

Erfahrungsbericht über das Auslandsstudium an der Waseda University, Japan im Wintersemester 2018/19 (Master - QTEM)

Mein Name ist Alexander Liebhart und ich habe das Wintersemester 2018/2019 an der Waseda Universität in Tokio verbracht. Der nun folgende Bericht soll ein möglichst umfassendes Bild meines Aufenthalts skizzieren, solltest du nach dem Lesen allerdings noch weitere Fragen haben, wende dich gerne an mich unter alex.liebhart@gmx.de.

Die Stadt Tokio

Die Stadt Tokio liegt in der Kantō-Region im Osten der japanischen Hauptinsel Honshū und beherbergt im Großraum Tokio-Yokohama rund 40 Millionen Menschen. Zu jeder Tages- und Nachtzeit trifft man daher Menschen an, nichtsdestotrotz ist die Stadt super sauber, ruhig und sehr sicher. Obwohl Tokio zweifelsfrei zu den wahren Weltmetropolen gehört und alles zu finden ist, was das Herz begehrt, sind nur relativ wenige Ausländer auf den Straßen zu sehen und es wird kaum englisch gesprochen. Alltägliche Dinge wie der Einkauf im Supermarkt können daher, gerade am Anfang deines Aufenthalts, schnell zu einer Herausforderung werden. Keine Sorge, mit der Zeit gewöhnt man sich dran und findet sich immer besser zurecht. Wie gerade eben schon erwähnt, in Tokio findet man alles, was man sich nur vorstellen kann. Seien es einfache Dinge wie essen gehen – Tokio bietet über 50.000 (!) – Restaurants oder der berühmte Kawaii Lebensstil, jeden Tag findet sich etwas Neues zu entdecken. Der Nahverkehr ist sehr gut ausgebaut und wirklich immer auf die Minute pünktlich, leider aber auch ein wenig teuer, da kein Semesterticket oder dergleichen von der Universität angeboten wird. Somit muss pro Fahrt bezahlt werden, und das lässt sich am schnellsten durch die Beschaffung einer aufladbaren Pasma/Suica-Card erledigen, die man vor Betreten und bei Verlassen an Drehkreuze hält und somit seine Fahrt je nach gefahrener Distanz bezahlt. Diese Karte kann übrigens in ganz Japan für den ÖPNV benutzt werden, aber auch zum Einkauf bei diversen Convenient-Stores (7/11, Family Mart, ...) oder zum Bezahlen des Mittagessens in der Kantine, daher auf jeden Fall zulegen. Auch wenn es in Tokio bereits Unmengen zu entdecken gilt, bietet sich das Rumreisen durch eine gut ausgebaute Infrastruktur geradezu an, dazu später mehr. Das Klima der Stadt ist eher warm (im August bis zu 35 Grad) und feucht, es regnet ab und an, und ab Dezember wird es dann doch relativ kalt (um die Null Grad). Der Koffer sollte also für alle Eventualitäten gepackt sein, was nicht mehr reingepasst hat oder vergessen wurde kann aber jederzeit, die Geschäfte haben auch sonntags bis mindestens 21 Uhr offen, besorgt werden.

