

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	BA Japanese Studies BA Japanese Studies with International Experience <i>Exit award:</i> - BA Japanese Studies with Korean / Chinese (available if conditions met; see below)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Dip HE; Cert HE
Is the programme offered with a Foundation Year?	Yes
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home School/other teaching departments	Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English and Japanese (Korean/Mandarin Chinese if taken)
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (3 years; 4 years with Foundation Year; 4 years with International Experience); Part-time (4 years; 6 years with Foundation Year) October
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	Not applicable
<u>QAA subject benchmark group(s)</u> <u>Higher Education Credit Framework for</u> <u>England</u>	Languages Cultures and Societies
UCAS code	T210; T211 (with int exp) ; T212 (with FY)
Birkbeck Course Code	UUBAJAPN_C (3 years full-time) UUBAJPIX_C (4 years full-time with int exp) UBAJAPAN_C (4 year part-time) UUBFJAPN_C (4 years full-time with FY) UBFJAPAN_C (6 years with FY)
HECoS Code	(101168) Japanese studies
Start date of programme	October 2020
Date of programme approval	Summer 2019
Date of last programme amendment approval	March 2023
Valid for academic entry year	2026-27
Programme Director	Michael Tsang & Irene González-López
Date of last revision to document	01/12/2025

Admissions requirements

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

UCAS tariff: 112 points (48 for with Foundation Year entry)

The UCAS tariff score is applicable to you if you have recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence. UCAS provides a [tariff calculator](#) for you to work out what your qualification is worth within the UCAS tariff.

Course aims

For Foundation Year (year zero), see School of Creative Arts, Culture and Communication Foundation Year programme specification.

The programme, offering evening, face-to-face study, allows students to reach a BA honours degree 'exit' level of attainment in Japanese (Japanese Language Proficiency Test, JLPT, N2) by the end of the three-year, four-year or six-year period of study. Students will also study the culture of Japan through the medium of that language and in English. They will also have the opportunity to acquire advanced knowledge of a range of comparative cultural topics. For students who have achieved a high level of proficiency in Japanese and a good academic track record, they will have the chance to study Korean or Mandarin Chinese as well.

Students study this programme in a three-year full-time, four-year-full-time or four-year part-time mode. Students taking the four-year full-time BA Japanese Studies with International Experience programme will spend a year of study (normally the third year) in Japan. Please note: students must make satisfactory progress during year 1 and 2 of their degree to be eligible for a Year Abroad. Additionally, the non-UK partner institution may set its own entrance criteria, including, but not limited to, academic criteria, language requirements and visa. In instances where a student does not meet the eligibility criteria for an approved Year Abroad, their registration may be transferred to the corresponding BA programme pathway without the 'with International Experience' designation.

More specifically we aim to:

1. Offer a broad and balanced degree programme in the evening that enables students to engage fully in the improvement of their language skills, in the reading and analysing of a variety of texts in the study of Japanese modern history, culture and society, Japanese literature, cinema, media and popular culture.
2. Provide access to learning and curricula appropriate for students with a range of traditional and non-traditional educational backgrounds, including and international students.
3. Enable our students to develop independent critical thinking and judgement.
4. Develop a range of subject-specific and transferable skills, particularly conceptual, analytical, and communication skills, including the ability to write lucid, logical, and well-structured prose in both English and Japanese. To these should be added appropriate IT skills and confidence to engage with evolving media.
5. To enable our students to study or work in Japan (subject to the restrictions stated above) during the summer break, as an optional part of the three-year full-time degree, or for a year as part of the four-year full-time BA Japanese Studies with International Experience in order to provide them with an opportunity to develop their language skills

and their knowledge of the culture of Japan, as well as to acquire a range of transferable personal, academic and employability skills.

