

Interview Questions

Part I) Overall impression about your year-abroad programme

- You are now back in Edinburgh. How do you see your year-abroad programme was overall?

- What kinds of curriculum has your Japanese university offered to you (in terms of speaking, grammar, writing [hand-writing as well as keyboard-based writing], reading, listening, vocabulary, etc.)?

- How have you found your social life on-campus as well as off the campus?

- Are you in close touch with your classmates from Edinburgh University? If so, how do you communicate with them? Via phone, email, skype, SNS, DSi?

- Has being in Japan made a big difference to your Japanese language?

- How do you rate the level of your cultural immersion so far?
(Do you feel you immersed yourself into Japanese university and society while you were there, or do you feel you tended to spend more time with your co-students from Edinburgh?)

- To what extent do you value the contacts from the tutors from Edinburgh University during your year-away programme? Was it too invasive or more supportive?

- Where have you travelled to during the year programme? Did you carry a DSi or a laptop computer?

- Did you sit in any courses apart from your language classes provided by your host university?

- What do you see as being the most significant differences between the UK and Japanese higher education systems?

Part II) DSi language tutorials

- Is this your first time to use a DS or DSi? How have you found using the DSi?

- How often did you use DSi while you were in Japan? For language learning, hobbies, gaming purposes or as a mobile communicative device?

- Is DSi a game console or a mobile communications tool for you?

- Do you see yourself as being an active participant in the DSi language tutorial activities?

- How have you found the DSi language tutorials offered by the home institution?

- What do you see as being the pros and cons of the Japanese language tutorial activities?

- What were your criteria or what motivated you to decide to participate in the particular task (s) ?

- Which activity do you like most amongst all the tasks using the DSi?

- Apart from the language tutorial sessions, have you used DSi for any other purposes like gaming, digital camera, checking the websites, social networking sites, emails, etc.? Do you use or have you purchased any other software for DSi apart from Ugoku Memocho?

- About collaborative work: Have you participated in any collaborative group tutorial activities using DSi? Who did you work with? How have you found the experience, good or something more problematic? (Could you tell me any reasons for that?) (Could you tell me why you didn't participate in the activities? Any particular difficulties or any areas you don't like?)

Part 3) The use of DSi in general

- How do you see the use of DSi? Was/is it easy to use for the tutorial sessions?

- How would you prefer using DSi for your own language learning, if we can change the ways of using DSi for tutorials?

- About WiFi access: Was it easy or difficult to access WiFi? Did you look for any WiFi hot spots in your area? Which places did you go to get secure WiFi access?

- How do you feel about writing Japanese letters/characters onto the screen of DSi using a stylus pen? Difficult, easy or something you got used to?
- Do you have any other concerns or opinions about the use of DSi as a language learning tool?

Part 4) About assessment

- We were initially planning to introduce Hatena blog as a way of keeping record of individual students' experiences and their own thoughts during the away-year programme as we thought it could be useful for the students when they create a portfolio for their assessment but we did not force them to do so this time. Could you tell me your views about the possible introduction of a blog as a part of the programme?
- How about Facebook? To what extent did you use Facebook while you were in Japan?
- What do you think if DSi assignments become a part of assessment? Do you feel it should be voluntary participation or should it be a part of the formal assessment?
- What kinds of things do you think would motivate the year abroad students to participate in the DSi language tutorials? Any advice for us? (e.g. using different mobile devices, etc.)

Final question

- Any messages to our current 3rd year students who will shortly be going to Japan for a year. Could you give me some advice on general issues and on the DSi language tutorials to the 2nd year students?

Thank you.