Vorbereitung und Ankunft

Die Beantragung eines einjährigen Studienvisums verläuft problemlos und wird nach persönlicher Beantragung im Konsulat im Messetower innerhalb weniger Tage abgewickelt. Ich empfehle jedoch mindestens zwei Wochen dafür einzuplanen, sodass dieser Punkt ohne großen Stress abgehakt werden kann. Im Normalfall erhält man ein „Multiple Entry“ Visum, was eine Wiedereinreise nach Abschluss des Semesters oder nach Reisen in andere Länder deutlich erleichtert. Spezielle Impfpfehlungen für Japan vom Auswärtigen Amt gibt es nicht, hier gibt es also nichts zu beachten. Eine Bewerbung für ein Stipendium sollte weit im Voraus erfolgen, die aufnehmende Universität wird einen jedoch auch für das Jasso Stipendium der japanischen Regierung vorschlagen (80.000 Yen). Eine Garantie für den Erhalt gibt es jedoch nicht, auch wenn mir persönlich niemand bekannt ist, der nach Bewerbung auf dieses Stipendium leer ausgegangen ist. Es ist also sinnvoll, sich beim Anfertigen des Motivationsschreibens Mühe zu geben, es wird sich auszahlen. Bei der Bewerbung wie auch bei allen anderen Dingen und organisatorischen Fragen hilft das International Office sehr schnell und wirklich gut weiter. Nach erfolgter Meldung durch die Goethe Universität an der japanischen Gasthochschule kommt das International Office mit allen benötigten Unterlagen auf dich zu, also keine Sorge, du kannst nichts Wichtiges vergessen zu planen. Ich habe während meines Aufenthalts im Nishi-Waseda International

Student House gewohnt und mich nach Anleitung durch das IO auf die Plätze beworben. Auch das ist kinderleicht und wirklich zu empfehlen, da man schnell mit anderen Studenten in Kontakt kommt und fußläufig 10 Minuten zur Universität wohnt. Für die Kurswahl bietet die QTEM-Homepage bereits im Vorhinein eine übersichtliche Datenbank mit angebotenen Kursen der letzten Semester an. Das exakte Angebot von wählbaren Kursen, die dann noch auf Anrechnung in Frankfurt geprüft werden müssen, erhält man innerhalb eines ersten Kennenlern-Treffens mit allen anderen QTEM-Studenten in der ersten Uni-Woche. Nach der Ankunft im Wohnheim stehen mit Hilfe der Residence Assistants (Einheimische japanische Studenten, die auch im Dorm wohnen und an die man sich bei Fragen stets wenden kann) noch einige Behördengänge an, u.a. zur Registrierung beim zuständigen Ward Office und zur Aufnahme in die Krankenkasse. Diese deckt 70% der Arztrechnung, es empfiehlt sich aber dennoch eine internationale Krankenversicherung abzuschließen. Nach Erledigung all dieser Dinge beginnt das Semester dann Mitte/Ende September mit den eigentlichen Kursen.

Universität, Campus und Kurswahl

Die Waseda Universität verteilt sich auf mehrere Campus, allerdings finden alle QTEM-Kurse am Nishi-Waseda Campus statt. Wie an der Goethe Uni auch gibt es mehrere Gebäude mit teilweise mehr als 15 Stockwerken, daher ein bis zwei Minuten länger für den Weg in den nächsten Hörsaal einplanen. Am meisten jedoch habe ich, wie viele andere Studenten auch, das Shirucafe aufgesucht. Dieses ist nur einen Katzensprung vom Campus entfernt und zeichnet sich dadurch aus, dass man nach einmaliger Registrierung mit seiner Campus-Mailadresse gratis Kaffee oder andere Getränke erhält, und das alle 90 Minuten über den ganzen Tag verteilt! Das ein oder andere zähe Gruppenprojekt konnte damit deutlich erträglicher gestaltet werden. Die wählbaren Kurse werden, wie oben bereits erwähnt, in einem Kick-Off Meeting zu Beginn des Semesters vorgestellt. Das Niveau der Kurse variiert, wie in Deutschland auch, relativ stark, daher ist es zu empfehlen, sich in der ersten Woche in möglichst viele Kurse reinzusetzen und sich das ganze erstmals anzuschauen, bevor man diese verbindlich wählt. Das Semester ist in zwei Quarter aufgeteilt, sodass man den Lernaufwand auf das Semester gut verteilen kann. Ich persönlich habe zwei meiner sechs gewählten Kurse bereits Mitte November abgeschlossen und hatte dann viel Zeit um nebenbei Tokio zu entdecken. Jeder Kurs wird mit fünf ECTS in Deutschland angerechnet, sodass man für den vollen Workload sechs Kurse belegen sollte. Anders als in Deutschland herrscht in vielen Kursen Anwesenheitspflicht und auch Hausaufgaben und Gruppenprojekte müssen absolviert und eingereicht werden, was allerdings dadurch ausgeglichen wird, dass die Abschlussklausur nicht 100% der Note ausmacht. Ich habe folgende sechs Kurse belegt:

