

November 8, 2021

Dear AKP Students,

We hope that your fall semester is going well. Thank you for your patience over the past month as well as for your continued resilience throughout this process.

Last week, the Government of Japan announced that it would resume letting students and other long-term visa holders into the country. While the initial announcement was encouraging, further details gathered over the past few days have revealed a much more complicated situation that sheds little light on when AKP's students can enter Japan.

**Thus AKP, with the approval of the Board of Directors, has once again made the difficult decision to cancel its Spring 2022 semester.**

We kindly ask that you read the following for more details about how the Board came to this decision as well as how to proceed going forward.

**Why is AKP cancelling its semester when Japan is opening its borders to students?**

According to the details that we have received from Doshisha University and the Japanese government, the reopening of the border for students will occur in stages. At this moment, those who wish to enter the country as a student can only apply for their visa based on the following timeline and eligibility requirements:

- **November 2021:** visa applications open to students who hold a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) issued between January 2020 and March 2020
- **December 2021:** visa applications open to students who hold a COE issued between January 2020 and September 2020
- **January 2022:** visa applications open to students who hold a COE issued between January 2020 and March 2021

As you may know, the Certificate of Eligibility is a document issued by Japan's immigration bureau and must be received before applying for a student visa.

Students who were issued a COE after March 2021 or are currently waiting for a COE to be issued (such as AKP's Spring 2022 students) have no concrete projection of when they'll be able to apply for a student visa under this initial timeline. Thus, AKP thought it best to officially cancel the program and allow students to make arrangements for a spring semester on their home campus.

**Can students defer to Fall 2022?**

All students accepted to Spring 2022 can defer to Fall 2022 without having to reapply. Anyone interested in deferring to the next semester should update AKP at [apply@associatedkyotoprogram.org](mailto:apply@associatedkyotoprogram.org) as soon as possible and no later than Monday, February 14.

Due to a change in AKP's application portal, deferring students will need to create an account on the new application portal as well as resubmit certain pre-acceptance and post-acceptance materials. AKP will provide more details upon receipt of a student's interest in deferring.

**Can students defer to Spring 2023?**

Students wanting to attend AKP in Spring 2023 must reapply to AKP through a streamlined application process during the normal application cycle. More information on this deferral policy can be found on our [website](#). If you are interested in reapplying, please update us at [apply@associatedkyotoprogram.org](mailto:apply@associatedkyotoprogram.org) with your intentions.

**Do students have any financial obligations to AKP to take care of?**

No. You do not have any further obligations (financial or otherwise) to AKP for the Spring 2022 semester.

**Will AKP still be running online Japanese language tables and the partnership program?**

Yes. In lieu of our in-country program, AKP will continue to provide our consortium school students with online opportunities throughout the spring semester, including our language partner exchange program.

Non-consortium students who were accepted to the Spring 2022 program and plan to defer to Fall 2022 or reapply to another AKP semester can also participate in these programs if they are interested. It is our hope that these programs will continue to foster your passion for and connection to Japan even if you cannot be there in person.

Once again, we offer our sincere regret to all of you, particularly to those who have weathered previous cancellations and have continued to show perseverance despite the setbacks. We can only imagine the level of disappointment that you are feeling at this moment.

Although this was not the news we had hoped to share when the initial announcement was shared last week, we hope that this gradual reopening is a step in the right direction for a return to travel abroad in Japan. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our US Office or your AKP Campus Representative.

Sincerely,  
Peter Flueckiger  
Chair of the Board of Directors  
Associated Kyoto Program