Further distinctive features:

1. We are particularly well-known for the strength of our language teaching-provision.
2. The flexibility of our language pathways means that students can normally enter the part-time programme at any language level from beginner to advanced and the fulltime programme at any level from A-level to advanced. All students have the opportunity to reach the BA honours degree 'exit' level of attainment.
3. The relatively high proportion of students engaged in the study of Japanese language and culture not only enriches all students' learning experience through shared experience and discussion, but also strengthens the Japanese atmosphere we endeavour to create in our classes and social activities which is helped by our extremely active Japanese society run by the students. We offer a varied range of modules relating both to Japanese culture, and the comparative study of cultures relating to Japan and to the other languages taught at Birkbeck (currently French, German, Italian, Spanish, Korean and Mandarin Chinese).
4. We maintain very strong ties with many Japan-related foundations, and our students can work on placement opportunities with these cultural institutions, sharpening their transferable and job hunting skills.

Note on Korean/Mandarin Chinese provision:

If a student has achieved a high level of proficiency in Japanese and a good academic track record, they may study Korean/Mandarin Chinese language as an option. However, Japanese attainment takes priority in this programme, and students must first endeavour to achieve exit-level proficiency in Japanese (Japanese 4 or above) before they can take other languages including Korean or Mandarin Chinese. Should a student wish to take Korean or Mandarin Chinese, and owing to certain similarities between Japanese and those languages, Korean or Mandarin Chinese can only be taken with the following conditions met:

- Under normal circumstances a Korean or Mandarin Chinese language module cannot be taken in the first year of study (i.e. Year 1 for BA or Year 0 for FY);
- Korean or Mandarin Chinese can only be taken once a student has passed Japanese 3 with at least a mark of 60 in their previous year of study and is taking Japanese 4 (thereby reasonably expecting to attain the exit-level proficiency of Japanese 4);
- Korean or Mandarin Chinese can be taken concurrently with Japanese 4 (as long as Japanese 3 was passed with at least 60). It can also be taken after passing Japanese 4 or Japanese 5;
- Because Japanese is the major language and Korean/Mandarin Chinese the option, the student must continue to study Japanese 5 from Japanese 4 if they have one or more years left for their study period. They cannot abandon Japanese 5 in order to focus on Korean/Mandarin Chinese. They can, however, choose to take Japanese 5 alongside Korean/Mandarin Chinese. (If they are in their Final Year doing Japanese 4, they will graduate with Japanese 4, and can be allowed to take **Korean/Chinese 1 as per above**).

If a student completes at least 90 credits of Korean or Mandarin Chinese language modules and achieves Korean/Chinese 3, this can constitute a 'Minor' pathway and the award title becomes BA Japanese Studies with Korean/Chinese.

The following table shows a number of indicative pathways where the optional study of Korean or Mandarin Chinese is possible:

3-year BA (full time)				
Pathway	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
AA	Japanese 1	Japanese 2+3 (intensive; 60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1	
B	Japanese 2	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1	
C	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1/2	
D	Japanese 4	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1	Korean/Chinese 1/2	
E	Japanese 5	Korean/Chinese 1	Korean/Chinese 1/2	
4-year BA (part time)				
Pathway	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
A	Japanese 1	Japanese 2	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1
B	Japanese 2	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1/2
C	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1/2	Korean/Chinese 1/2/3
D	Japanese 4	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1	Korean/Chinese 1/2	Korean/Chinese 1/2/3
4-year FY				
Pathway	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A	Japanese 1	Japanese 2	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1
B	Japanese 2	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1/2
C	Japanese 3 (60+)	Japanese 4 Korean/Chinese 1	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1/2	Korean/Chinese 1/2/3
D	Japanese 4	Japanese 5 Korean/Chinese 1	Korean/Chinese 1/2	Korean/Chinese 1/2/3