- **Money and Banking**
Dieser Kurs behandelt die Ökonomie von Finanzinstituten und -märkten sowie die Rolle der Zentralbanken. Er beginnt mit einem Überblick über das Finanzsystem und einer Einführung in das Geld und seine Rolle in der Wirtschaft. Daraufhin lag der Fokus auf dem Verhalten von Zinssätzen, grundlegenden Theorien über Aktienkurse, Banken und Bankmanagement, dem Geldmengenprozess und der Durchführung der Geldpolitik. Die Note wird aus fünf eingereichten Hausaufgaben und einer Abschlussklausur gebildet.
- **Decision Making Theory**
Ziel dieses Kurses ist es die grundlegenden Konzepte und Werkzeuge der Entscheidungstheorie zu vermitteln. Der Schwerpunkt liegt dabei zu Beginn auf der Erwartungsnutzentheorie, ehe auf Rank-dependence Theory und Prospect Theory übergegangen wird. Gerade die letzten beiden werden in klassischen Mikroökonomiekursen nicht behandelt und bieten einen spannenden Einblick in persönliche Entscheidungsfindung. Notenbildung: Mitarbeit, ein Midterm sowie eine Abschlussklausur.
- **Political Economy II**
Dieser Kurs vermittelt die fortgeschrittene Theorie der politischen Ökonomie, in der Wirtschaftstheorie und Spieltheorie zum Verständnis politisch-ökonomischer Phänomene angewendet werden. Hier wird ein großer Überblick über politische Entscheidungsprozesse und deren spieltheoretische Grundlage vermittelt, sehr zu empfehlen, wenn man eine neue

Sichtweise auf politische Entscheidungsfindung kennenlernen möchte. Es sind drei Hausaufgaben/Rechnungen einzureichen sowie eine Abschlussklausur zu bewältigen.

- **International Finance and the Economy**
Dieser Kurs behandelt den dynamischen Zusammenhang zwischen internationalen Finanzen und makroökonomischen Entwicklungen von Volkswirtschaften wie der japanischen und der chinesischen Wirtschaft. Dieser Studienbereich wird oft als internationale Makroökonomie oder offene Makroökonomie bezeichnet. Der Schwerpunkt liegt auf der Anwendung grundlegender theoretischer Analysen auf die reale Welt, um besser zu verstehen, wie nationale Volkswirtschaften im Zeitalter der finanziellen Globalisierung funktionieren. Ein eher durchschnittlicher Kurs, dessen Note sich aus Mitarbeit und einer Abschlussklausur zusammensetzt.
- **Corporate Valuation**
Der Fokus dieses Kurses galt grundlegenden Bewertungsprinzipien und Techniken in Aktienanlagen, Aktienemissionen, M&As usw. Ziel ist es ein tieferes Verständnis für die verschiedenen Themen der Unternehmensbewertung zu vermitteln. Nach Erlernen theoretischer Grundlagen (CAPM, Cash Flow vs. Earnings, ...) musste man zwei Gruppenarbeiten einreichen, zudem galt es in einer Abschlussklausur ein Unternehmen zu bewerten. Ein sehr spannender und cooler Kurs mit starkem Praxisbezug, daher absolut zu empfehlen.
- **Management of Financial Institutions:**
Dieser Kurs vermittelt Wissen und Perspektiven über das Management von Finanzinstituten, ihre Chancen und Herausforderungen im globalen Umfeld und Fragestellungen von aktueller Bedeutung. Er verfolgt dabei einen angewandten Ansatz, der praktisches, anwendbares Wissen in den Vordergrund stellt und das behandelte Thema jeder Woche mit aktuellen Debatten in Verbindung bringt. Der Unterricht konzentriert sich auf die Grundlagen des Managements, verschiedene Arten von Finanzinstituten (mit Schwerpunkt Banken und bankenähnliche Institute in Japan), die jüngsten Entwicklungen an den Finanzmärkten und das neue regulatorische Umfeld. Rund jede dritte Vorlesung wurde durch einen Vortrag von Führungskräften japanischer Finanzinstitute bereichert. Hier galt es einen Vortrag zu halten, ein Paper zu schreiben und eine Abschlussklausur zu bewältigen.

