

Experience report

Kindai University Osaka – Spring Semester 2026

About the semester abroad and my degree

As a mandatory part of the International Business bachelor's degree at Hochschule Trier, we have to participate in two semesters abroad at one of our partner universities. For my second semester abroad, I chose Kindai University in Osaka, Japan, where I studied during the spring semester of 2026. I had always wanted to visit Japan to learn more about its culture and language, so I was very excited to have the opportunity to live there for several months.

English taught courses available

Kindai University offers a relatively small selection of English taught courses. Although the options were limited, there were enough courses available to receive the required ECTS credits. Compared to the courses at Hochschule Trier, I found the classes significantly less demanding. Most of the grades were based on regular homework assignments, presentations and a few exams. This meant that there was usually something to do during the semester, but the overall workload was manageable.

Most students in the English taught courses were international exchange students, although there were also some Japanese students in certain classes. Overall, I enjoyed the courses, but I would have preferred a larger selection to choose from.

Preparation for the semester abroad and the application process

The application process for Kindai University was relatively time-consuming, as several documents had to be submitted. Besides the regular application, I also had to apply for a document required before obtaining the student visa and provide medical documentation. However, the actual visa application was uncomplicated, and I only had to travel to Frankfurt to complete the process.

Kindai University was extremely helpful throughout the entire preparation process. The university provided detailed instructions about all the necessary steps and clearly explained where we needed to be and when. This made the organization much easier, and I always felt well informed.

Finding accommodation

All exchange students were required to stay in one of the student dormitories. I stayed at Nasic Higashiosaka, which was located about ten minutes on foot from the university. Although the dormitory was not in the city center, I was generally satisfied with the location. It took around 35 minutes to reach central Osaka by public transportation.

The rooms were relatively spacious, and everyone had their own private room and bathroom, which I really appreciated. Initially, I would have preferred to choose my own accommodation, but in the end, living in the dormitory turned out to be a good experience.

Costs for the study abroad

My total monthly living expenses were approximately €1,500, including accommodation, groceries, transportation and leisure activities. Some groceries were more expensive than in Germany, but eating at restaurants was generally cheaper, which made going out for food quite affordable.

One expense that should not be underestimated is public transportation. Japan has a very convenient train system, which makes it easy to travel around Osaka and visit other places. However, since there is so much to see and do, the transportation costs can add up quite quickly.

Everyday life and leisure activities

I had university classes from Monday to Thursday, which gave me enough free time to explore Osaka and travel around Japan. During my free time, I often explored different neighborhoods, visited sightseeing attractions or spent time with other exchange students.

One of the things I enjoyed most was traveling around Japan. During my semester abroad, I had the opportunity to visit many different places, including Tokyo, Kyoto, Kobe, Nara, Hiroshima, Okinawa and Misawa. These trips allowed me to experience different regions of Japan and learn more about the country's culture.

Osaka itself is a very exciting city with countless things to do, and there was always something new to discover. I particularly enjoyed experiencing Japanese culture and everyday life, which were very different from what I was used to in Germany.

Making friends with other international exchange students was relatively easy. Although I also met some Japanese students, I found it a little more difficult to build friendships with locals, as many were rather reserved. Another challenge was the language barrier. While it was possible to manage everyday life without speaking Japanese fluently, I would definitely recommend learning some basic Japanese beforehand, as many people do not speak much English.

Advantages and positive experiences

The biggest advantage of studying in Japan was the opportunity to experience a completely different culture. Almost everything felt new and interesting, and there was always something to see or do. I particularly enjoyed exploring different cities, trying new food and experiencing everyday life in Japan rather than just visiting as a tourist.

Another positive aspect was the international environment, which made it easy to meet people from different countries and spend time together. Overall, living in Japan was a very special experience that I would not have wanted to miss.

Negative experiences

There were only a few things that I did not particularly like during my semester abroad. One of them was the limited selection of English taught courses, which made it difficult to choose classes based entirely on personal interests.

Another disadvantage was that exchange students were required to live in the student dormitories instead of being able to choose their own accommodation. However, the dormitory turned out to be quite comfortable, so this was not a major problem in the end.

Recommendation

I would definitely recommend studying abroad at Kindai University, especially to students who are interested in Japanese culture and want to experience life in Japan. I would advise future exchange students to learn at least some basic Japanese before arriving, as it can make everyday life much easier.

It is also important to plan enough money for transportation and traveling, since there are so many interesting places to visit. Although the application process

requires some preparation, Kindai University provides excellent support throughout the process. Overall, I really enjoyed my time in Japan and would highly recommend the experience.