	30	option	
5	2	155901215	J2: Japanese	60	Core	
5	2	155901213	Survey of Pre-Modern Japanese Literature in Translation	15	Compulsory	
5	2	155901294	Introduction to Pre-Modern Japanese Language	15	Compulsory	
5	2	n/a	optional course in the Japanese section or open option	30	option	
5	3	n/a	Year Abroad in Japan	4 units = 120	Core	
6	4	155900883	Independent Study Project	30	Compulsory	
6	4	n/a	Two advanced Japanese language use courses	60	Compulsory	Student must take two units from a list of Japanese

						language use courses.
6	4	n/a	optional course in the Japanese section or open option	30	option	

The availability of optional/elective courses may vary in a given academic session due to factors such as staff absence and student numbers. For an up to date list of courses running in a given academic session please refer to the degree structures as listed on the SOAS website for the degree programmes taught by each Department.

List of Japanese language use course available to students in year 4:

- [Independent Study Project in Japanese Language and Culture](#)
- [Advanced Practical Japanese](#)
- [Memory and Militarism on Japanese TV](#)
- [Readings in Japanese History](#) 0.5 unit (term 1)
- [Readings in Japanese Intellectual History](#) 0.5 unit (term 2)
- [Readings in Modern Japanese Literature](#)
- [Readings in Pre-modern Japanese Literature](#)

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

What methods will be used to achieve the learning outcomes?

<p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of 1, 3 and 4 is through small-group classes, tutorials, regular assessed and non-assessed coursework. • Acquisition of 2 is through courses taught in another department at SOAS. These can be large lecture courses or small-group classes. • Acquisition of 4 and 6 is through lectures and practical exercises, as well as through dedicated courses in culture and linguistics at various levels. • Acquisition of 5 is central to all language use courses in Years 3 and 4 (from 2003/04 intake onwards: years 2 and 4), most of which are centered around the reading, translation, analysis and interpretation of texts. The specific type of ability acquired by the student in these years depends on the courses selected, since joint degree students typically need only take 1 course unit in Japanese during these two years, although more may be taken as options. • Acquisition of all elements is furthered by the compulsory inclusion of a year abroad (Year Three), spent in Japan, providing total immersion in the modern language and culture. <p>Assessment: Testing of the knowledge base is through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) written examinations, typically containing both seen and unseen elements; b) oral examinations c) assessed coursework; d) assessed library assignments; e) essays <p>Intellectual (thinking) skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme

outlined above. Each course involves discussion of key issues, practice in applying concepts both orally and in writing, analysis and interpretation of materials, and individual feedback sessions for learners on work produced.

Assessment:

Assessment of intellectual skills (oral presentation, participation in classroom discussion, essay writing) is typically reflected in a 40% “coursework mark” for upper level courses in literature and linguistics.

Subject-based practical skills

- Guidance on how to identify, locate and use material in the library and elsewhere is provided in the context of all non-language acquisition courses.
- Throughout the four years, all students take classes that involve the use of modern Japanese.
- Key methods and concepts of literary and linguistic analysis are taught in dedicated units at various levels.
- The compulsory year in Japan provides students with an invaluable experience that greatly enhances, in practical terms, their position on the job market after graduation.

Assessment:

Skills 1, 2 and 5 are primarily assessed through coursework, essays and the Independent Study Project. Skills 3 and 4 are assessed through written and oral examinations and coursework.

Transferable skills

- The year abroad, and the uniquely multicultural constitution of the teaching staff, are key elements in providing students with a learning experience that actively fosters intercultural awareness and a non-eurocentric perspective. (Skill 1)
- Skills 2, 4, 5 and 7 are typically learned in the process of carrying out research assignments (coursework, essays etc.) as well as during classroom discussions.
- Skills 3 and 6 are important elements of the entire learning experience, but specifically of the year abroad.

Assessment:

Assessment of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 is through various types of coursework and research assignments already described above.

Encouragement of 1, 3, 6 and 7 is also a key element of the classroom experience, as well as of personal feedback from and contact with tutors.

REFERENCE POINTS

What has been the basis for the design of this programme?

The following reference points were used in designing the programme:

- School Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Staff research
- QAA framework for higher education qualifications
- QAA subject benchmark statement Languages and related studies (2007):
 1. The programme provides a high standard of active and passive competence

in the use of the language. It includes a year abroad. The programme also caters to the needs of non-beginners and/or heritage students, who are partly taught in special groups and given additional options during the first year.

2. Explicit knowledge of language is covered by specific upper-year courses as well as by a new first-year course in Language Learning.

3. The programme clearly provides knowledge of aspects of the cultures, communities and societies where the languages are used, as well as subject-related skills. This is done through survey courses in the first year, as well as through reading (or viewing) and analysis of literary and other cultural materials in later years.

4. The programme actively promotes the adoption of a non-eurocentric perspective and intercultural understanding.

The staffing of the Japanese section, with scholars from Japan, Britain, Germany and Italy, educated at universities in Asia, Europe and the United States, in itself is a model of intercultural understanding, and guarantees that the students are provided with diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives, as should be the aim of any university education.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

SOAS has internal procedures to assure the quality of provision to be offered to students and to enhance the quality in the light of experience following delivery, taking into account the input of external experts and students. The procedures are set out in the School's Quality Assurance Handbook and can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/add/qualityassurance/quality-assurance-handbook/>).

SOAS is also subject to periodic external review from bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and relevant professional and statutory regulatory bodies.

The procedures described in the Quality Assurance Handbook are in place to provide a high quality student experience for those choosing to study at SOAS, and student input and evaluation of their experiences is greatly valued. Students make an input to the ongoing development of their programmes, and the environment in which they operate, in a number of ways, including:

- formal student evaluation as part of the annual programme review;
- student representation on School committees at various levels (through the Students' Union) where many relevant issues are discussed.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Add in links to other relevant information, both internal and external, including:

- [SOAS Vision and Strategy Statement](#);
- [Undergraduate Handbook](#);
- [Quality Assurance Handbook](#);
- [UCAS website](#);
- [QAA website](#).