Leben und Freizeit in Japan, Reisen und Sonstiges

Das Leben in Japan ist aufregend und anders. Es ist (abseits von Osaka und Tokyo) weniger bunt und abgedreht, als man das aus TV Bildern gewöhnt ist. Gerade abseits der Großstädte strahlen Land und Leute eine unheimliche Ruhe aus, ich empfehle deshalb auch dringend ein paar Trips auf bzw. durch das Land zu planen, da der Kontrast zu den Städten sehr stark ist. Besonders sehenswert ist der Mount Fuji (Nationalheiligtum!), den man bis Mitte September auch bewandern kann. Wer also Lust hat dies zu machen, nicht lange zögern! Tokio an sich bietet bereits einiges zu entdecken: Museen (Science Museum, Edo Museum oder das neu installierte Digital Arts Lab Light Museum), Parks, der alte und der neue Fischmarkt, Tempel und Schreine, Tokio Tower und Skytree, Baseball und Sumo-Ringen. Besonders coole Viertel sind Shibuya, Shinjuku, Ikebukuro und Akihabara. Das Nachtleben in Tokio ist ebenfalls legendär. Sehr viele Bars (Golden Gai ist immer einen Besuch wert) und Clubs aller musikalischen Geschmäcker gilt es zu entdecken. Wie oben angesprochen sollte man auch möglichst viele Restaurants testen. Eine besondere Empfehlung sind natürlich jegliche Sushi-Restaurants, bei denen man nichts falsch machen kann. Direkt in Uninähe ist das Hamasushi, ein Running-Sushi Laden mit wirklich leckerem Sushi für unschlagbare Preise (80 Cent der Teller). Gerne auch in Sterne-Restaurants vorbeischaun: Abends sehr fancy, bieten viele mittags für rund 10€ wahnsinnig leckere Gerichte an. Mein Favorit: Nakajima. Drei Sardinengerichte auf der Karte, aber das mit Abstand beste Sashimi, das du je essen wirst!!

Zum Reisen empfiehlt sich der Fernbus über Nacht, wer es eilig hat kann aber auch günstig fliegen. Der Shinkansen ist ein Erlebnis wert, allerdings auch sehr teuer. Ich habe Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe, Hiroshima und Fukushima besucht. Einen Besuch wert sind darüber hinaus Okinawa (Insel im Süden) und Hokkaido zum Skifahren. Ziele außerhalb Japans hängen von eigenen Interessen ab. Lange Reisen außerhalb Japans bieten sich aber über die zweiwöchige Pause über Weihnachten und Neujahr an. Zu guter Letzt zu den Menschen, die das Land besonders ausmachen: Alle Japaner sind mir insgesamt sehr freundlich, hilfsbereit und interessiert begegnet. Es schadet allgemein nicht, mit einem Lächeln durch das Land zu gehen. Sehr wichtig ist es sich der örtlichen Kultur anzupassen: Wie eingangs schon erwähnt ist es auch in den Großstädten vergleichsweise ruhig. Dies liegt unter anderem daran, dass in der U-Bahn wenig gesprochen, vor allem aber nicht gegessen und telefoniert wird. Müll will ordentlich getrennt werden und das obwohl es kaum Mülleimer im öffentlichen Raum gibt. Auch das Rauchen auf offener Straße ist verboten. Hält man sich an diese paar Grundregeln, wird man in Japan ein sehr interessantes und angenehmes Semester verbringen und viele neue internationale Freunde gewinnen.

