

## Guide for Application for Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

### 1. What is a Certificate of Eligibility (COE)?

A Certificate of Eligibility (COE) is an official document issued by the Ministry of Justice. All applicants, excluding those who possess a valid status of residence in Japan (\*), must have a COE issued before applying for a student visa. (\*A visa for short-term stays such as a tourist visa is not regarded as a valid status of residence in Japan.)

Hitotsubashi University(HU)'s partner law firm will act as a proxy and apply for your COE at the Tokyo Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice.

\*There is **no need** to apply for a "COE" for those who have a Japanese passport or a valid status of residence in Japan.

#### Roadmap for obtaining your student visa

When	By who	What to do
Aug. ~ Sep. 2025	Applicant	<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant submits information and documents necessary for COE application to HU's partner law firm. (At this step, the law firm (hit-u@shigyo.co.jp) will email each applicant first. Please just wait for their email before submission procedures.)
Early Dec. 2025	HU	<input type="checkbox"/> HU releases each applicant's selection result, based on their application documents.
Early Dec. 2025	Partner law firm	<input type="checkbox"/> The partner Law firm organizes the COE application documents, based on the information provided by applicants, and applies for the COE at the Immigration Bureau of Japan on the applicants' behalf. (*Applicants DO NOT need to apply for the COE by themselves.) * The COE screening process by the Immigration Bureau generally takes 2-3 months, but we cannot guarantee or estimate when the COE will be actually issued.
~Mid Mar. 2026	Partner law firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Once the COE is issued, the partner law firm receives the COE in electronic form, and send it to each applicant by email.
Mar. 2026 (Before Your Departure)	Applicant	<input type="checkbox"/> Upon received the electronic COE, applicant applies for a student visa at a <b>Japanese Embassy/Consulate in respective country</b> . For documents required for student visa application, please refer to the website linked below. <a href="https://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/visa/long/visa6.html">https://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/visa/long/visa6.html</a>
Late Mar. 2026	Applicant	<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant enters Japan with a <b>student visa</b> .

YOU ARE HERE

▶ Receive an electronic COE



▶ Apply for a "Student" visa.



A visa seal will be placed on a passport when granted.

▶ Receive a residence card



The Residence Card will be your official identification during your stay in Japan.

If your application documents are insufficient, the COE screening might be delayed. Please submit correct information and submit an acceptable photo. More information and detailed instructions will be provided after your nomination is submitted to HU.

#### Need Help?

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of JAPAN: General visa: Student

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/j\\_info/visit/visa/long/visa6.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/visa/long/visa6.html)

Immigration Services Agency: Application for Certificate of Eligibility

<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-1.html>

FAQs: VISA / Residing in Japan [https://www.mofa.go.jp/j\\_info/visit/visa/faq.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/visa/faq.html)

#### Want to Contact?

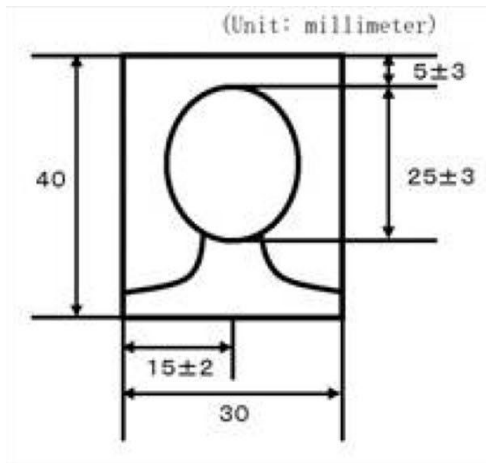
サポート行政書士法人  
SG Administrative Legal Services

✉ [hit-u@shigyo.co.jp](mailto:hit-u@shigyo.co.jp)

## 2. Specifications for photos to be submitted

Photos to be submitted for various applications should be as specified below.

Please also refer to the “Acceptable Photo Examples” and “Unacceptable Photo Examples” below to help ensure you submit a photo that meets the specifications.



1. Dimensions of photo  
4 centimeters high, 3 centimeters wide
2. Photo of only the applicant
3. Dimensions of parts excluding the edges satisfy the dimensions shown in the diagram to the left  
(Dimensions of the face are from the top of the head [including the hair] to the tip of the chin.)
4. Subject is facing forward and not wearing a hat
5. Nothing in the background (including shadows)
6. Photo is clear
7. Photo must be one taken within three months of date of submission

### Acceptable Photo Examples

Satisfies all specifications - subject is easily identified.



### Unacceptable Photo Examples

Photos that don't satisfy given measurements or specifications



Off-center

Face is angled to the side

Shadow in background

Body is angled

Photos in which identification of the individual is difficult



Expression differs greatly from normal expression

Dark background color makes it difficult to determine outline

Not clear due to focus issue or vibration of camera

Shadow on face

Photos in which part of the face is obscured



Glasses frame covers eyes

Glasses frame is exceedingly large

Lighting is reflected in glasses

Part of face is covered with a mask

Eyes are obscured by hair

Cloth wrapping creates a shadow on face

(Note) Head wrappings made of cloth, etc. are acceptable if the face is clearly visible.

(Reference) [https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/guide/photo\\_info.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/guide/photo_info.html)