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp/ Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 3 years or 4 years with international experience					
Year 1 (120 credits from modules indicated)					
4		Japanese 1, 2, 3 or 4 (depending on level at entry)	30	Core if taken	T1-T3
4	ARLL004S4	Doing Languages Cultures and Applied Linguistics	30	Comp	T1
4	ARLL010S4	Culture and Text OR	30	Option	T2
4	ARLL009S4	Culture and Image	30	Option	T2
4	LNLN023S4	Rethinking Japan	30	Comp	T3

Year 2 (120 credits from modules indicated)					
5/6		Japanese 2, 3, 4 or 5 (depending on entry level) OR	30	Core if taken	T1-T3
5		Japanese 2 (Intensive) AND	30	Core if taken	T1-T2
5		Japanese 3 (Intensive)	30	Core if taken	T2-T3
5	ARMC145S5 ARMC093S5	Popular Culture in Japan and East Asia OR Theorising Japanese Cinema (offered in alternate years)	30	Option	T1, T2 or T3
5	ARLL012S5 OR ARLL011S5	Themes in the European and Japanese Novel OR Themes in European and Japanese Cinema (offered in alternate years)	30	Option	T1, T2 or T3
5	ARCL022S5 LNLN024S5 ARCL25S5 AREL094S5	Reading Transnational Cultures OR Representations of Gender, Love and Sexuality OR Culture and Crisis OR Film and Politics (one or two offered each year) OR	30	Option	T1, T2 or T3
5	SC04011S5/ SC04050S5	Korean/Chinese 1 (if having passed Japanese 3 in previous year with at least 60 and taking Japanese 4/5 in current year)	30	Option	T1-T3
Year 3 'with International Experience' only					
5		60 credits APL from modules taken at a partner institution* (see below)	60	Option	n/a
Year 3 OR Year 4 'with International Experience' (120 credits from modules indicated)					
6		Japanese 4 or 5 (depending on starting level)	30	Core if taken	T1-T3
6	ARMC187S6 ARLL026H6 ARLL027H6	Manga and Anime AND/OR Advanced Seminar in Japanese Society and Culture PLUS Advanced Seminar in Japanese Linguistics and Translation (The two advanced seminars must be taken together)	30 15 15	Option	T1, T2 or T3
6		Cross-cultural Options	30	Option	T1, T2 or T3
6	ARCL123S6	Dissertation in Cultures and Languages	30	Option	T1-T3

6	SC04012S6/ SC04015S6/ SC04051S6 SC04054S6	Korean/Chinese 1/2 (if having passed Japanese 3/4 in previous year with at least 60 and taking Japanese 4/5 in current year)	30	Option	T1-T3
6	ARAR010S6	Industry Placement	30	Option	
Part-time – 4 years					
Year 1 (90 credits from modules indicated)					
4		Japanese 1, 2, 3 or 4 (depending on level at entry)	30	Core	T1-T3
4	ARLL004S4	Doing Languages Cultures and Applied Linguistics	30	Comp	T1
4	ARLL010S4	Culture and Text OR	30	Option	T2
4	ARLL009S4	Culture and Image OR	30	Option	T2
4	LNLN023S4	Rethinking Japan	30	Option	T3
Year 2 (90 credits from modules indicated depending on language pathway being followed)					
5/6		Japanese 2, 3, 4 or 5 (depending on entry level) OR	30	Core if taken	T1-T3
5	ARLL038S5	Japanese 2 Intensive	30	Core if taken	T1-T2
5	ARLL040S5	AND Japanese 3 Intensive		Core if taken	T2-T3
4		Level 4 Option (as above Year 1)	30	Option	T2 or T3
5	ARMC145S5	Popular Culture in Japan and East Asia OR	30	Option	T1, T2 or T3
	ARMC093S5	Theorising Japanese Cinema (offered in alternate years)			
5	ARLL012S5	Themes in the European and Japanese Novel OR	30	Option	T1, T2 or T3
	OR ARLL011S5	Themes in European and Japanese Cinema (offered in alternate years)			
5	ARCL022S5	Reading Transnational Cultures OR	30	Option	T1, T2 or T3
	LNLN024S5	Representations of Gender, Love and Sexuality OR			
	ARCL125S5	Culture and crisis OR			
	AREL094S5	Film and Politics (one or two offered per year)			
5	SC04011S5	Korean/Chinese 1 (if having passed Japanese 3 in previous year with at least 60 and taking Japanese 4 in current year)	30	Option	T1-T3