Falls noch weitere Fragen offen sind oder du weitere Dinge wissen solltest, melde dich einfach unter angegebener Mailadresse bei mir! Das Auslandssemester in Tokio war eine unglaubliche Erfahrung und ich kann dir nur wärmstens empfehlen, es selbst vor Ort zu erleben!

Study report at Waseda University, Japan, winter term 2017/18 (Master – QTEM)

By: Alexander Kabakov
a.kabakov@web.de

1. Introduction

Going to Japan, to study and live for half a year is a big decision. Numerous concerns emerge as you are faced with the planning part of your journey. What are the eligibility requirements? Which courses can I pick? How can I arrange (or start arranging) my accommodation for the next 6 months? Apart from studying, will I get the chance to travel the country, experience the culture and people? And what about the finances? Worry not, my friend, in the following lines I will answer all of these and other major questions concerning your semester abroad at the Waseda University in Tokyo. I will guide you through the whole planning process, address the most important challenges, share my personal experience and give you some Pro-Tips around studying, living and travelling in the Land of the Rising Sun.

2. Preparation – before the exchange

The good news is that once you have been accepted into the QTEM Program, you will get a lot of assistance from your local coordinator as well as the coordinator of the host university. This way it is fairly easy to gather all the needed documents for your exchange. The tricky part is to get into QTEM. As for me, I knew I wanted to do a semester abroad in my masters. Thus, I read up about all the information events regarding the different exchange programs offered by the Goethe University in the first weeks of my masters and made it a priority to attend all of them, which I ultimately did. Attending these events is greatly useful. Not only will you get a summary about the relevant programs, but you will also get to know the coordinator of your program, get to know likeminded fellow students, who may share useful experience with you and, last but definitely not least, get a great overview of the organizational workload that will be awaiting you. The most important requirements to get accepted into the QTEM program are: a GMAT score of at least 650, a proficient level of English language and some extracurricular activities. As for me, I perfectly met these requirements and was lucky enough to get accepted into the program.

Pro-Tip: once you decide to go abroad, start to gather information on the requirements and the organization of your exchange **asap**. Even if you didn't get the accepted yet. It's best to start already during the orientation week.

Once you get the acceptance letter, that's when the planning really starts. First things, check the semester dates. The Japanese winter term starts in the middle of September. Thus, you will be able to comfortably complete your exams in Germany before heading out for Japan.

Now that you have planned your semester in Germany, it's time to think about the courses you'll pick at Waseda. The QTEM homepage offers a neatly arranged database of the units you can attend at the partner universities. I strongly suggest you to use this database when planning your schedule as it will give you a comprehensive overview of all available courses for the respective term. Moreover, all of the courses in the database will most likely be accepted by Goethe, so you don't have to worry too much about the approval. Keep in mind, since the courses at Waseda are worth only 5 CP, you will have to pick more courses than in Germany. Choose up to eight courses to submit for approval at Goethe. This will give you a nice flexibility later on (when you will learn more about the exact contents and the lecturers during your first weeks at Waseda) as you will be able to pick six out of eight courses.

Pro-Tip: unlike at Goethe, where you can sign up for an exam pretty late in the semester and sign out at a short notice prior exam, Waseda won't give you that freedom. The registration for exams is completed within the first couple of weeks and **can't be altered easily**. Thus, inform yourself about the subjects you're about to pick as good as you can in advance. Think carefully about: attendance, tests, homework, examination dates, papers to submit etc.

