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Frankly speaking, all these HGP experiences have enabled me to not only get to know Japan but also myself, and thereby, enabled me to define my career path better. That is why I am confident in saying that it was not merely an exchange year, but rather the experience of a lifetime. You should try it, too.

My two years of study at Sciences Po, my home university in France, provided me with a strong foundation in social science topics surrounding Japan and the region; yet, many questions remained unanswered. I was certain that without first-hand knowledge and experience, I would never be able to really get to know Japan and understand the full dynamics of recent developments within its contemporary society. My eagerness to put my knowledge to the test and discover new perspectives led me to the HGP, which helped me achieve that and way beyond.

By offering a great selection of courses in English, Hitotsubashi University's HGP stands at the very forefront of Japan's aspiration to make its education system more open and international. This is especially great news for students like me, who have little confidence in their Japanese upon arrival, but want to have the same level of access to the local academic expertise. The HGP's range of course offerings is plentiful and students have full flexibility of choice, making it easier to improve on a wide range of topics without limiting yourself to one particular field. As the HGP was my first academic experience in Japan, I was glad I could look at different sides of the multi-faceted issues at stake and took classes in covering Japanese constitutional law, negotiation strategies, as well as business, media, and sociology.

Nevertheless, it is not only the diversity of classes, but also the diversity of its academic staff that makes HGP a unique experience. Being taught by both Japanese and international professors enabled me to discover various stances on the same issues, making it easier for me to have a more informed opinion. At the same time, I greatly appreciated the fact that the HGP teacher community consists not only of professional academics but also of real-world business practitioners, simultaneously working in Japan's biggest firms while agreeing to share their everyday challenges with students and even occasionally take them on company tours.



HGP connects international students not only to its diverse academic portfolio but also to Japanese students, who are encouraged to take the same classes. That is how endless opportunities for intercultural exchanges between international and Japanese students were born—be it during a class discussion sharing opinions about Japanese affairs, or in a language session enjoying conversations about daily life. I felt it was always a win-win experience, enabling international students to learn more about the country they were visiting and their Japanese course mates to delve into global affairs.

It is not only thanks to these exchanges but also the well-constructed offer of HGP Japanese language classes that enabled me to make fast progress and become an independent user in a relatively brief period. Being able to find a method and provide a learning path for every student is one of the greatest strengths of the Japanese teacher community located here. Being placed in a class matching my Japanese level and provided with teaching materials exactly tailored to my interests gave me motivation to study and use language more actively. In the end, I can say that HGP's Japanese classes worked as a springboard to classes in Japanese, internships, sport clubs, and other activities within Japan, which would otherwise have been hard to access for non-Japanese speakers.

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