Year 3 (<i>Students must take 30 credits at Level 6 before Year 4; 90 credits in total from modules indicated</i>)					
5/6		Japanese 3, 4 or 5	30	Core if taken	T1-T3
5		Level 5 Option(s) (as above year 2)	30/60	Option	T1, T2 or T3
6		Level 6 Option(s) (as below YEAR FOUR)	30/60	Option	T1, T2 or T3
5	SC04012S6/ SC04015S6	Korean/Chinese 1/2 (if having passed Japanese 3 in previous years with at least 60 and taking Japanese 4 this year)	30	Option	T1-T3
Year 4 (<i>90 credits from modules indicated depending on language pathway being followed</i>)					
6		Japanese 4 or 5	30	Core	T1-T3
6	ARMC187S6 OR ARLL026H6 OR ARLL027H6	Manga and Anime OR Advanced Seminar in Japanese Society and Culture OR Advanced Seminar in Japanese Linguistics and Translation (the two advance seminars must be taken together)	30 15 15	Option	T1, T2 or T3
6		Cross-cultural options	30	Option	
6	ARCL123S6	Languages and Cultures Dissertation	30	Option	N/A
6	SC04012S6/ SC04015S6/ SC04018S6	Korean/Chinese 1/2/3 (if having passed Japanese 3 in previous years with at least 60 and taking Japanese 4 this year)	30	Option	T1-T3
6	ARAR010S6	Industry Placement	30	Option	

*APL from modules taken at a partner institution: where a student is unable to complete credit from a partner institution these APL credits may be substituted through taking the two 30 credit level 5 option modules: ARCL067S5 Study Abroad Module 1 and ARCL068S5 Study abroad Module 2.

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Learning and teaching methods vary between Language modules and 'Culture' modules, but in all cases the programme builds on tried and tested methods, and the collective experience and expertise deployed in existing modules within the School of Creative Arts, Culture and Communication.

- Language classes are 2.5 hours long (including a short break). Activities are varied and are designed to promote student participation. Language classes all employ a task-driven syllabus, which serves to promote the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Students will be exposed to a variety of authentic materials (including written and audio/visual texts), and develop competency through a range of activities and exercises including individual, pair, and group work.
- Classes for the 'Culture' modules (90 or 2x90 minutes including a break) adopt a mixed-mode delivery, part lecture, part student activity either singly or in small groups, part open discussion. The range of methods deployed is effective in retaining students' attention after a day's work. Varied use is made of the full range of available support materials and technologies, including Moodle. Supervised group and pair-work and short student presentations serve to vary the pace of classroom activity. Presentations also offer the opportunity for formative feedback and may be used to prepare a written assignment.
- **Lectures** and presentation of knowledge aim to fulfil the intellectual aims of "knowledge and understanding of what is involved in the study of the field". Students' understanding of the lecture/presentation material is reinforced by interactive discussion. This suits the mature student body, whose life experience and cultural background is a resource in the learning process.
- **Small group** work is designed to allow students to undertake focused tasks in a supportive environment and to develop their creative, analytical, communication and interpersonal skills, as appropriate.
- **Discussion group** work is designed to develop students critical and analytical, presentation and communication skills.
- **Tutorials**, typically on a one-to-one basis, develop student skills in presenting and discussing ideas.
- **Study abroad:** Students taking modules at one of partner institutions will be assessed according to the methods employed at those institutions. Students not based at a university during their time abroad will be expected to submit work to Birkbeck in order to gain credits, including essays and a learning diary.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. We use a variety of assessment methods. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

- In **Language modules**, assessment takes place at regular intervals throughout the academic year and takes a variety of forms testing skills in writing, reading, speaking and listening as appropriate to the language-level of the module; exercises might include short coursework assignments, in-class written tests, oral and listening comprehension tests. At Level 5 students complete a self-reflexive essay; and at Level 6 they undertake

a short project. Regular homework is given and returned to students, with extensive feedback, usually within a week.