If you are a member of the European Union, getting a visa is done easily by submitting a request in a Japanese embassy. Unfortunately, I do not know the requirements for the citizens of outside the EU, thus you may want to consult your embassy in advance in order to avoid possible delays. After a successful application, you will get all the important documents online too. Don't worry too much about getting a health care in advance in Germany. Every student at Waseda is obliged to buy a Japanese health care policy at admission. It's nice, since everything will be prepared for you. For a fairly low price you will get the necessary insurance in no time. So save your money in Germany.

In terms of bank accounts, I would recommend getting an account at the DKB (Deutsche Kredit Bank). With the student credit card offer you can withdraw (not pay(!)) money free of charge all over the world, which is really useful. Additionally, it is very troublesome to get a Japanese bank account as a foreigner. It's a path full of bureaucracy, extreme language barriers, misunderstandings and frustration. However, should you be needing a Japanese account anyways, get one of the local students to help you. This will save you a lot of time and trouble. Still, I can't stress enough how useful a charge free credit card was to me. So, try and get one before you leave for Japan. Keep in mind that it may take a couple of weeks to actually get your card, be sure to start on time.

Finally, you'll have to think about the accommodation. There are several options to choose from. First, you may try get into a student dorm, which I did. You can apply for it straight from Germany. Second, you could try and rent a place while you are still in Germany. Third, book a hostel for your first week in Tokyo. Even though I heard stories about student dorms being very dirty, I applied anyway and never looked back. There are two major student dorms Nishi Waseda and Waseda Hoshien. Ultimately, you don't get a say in neither the dorm you will be assigned to nor the room. I got assigned to Waseda Hoshien and it was an amazing place to stay. On the ground floor, there is a big common room where you can meet other students, play all kinds of Nintendo, PlayStation and Xbox Games, meet for a couple of drinks and just hand out. I got my own room, which is a pretty small apartment-like accommodation with a bedroom and your own toilet with a sink. You share the showers and the big kitchen with other 9 guys flats from your floor. All the common rooms are cleaned daily by a cleaning lady, so you don't have to worry about cleaning which is pretty nice. Additionally, the dorm is 3 minutes' walk from the Uni and is located in the Student area of the city, full of small coffees, restaurants and shops. The only downside is the strict visitor policy in the dorms. You are not allowed to take anyone outside the dorm to your room, only the common room. However, it is a problem most of us managed to figure a way around pretty quickly. Unfortunately, I don't know a lot about looking for a place outside a dorm in Japan. As far as I know, all of the exchange students that wanted a room in a dorm also got one.

You got your courses lined up for Germany and Japan. You successfully applied for the visa and got a room in a dorm. Now it's time to get a flight. I definitely recommend booking a 'nice' airline, as you'll spend around 24 hours in the plane. I used Skyscanner to find an affordable flight and booked Emirates. It was a nice flight of 6 hours to Dubai, transition of 2 hours, and another 13 hours from Dubai to Tokyo. Should you get a return flight straight away? It depends on your plans. The Japanese semester is over just in time for you to go back and catch the German exam period. Some may choose to do so. On the other hand, when is the next time you may end up in Japan? As for me, I took two months to backpack after my studies and had an amazing time! In the end, it is for you to decide.

3. Waseda University

Waseda University is the one of the biggest universities in Japan. In Tokyo it located in a nice and calm area. It is really nice with lots of green, places to relax, some cafés and places to eat. There is a gym, a basketball court and some places to get food and coffee around. In terms of study material, you will find all you need here. There are books, working space as well as computers.

Pro-Tip: there are lots of small eateries all around the campus with low prices and amazing food. Definitely worth discovering!

