

2026
Application Guidelines
Doctoral Program, Graduate School of Economics, Kyoto University

**General Selection / Special Selection for Students in Employment /
International Graduate Programme for East Asia Sustainable
Economic Development Studies
(October 2026 Admission)**

The Graduate School of Economics is seeking applicants for its doctoral program according to the application criteria and procedures outlined below.

1. **Number of Applicants to be admitted** Undetermined

2. Eligibility

【General Selection】

Applicants who satisfy or are expected to satisfy one of the requirements below by September 30, 2026, are eligible.

- (1) Those who have obtained a master's degree or Juris Doctor degree (professional degree in law) by the date of enrollment at Kyoto University.
- (2) Those who have completed a master's degree or equivalent in a foreign country.
- (3) Those who, by studying relevant subjects in Japan via a correspondence course provided by a school in a foreign country, have completed a degree equivalent to a master's program or professional degree program of Kyoto University Graduate School.
- (4) Those who have completed a graduate course (limited to courses that correspond to a master's degree or professional degree program of Kyoto University Graduate School) of a foreign university that is accredited under the school education system of the relevant foreign country as offering graduate courses and which is designated as such by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.
- (5) Those who have completed a curriculum at the United Nations University and received a degree equivalent to a master's degree.
- (6) Those who have passed a Qualifying Examination or equivalent assessment at an institution in another country and are recognized by Kyoto University as having academic ability on a par with or higher than that of a person with a master's degree. (*1)
- (7) Those specifically designated by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (*1)
- (8) Those who are qualified through the individual entrance examination of the Graduate School of Economics of Kyoto University and are judged to have academic ability equivalent or superior to a master's degree holder, and who have reached 24 years of age. (*1)

*1 Applicants who wish to apply according to the above requirements (6) to (8) must be screened in advance. Those who should undergo this screening should contact the Student Affairs Office by Thursday, February 5, 2026. Applications without having undergone the screening will not be accepted.

The application form for pre-screening is available on the Graduate School of Economics website.

【Special Selection for Students in Employment】

Applicants must have completed a master's program at a Japanese or foreign university and have obtained a master's degree or equivalent and have at least two years of work experience at a company, government office, or research institute after completing the master's program. Applicants must have a master's degree in economics, business administration, or commerce, or have equivalent or higher specialized knowledge.

***Long-Term Study Program**

Doctoral students who enroll via the Special Selection for Students in Employment may engage in the Long-Term Study Program which allows students to extend their study period. After careful screening, there are cases in this program in which it is accepted that students who find it difficult to graduate within three years due to their employment situation, etc., can enroll for up to six years with only three years' tuition fees.

【International Graduate Programme for East Asia Sustainable Economic Development Studies】

Applicants who have already obtained or will obtain a master's degree in the social sciences, including economics and business administration, or in a field of study relevant to their research plan in the doctoral program, by the enrollment day at Kyoto University. It does not matter whether their master's degree has been or will be conferred by Kyoto University or another institution of higher education.

<AAO Process for International Applicants>

Applicants who have graduated or expect to graduate from non-Japanese universities are required to go through the Admissions Assistance Office (AAO) process before they file their applications for admission. As the process at AAO can take some time to complete, applicants are encouraged to get started at least a few months before the application period. Applicants must complete the AAO process at the time of application.

Admissions Assistance Office (AAO)

<https://www.kyoto-u.ac.jp/en/education-campus/education-and-admissions/graduate-degree-programs/how-to-apply/for-graduates-of-overseas-universities>

- Refer to the above website and start the process.
- Applicants need to obtain approval from their prospective supervisor before the application. Contact your prospective supervisor through the AAO and apply for admission with their approval.
- When your AAO application is accepted, you will be informed of your AAO-ID by the AAO. Note down your application ID because it is necessary for the Online Application System.
- The AAO will directly inform the Student Affairs Office of the result.

3. Application Procedures

Applicants must complete the application procedures (1) and (2) below without fail by each deadline.

(1) Application and Uploading Documents through Online Application System

Refer to the following URL to access the Online Application System:

*Select the appropriate type of selection and register your application.

