

International Students - Study Abroad in Japan – Non-Waiver Visa FAQs

Below are common questions we receive from international students participating in May and Summer programs of 90 days or less.

Q: I need a Temporary Visitor's Visa to travel to Japan. Do I apply for my visa by myself?

A: No. If you are attending a JCMU program or an eligible MSU study abroad program, then JCMU will assist you with the application process, including collecting documentation and shipping your passport to the Consulate General of Japan in Detroit.

Q: Will I need additional documents for my visa?

A: Yes. After you are accepted to the JCMU program, our staff will contact you with a list of the documentation needed for your visa application. You will also need a 2 x 2 inch passport photo.

Q: Can I send a scan or copy of my visa documentation / application materials?

A: No. The Japanese immigrations authority requires that all visa documentation be original hard copies with authentic signatures. No copies, faxes or scans are allowed. This includes all signed student forms, financial support documentation, and the visa application form itself.

Q: I heard that I need to give JCMU my passport in order to get my visa. Is this true?

A: Yes. Your visa is actually placed inside your passport, so your original passport is required for processing. JCMU will collect student passports and lock them in our office safe before sending all passports as a batch to the consulate. Your passport will then be returned to you when your visa is issued by the Consulate.

Q: Is there a fee for my visa application?

A: Yes, there is an additional fee for visas for students from non-waiver countries. You must turn in a money order made payable to the Consulate General of Japan. However, we will not know the fee's amount until after April 1st of every year. At that time, the JCMU office will let all students in need of a visa know about the fee.

Q: How long does it take to get a visa?

A: The visa process takes about 4-6 weeks from start to finish, the processing at the consulate taking 7-10 business days. This is one of the reasons that we start the visa process as soon as acceptance letters go out to students – we want to make sure there is enough time to have the visas processed and the passports returned before students depart for Japan.

Q: I have more questions about getting a visa. Who should I talk to at JCMU?

A: Our Fiscal Officer, Kitty Douglass-Harris, takes care of all of the visa applications for JCMU and eligible MSU study abroad programs to Japan. Kitty can be reached by phone at (517) 355-4654, by email at gabele@msu.edu. She is also available for in-person consultations by appointment at the JCMU-East Lansing office – please just email her to request an appointment window.

For more general information about visas, and for a list of the non-waiver visa requirement countries, please visit the Consulate General of Japan in Detroit's website at <http://www.detroit.us.emb-japan.go.jp>.