Japanese academic approach differs greatly from the German. First of all, all of the courses will have an attendance sheet, which will determine a part of your final grade (up to 40%(!)). Many courses will have weekly homework that you'll have to hand in either on paper or online. Almost every course will have some kind of a group project, that you'll have to either submit, present or both by the end of

the semester. Compared to Germany, the required volume of work during the semester is definitely higher, however in my experience it is significantly less challenging. Additionally, due to the high workload during the semester the finals will have a lower impact on your final grade, typically 40 – 60%. It has lots of advantages, as your final grade is not decided by a one-time-performance (i.e. exam), rather you get the chance to impact your grades at different points in time throughout the semester, which may come useful. Another advantage is that many lectures are recorded and uploaded online for your access. However, don't fall into the trap of not going to lectures and later forgetting to listen to the online version, you'll definitely need one of those to pass the exams. One other thing to pay attention to are the group projects. If you care about your grades, make sure to find the right people to work with (!). For some reason many exchange students (including myself) had troubles with their groups in terms work ethic. If you're unlucky, you may end up working on several assignments, of which each is meant for five people, all by yourself. As for me, I took *Advanced Corporate Finance*, *Business Transformation in a Digital Era*, *Statistical Finance*, *Trade Relations and International Finance*, *Growth Strategy & Creation of Sustainable Business* and *Organizational Strategy*. Unfortunately, I can't recommend any of the courses. Most of the time the contents were either extremely unchallenging, like in *Business Transformation*, or extremely overwhelming, like *Advanced Corporate Finance*. However, what I CAN recommend are courses with easy credits. Such as *Trade Relations and International Finance*, where 40% of your grade is determined by the attendance and the other 60% by a 3 pages report you write about a paper. I still didn't quite get neither the goals nor the point of *Growth Strategy*, but the lecturer was a very nice guy. *Business Transformation*, although very trivial course, had lots of guest speakers CEO's and CFO's of companies like Mitsubishi and Financial Times, which was really interesting. Lastly, I heard *Sport Finance* was a very interesting course.

Pro-Tip: for the group projects, try to create a group with 70% other QTEMers and the rest local students. This way you'll get some exposure to the local ways but wont risk to mess with your final grades

Waseda offers a ton of leisure activities, so called circles. Many student associations, sport clubs, gym memberships, bar crawls, you name it. Most of the clubs will introduce themselves during the welcome days. As for me, I didn't take part in any of those activities, except for boxing. Yet, for many exchange students joining club activities makes it a lot easier to meet new people.

4. Life in Tokyo

Japan is slightly more expensive than Germany. But if you keep an eye on the price tags while shopping you should be fine.

Tokyo is known for good coffee, food, drinks and amazing night life so make sure to try out different places. Also, it is a city of many 'hidden bars' and has a huge pub culture. It's fun to explore the different locations. There is lots of street musicians, art, live music, concerts and other events all around the city. You can stay up to date using Facebook and the information provided by Waseda Clubs. I can't give you a recommendation for a specific place or event to go or attend, simply because there have been so many of them. Make your own experiences and explore as much as you can. You are spending the semester in an amazing city, make it count!

5. Travel

It is needless to say that you should explore the city you are staying in, first things. Try not to focus too much on the studies, you are in Tokyo, my friend, enjoy.

Finally, take some time and travel around the country if you can. Japan is extremely exciting to travel around. Thus, I travelled as well. My favorite destinations were Osaka with its amazing food, completely different breed of mentality and an amazing night life I will never forget. Nara is a place where you can hand feed some wild deers, who will bow in front of you to ask for food. Hokkaido is in the North of the country and pretty cold. You can go skiing and snowboarding there, or simply enjoy some amazing landscapes. Additionally, you can try and discover some countries around Japan. I've spent Christmas and New Years in the Philippines, visited Korea and Taiwan.

6. Conclusion

Japan is amazing. I would definitely recommend Waseda as a host university to study abroad. You will have a great time studying and experiencing a totally different way of living.

Overall, the QTEM program offers a high value package for the students, with two semesters abroad and numerous corporate partners. I am glad to have been a part of it and hope that this report will help you to get a head start on an amazing time, which is lying on front of you. Enjoy the the Land of the Rising Sun!!