- Assessment for **'Culture' modules** is via a combination of assessed essays, commentaries and in-class or take-home tests. Formative or non-assessed exercises might include presentations, as well as pre- and post-session activities such as quizzes and multiple-choice questionnaires.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

On successful completion of the course you will be expected to be able to:

A. Use of the target language

- With a focus especially on advancing students' reception skills, to demonstrate experience at comprehending Japanese at natural speed using audio-visual materials; to use original texts from a variety of sources and subject fields to develop their reading techniques including scanning and skimming for key information, reading extended paragraphs and complex sentences, and in-depth reading; to sustain complex conversations in social, cultural, and business situations using appropriate speech forms and politeness registers; to begin to acquire academic-level verbal communication skills, including participation in discussions, and preparing and delivering presentations; to write substantial reports and short essays based on texts read and discussed in class, using their knowledge of between 800-1,000 kanji characters and of appropriate compositional structure.
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity in communicative exchanges in Japanese.

B-D. As above, and:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the key moments and concepts in the cultural/social history of modern Japan.

E. Intellectual

- Identify and describe problems and to devise effective strategies for their resolution.
- Demonstrate a reasoned awareness and critical understanding.

F. Practical

See Subject-specific skills, plus the following:

- Gather, process and evaluate critically information from a variety of paper, audio-visual and electronic sources.
- Use IT effectively, both as a means of communication and as an aid to learning.

G. Personal and Social

- Communicate information, ideas and arguments cogently and coherently both orally and in writing with due regard to the target audience.
- Be responsive to the discipline of working with others and to work effectively as part of a team.
- Be an effective and self-aware independent learner.

Korean (if taken):

A. Use of the target language

- With a focus especially on advancing students' reception skills, to demonstrate experience at comprehending Korean at natural speed using audio-visual materials; to use original texts from a variety of sources and subject fields to develop their reading techniques including scanning and skimming for key information, reading extended

paragraphs and complex sentences; to sustain complex conversations in social, cultural, and business situations using appropriate speech forms and politeness registers; to begin to acquire verbal communication skills, including participation in discussions, and preparing and delivering presentations.

- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity in communicative exchanges in Korean.

B-G. As above, and:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the modern Korean society and culture.

Mandarin Chinese (if taken):

A. Use of the target language

- With a focus especially on advancing students' reception skills, to demonstrate experience at comprehending Mandarin Chinese at natural speed using audio-visual materials; to use original texts from a variety of sources and subject fields to develop their reading techniques including scanning and skimming for key information, reading extended paragraphs and complex sentences; to sustain complex conversations in social, cultural, and business situations using appropriate speech forms and politeness registers; to begin to acquire verbal communication skills, including participation in discussions, and preparing and delivering presentations.
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity in communicative exchanges in Mandarin Chinese.

B-G. As above, and:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the modern Sinophone societies and cultures.

Careers and further study

You will find **Japanese Studies** graduates in a wide range of roles in the creative industries, as well as, in education, law, the civil service and business roles. Our graduates leave with valuable attributes such as:

- High-level oral and written communication skills in English and in Japanese
- Research skills
- Skills in evaluating and assessing various types of information
- The ability to convey your ideas and build an argument
- The ability to analyse and process complex ideas
- Independent research skills as well as the ability to work as part of a team

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

All Language modules are 'Core', which means that each Language stage on a Pathway must be passed before a student may progress to the next Language stage. The final stage of the Language pathway must be taken (and passed) at Level 6.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment

called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

Please check our website for more information about student support services. This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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