

## Study abroad in Japan

SOAS University

Amelia Laird

My study abroad experience has been a little bit strange. Firstly, I thought Japan's borders should open in November. So, I went to South Korea in September because they have the same time zone as Japan. But then, Japan only opened their borders for a few weeks, and I could not go. I still have not gone to Japan. I left South Korea in December. Now I have returned to the United Kingdom.

Because I went to South Korea, my study abroad experience was enjoyable. A lot of my friend's study Korean in Korea, and work in Korea, so I met them. I also practiced Korean. Korean has the same grammar as Japanese, so it was easier. I liked Korea, but I wanted to go to Japan. However, it is now January, and I don't think Japan are going to open the borders. The Japanese government do not answer questions about student visas. It is disappointing.

My online classes have been good. I think I learned a lot of new grammar and kanji, which is good. When I was in Korea, I met a few Japanese people and I practiced Japanese with them. I think my Japanese has become a bit better, but it is not that good. My Japanese teachers were encouraging, but because I am not in Japan, I can't practice Japanese every day, and I still think it is difficult.

When I was in Korea, I did a lot of walking. When class finished at around 4:30pm, I would go and walk up the mountains and hills with my friends. When I go to Japan, I really want to climb up Mount Fuji. I hope the



Japanese government will open the borders soon so I can climb it before summer.

In Ochanomizu University, there is a climbing club. I want to join that club and make friends and climb Mount Fuji together.

Overall, the study abroad has been unfortunate. I really want to go to Japan soon and learn Japanese, so I hope the borders will open soon. I want to thank all my teachers for supporting me, and when I went back to England, for being considerate of the time zones. Thank you to Matsuda-sensei and Hagiwara-sensei for an amazing homeroom and always helping us out if we had any questions. I wish I could thank you all in person. I hope we can all meet in the classroom soon.

Thank you.