**Application Period: From Monday, March 2 to 5 p.m. (JST) on Friday, March 13, 2026
(Documents submission at the Student Affairs Office is not acceptable.)**

Applicants must upload all the application documents to the Online Application System during the above application period.

(2) Examination Fee Payment

Examination Fee: JPY 30,000

* In addition to the above examination fee, there is a service charge of JPY 650.

Payment Period: From Monday, March 2 to 5 p.m. (JST) on Friday, March 13, 2026

Payment Method: Make payment on the Online Application System.

* Those who are expected to complete a Master's program at Kyoto University in September 2026 do not need to pay the examination fee.

* In areas covered by Japan's Disaster Relief Act (see below), it is recognized that there may be cases in which applicants find it extremely difficult to pay the examination fee because they or their household supporters have been adversely affected by disaster(s). In such cases, they can obtain a Disaster Victim Certificate, etc., and exemption from the examination fee may be granted. Contact the Student Affairs Office for further details by Thursday, February 12, 2026.

- ① Great East Japan Earthquake March 2011 ② Kumamoto Earthquake April 2016
③ Heavy Rain July 2018 ④ Hokkaido Earthquake September 2018 ⑤ Typhoon Hagibis
October 2019 ⑥ Heavy Rain July 2020 ⑦ Noto Earthquake January 2024

- 【Note】** • If the original certificate is in a language other than Japanese or English, submit a translation either in Japanese or English.
- Incomplete sets of application documents will not be accepted.
 - Changes to the application documents cannot be made after they have been accepted.
 - International applicants should register and write their name in Latin alphabet on the Online Application System and on documents as it appears on their residence card/passport in English.
 - Neither the application documents nor the examination fee can be returned in any case.

【Application Documents】

Necessary documents vary by the selection: the General Selection, the Special Selection for Students in Employment, and the International Graduate Programme for East Asia Sustainable Economic Development Studies. Carefully refer to the tables below and prepare the required documents.

Application Documents common for all selections

<p>1. Application Form and Photo Data</p>	<p>Fill in the items on the Online Application System. Also, upload the data of the photo taken within three months, showing upper body, without a cap, and facing forward. The photo data format should be either JPEG or JPG, with a width of 480 to 6000 pixels and a height of 480 to 6000 pixels.</p>
<p>2. Academic Transcript and Graduation /Completion Certificate</p> <p>*Certificate of expected master's program completion is also acceptable.</p>	<p>Upload all transcripts and graduation/completion certificates from both undergraduate and graduate programs you currently attend/previously attended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They must include the date of issue. • They should be official certificates issued by your university for the purpose of certifying your graduation to an external party. They are different from a copy of the diploma you received at the time of graduation. • Applicants can request their university to upload the certificates on the Online Application System directly as well. • Those who have already completed a graduate program are required to submit all of their transcripts, including the academic transcript(s) of undergraduate study. Those who are currently enrolled in a graduate program are required to submit all available transcripts to date.
<p>3. Letter of Recommendation</p>	<p>Upload the letter of recommendation from the applicant's supervisor, the dean, or the head of the institution previously attended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants need to name and send a message to the person they request a letter of recommendation from through the Online Application System. The message sent out from the system will include the URL to the webpage where they can upload their letter. • The letter must be written within a period of six months prior to the application. • The letter must include the signature by hand (a digital signature is not accepted), the affiliation and contact information of the person who writes the letter, and remarks on the applicant's academic performance such as achievements, accomplishments, and attitude. • If applicants do not have an academic supervisor, they should find a faculty member of their institution who can write a recommendation letter. If the applicant graduated from a university a long time ago and has difficulty contacting supervisors, a letter of recommendation by a non-academic person (e.g., someone in a senior position in the workplace) can be accepted.

