

Exchange in Japan

Birkbeck, University of London

Eden Wood

I think my experience of studying abroad at Ochanomizu has been very fulfilling. Because of the corona virus, I couldn't come to Japan for two years. I was planning to start at Ochanomizu University in October 2020, but I couldn't come to Japan because of the entry restrictions. Living in Tokyo and going to classes everyday has improved my Japanese speaking ability a lot since last year. Because you have many opportunities to speak to Japanese students, you are able to become familiar with real conventional language that Japanese people use that is not taught in textbooks.

This term, I took intermediate and advanced level classes. Classes at Ochanomizu require a lot of presentations. Last term I was always nervous to speak in front of the class. Even in English, I am quite a bad at public speaking. However, this term I think I became much less nervous. But I am still quiet. For me, the most fun class was the upper level kanji class. I like studying kanji and the kanji we learnt in this class were very interesting. Katō-sensei is also very kind. The most difficult class I took this term was Nihongo Enshū 3A. I think Level 3 is a bit difficult for me and the topics we studied such as 'societal change and our way of life' were complicated, but I tried my best!



I went to a lot of wonderful places this semester. My partner came to Japan in March for 3 weeks. We ate at the Pokémon cafe, went to TeamLabs art museum and did a lot of flower viewing while the sakura were in bloom. However, One of the best things we did was go to the 'mipig' cafe in Harajuku. You can hold cute baby pigs so if you have time, I recommend checking it out!

My family also came to Japan in May for 2 weeks. They wanted to go to popular the tourist spots together like the Sky Tree and Takeshita street. However, we also went to Fukuoka and Hiroshima on the weekend to meet my host family. My host family took us to a local restaurant. I was glad my family was able to experience Japanese culture and food and talk to my host family. One of the most difficult experiences in Japan was trying to buy Shinkansen tickets for my family. It must be difficult for tourist who can't speak Japanese. If you get the chance to go to Hiroshima, I recommend going to Miyajima. It's a beautiful island with many friendly deer and a large floating torii gate. It's also quite easy to get to from Hiroshima station.



There were many people who helped me during my study abroad, and I would like to express my gratitude to them. First of all, thanks to the teachers, I was able to learn many useful things. Hirano-sensei took me and my classmates to the Uchiwa festival in Saitama Prefecture. Thanks to Hirano-sensei, I was able to experience a wonderful Japanese festival and I am very grateful. Next, I would like to thank my supervisor. Allen-sensei, thank you for always checking my review sheet. To the International Affairs Division and dormitory managers, thank you for always helping me with various problems. Finally, I am most grateful to my tutor, Moeka. Thank you for meeting and talking to me every

Friday. I really enjoyed learning about your hobbies and interests. By talking with Moeka, I was able to understand real Japanese. Thanks to Moeka, I didn't feel lonely in Japan, and it was really nice to have the opportunity to talk with a Japanese student like Moeka. Thank you for all your guidance and help since I came to Japan.