<p>4. Residence Card (both sides) and/or Passport</p>	<p>International applicants who reside in Japan at the time of application should upload a copy of both sides of the residence card and a copy of the passport showing their name, nationality, photo, and date of birth.</p> <p>Those who reside outside Japan at the time of application and have passport should upload a copy of the passport showing their name, nationality, photo, and date of birth.</p>
<p>5. Certificate of MEXT Scholarship Student</p>	<p>*Only applicable to MEXT Scholarship Students</p> <p>International students who have been awarded the MEXT Scholarship at the time of application and will receive it after October 2026 are required to upload the certificate issued by their current university.</p>

Additional Application Documents for General Selection and Special Selection for Students in Employment

6. Research Proposal	<p>Prepare the research proposal using word processing software, convert it into a PDF file, and upload the PDF to the Online Application System. It should be A4 size and up to two pages.</p>
7. TOEFL iBT® Score Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upload a copy of the Test Taker Score Report (online test versions accepted). At the same time, request the ETS (Educational Testing Service) to send the official TOEFL iBT® score (Institutional Score Report or Official Score Report) directly to Kyoto University. • Official scores from April 1st, 2024, onwards are accepted. <p>Scores acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Test Date Score of the TOEFL iBT® <p>Scores unacceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The MyBest® score -Other TOEFL tests such as TOEFL ITP® score -The TOEFL iBT® Home Edition score <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants should ensure they give themselves plenty of time for taking the TOEFL test because the arrival of the test score can occasionally take a considerable amount of time. • For sending the TOEFL score from ETS, the institution code of Kyoto University is 9501. As long as the applicant uses 9501 as the institutional code, a Department Code will not be necessary. • Arrange the sending of the Score Report so that its details can be confirmed by the deadline (including online). Inquiries about the arrival of test scores cannot be responded to.

<p>8. Research Paper in Economics, Management or Commerce * Master's thesis accepted * In Japanese or English * The Special Selection for Students in Employment applicants must submit up to two research achievements.</p>	<p>(1) If the original paper is written in a language other than Japanese or English, upload a translation either in Japanese or English as well. (2) Attach a cover page with the title and the applicant's name. (3) For co-authored papers, a letter written and signed by any co-authors is required. It should clearly indicate the parts of the paper where the applicant contributed. Applicants need to name and send a message to the person they request such a letter from through the Online Application System. The message sent out from the system will include the URL to the webpage where they can upload the letter.</p> <p>【Special Selection for Students in Employment】 Applicants may upload their research achievements, such as their master's thesis, a journal article, or a report. Limit this to two items.</p>
<p>9. Summary of the above papers * In Japanese or English</p>	<p>(1) A4 size, approximately four pages (2) Attach a cover page with the title and the applicant's name.</p>

Additional Application Documents for International Graduate Programme for East Asia Sustainable Economic Development Studies

<p>6. Research Proposal</p>	<p>Write in English using a word processing software, convert it into a PDF file, and upload the PDF to the Online Application System. This document must include two sections: (1) Reason for Application and Plan after Completion: The total number of pages must be two A4 pages. (2) Research Proposal: Upload the PDF on the Online Application System. The total number of pages must be five A4 pages (around 2,000 - 2,500 words long, excluding references). There is no specific format requirement, but it must be well-structured according to a standard academic style (for example, it should include the background of research, literature review, research objectives, research questions, methodology, expected results and implications, and a reference list).</p>
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<p>7. Research paper related to your research proposal, such as master's thesis or an equivalent paper</p>	<p>Research papers in any field of study (preferably those in the social sciences and humanities) are acceptable. There is no limit on the total number of pages. If the paper is written in a language other than English, a translated summary and table of contents in English must be attached. If applicants cannot complete their graduation thesis by the application deadline, they may submit an essay as a substitute.</p> <p>In principle, a co-authored paper is not appropriate. However, if a co-authored paper is the only option, the applicant may submit it while fulfilling the following two requirements.</p> <p>i) A clear indication of the parts where the applicant contributed to the co-authored paper is provided.</p> <p>ii) A letter from the supervisor or co-author is attached, which certifies the applicant's contribution.</p>
<p>8. TOEFL iBT® Score Report or IELTS Test Report Form</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants whose first language is not English are required to submit an official TOEFL iBT® Score Report or IELTS Test Report Form taken on and after April 1, 2024. • The score is not required for those who have completed their bachelor's degree in one of the following countries: Australia, Canada (excluding Quebec), Ireland, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. However, applicants are still strongly recommended to submit either score. Note that this exception does not usually apply to the country in which you completed your master's degree due to the shorter duration of master's programs. • Applicants who have completed their bachelor's degree in one of the countries mentioned above having transferred from universities in other countries (for example in the case of double/joint degree programs) also need to submit the score. • There may be some exceptional cases where we waive the requirement to submit the score. Contact the Student Affairs Office for more details. • TOEFL ITP® (Institutional Testing Program) , TOEFL MyBest® Score, TOEFL iBT® Home Edition, and IELTS on Computer are not accepted. • For TOEFL iBT®, a Test Taker Score Report is accepted at this stage. However, applicants must eventually submit the official score report. Those who do not have an official score report may request that test-administering organizations send their scores directly to Kyoto University. For sending TOEFL score from ETS, the institution code of Kyoto University is 9501. • Arrange the sending of the score so that its details can be confirmed by the application deadline (including online). Inquiries regarding the receipt of the score are not acceptable.

【Notes】

1. In cases where the name that appears on certification documents and the current name of the applicant are different (i.e., as a result of a changed family name because of marriage, etc.), submit a document written by the applicant indicating the name change and the date when it was made.
2. In cases where false details are found in the submitted documents, enrollment may be canceled even after the applicant has enrolled.

4. Selection Method

Evaluation based on the application documents and oral examination.

5. Date of Examination, Announcement of Successful Applicants

Initial screening (General Selection / Special Selection for Students in Employment only)	Application documents evaluation
Announcement of successful applicants of initial screening (General Selection / Special Selection for Students in Employment only)	3 p.m. (JST) on Monday, April 20, 2026 The announcement of successful applicants will be made on the Online Application System.
Oral examination (Online or face-to-face) (All selections)	Middle of May 2026 *Details of the exam shall be notified later.
Announcement of results	3 p.m. (JST) on Friday, June 12, 2026 The announcement of successful applicants will be made on the Online Application System.

6. Enrollment Procedures

Successful applicants will be notified in August 2026 with details on enrollment procedures.

- (1) Admission fee: JPY 282,000 [Expected]
(Applicants who expect to complete the Master's program at Kyoto University in September 2026 do not need to pay the admission fee.)
- (2) Tuition fee: JPY 535,800 (1st semester JPY 267,900, 2nd semester JPY 267,900) [Expected]
- (3) *The admission fee and tuition fee will be changed at the time of admission and during the period of enrollment.
*If the admission fee and/or tuition fee is changed, the new amount shall be applied at the time of the change.

7. Personal Information Handling

Note the following about personal information handling:

- (1) All personal information will be handled according to the Act on the Protection of Personal Information and the Regulations for the Protection of Personal Information by Kyoto University.

- (2) The personal information (such as name, gender, date of birth, address, etc.) that applicants include in their applications will be used only for matters such as entrance examinations, admission procedures, scholarships, and preparation for enrollment.
- (3) Personal information in applications is used only for matters such as student registration, student support related, and procedure for the collection of tuition fees, etc.

8. Notes

- (1) Do not use abbreviated names or nicknames, etc. on the application documents. International applicants should use the name in Latin alphabet that appears on their passport and residence card.
- (2) Applicants with special needs for exams or for their studies should contact the Student Affairs Office prior to their application.
- (3) Once admitted, students are expected to receive research supervision in Japan for the duration of their studies.
- (4) In the event that an examination cannot be conducted on the scheduled date due to an emergency warning, a storm warning, or other circumstances, an announcement will be posted on the Graduate School website (<https://www.econ.kyoto-u.ac.jp/en/>) by the morning of the examination day. Be sure to check this announcement.
If the examination is deemed impossible to hold, the examination date and time may be changed. In the event of postponement of the examination schedule, the new date and time will be announced on the above website. Be sure to check this announcement.
- (5) Contact the Student Affairs Office for questions.

September 2025

Student Affairs Office
Graduate School of Economics
Kyoto University

Yoshida-honmachi, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-8501 JAPAN
Mail: 040daigakuin@mail2.adm.kyoto-u.ac.jp
<https://www.econ.kyoto-u.ac.jp/en/>