Study report at Waseda University, Japan, winter term 2017/18 (Master – QTEM)

Japan is a place with charm. There are too many things here what people can discover and investigate. And it is a country that has lots of similarities but also great difference to Germany. Therefore, I am always seeking for an opportunity to go to Japan and live with the people for a while, in order to gain a better understanding of the culture and more... The QTEM program gave me this wonderful chance.

WASEDA UNIVERSITY

Our partner university, the Waseda University, is one of the best universities in Japan and in Tokyo, especially with regard to Economics and Business. It has famous alumni among different sectors and well-known professors who are graduated from or have worked for top-universities around the world. As a student at the Waseda Uni, you would have various opportunities to join workshops or seminars with very advanced topics or concerns about Japanese modern economics. In Japan, Waseda Uni is often compared to its “rival” – the Keio University, since both are top private universities and famous for Business. Moreover, Waseda Uni has four campuses: three in Shinjuku district -- central area of Tokyo and one in countryside for sports program. Thus, it is very convenient and lucky for foreigners to discover Tokyo and Japan.

STUDY AT WASEDA

I am an exchange student at the Graduate School of Economics (GSE), and with the QTEM program I was allowed to choose courses not only from GSE but also some from the Graduate School of Commerce (GSC) and Waseda Business School (WBS) as well. The latter provide me with courses in the Business Administration area, such as “Japan's Economy and Business Environment”, “Management of Financial Institutions”, “Trade Relations and International Finance” and also interesting topics like “Sports Finance-An Introduction”. I recommend almost all courses that I have taken, especially courses with guest lectures and targeting more practical issues. From these courses you can have primary information about Japanese companies and Japanese economy and hear from internationalization for Japan and Asia. And courses with more discussion are organized also well and give you various insights from different backgrounds. Each course counts 2 credit points at Waseda and for Goethe Uni you will get 5 credit points transferred.

Furthermore, you can also apply for Japanese courses separate from the academic ones from another center for Japanese studies CJL (Centre for Japanese Language). Courses in all levels are offered systematically, from “Survivor Japanese” for zero beginners to JPLT test. Here, you would have courses with exchange students from all faculties. However, places for some popular courses are limited, which means you should apply as soon as possible.

OFFICIAL THINGS YOU HAVE TO DO

There are many things you have to do for travelling in Japan as an exchange student. A plan for that should be made carefully. Before arriving in Japan, you need to contact with your coordinator to get CoE (Certificate of Eligibility). After that, you can apply for Student Visa (1 Year) with the CoE. Then, flight and housing should be considered. After arriving in Japan, you will get your Identity Card at the Airport, along with the working permission (if you need that, you should apply it together with your visa). Then, go to university and local government for health insurance and registration. Now you get the most important things done! (You can live without a bank account and SIM card, if you don't need one. More information will be given in orientation event.)

HOUSING

Overall I would say it is very difficult to find a room in Tokyo, especially when you are new in the city and can't speak Japanese. So the recommended way is to apply for dorms. The Waseda Uni has 3 dorms

for international exchange students and they are all 5 min. near the campus. The price is pretty good for the location, since Shinjuku district is really a nice and popular area in Tokyo. However you might have less opportunity to interact with Japanese people. Application for dorms will be early around May and coordinator will remind you of that. If you unfortunately haven't got a place for dorm or you would like to live more in "Japanese style", share houses with both Japanese and international roommates or private apartments are considerable. However rooms are usually shared in shared house and hygiene problems might occur. Moreover, Japanese renting (except dorms and international shared houses) acquire "gift money" above normal deposit, so you need to pay a lot at first, which is not so worthwhile for exchange students. Also it is worth mentioning: transportation costs are also high in Japan, so you should include that also in your calculation for housing costs, if you decide to live a bit further.

ORIENTATION AND SUPERVISION FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS

In general, Japanese people own the best service spirit and service quality that I have experienced. The exchange program at Waseda Uni was well organized and included all kinds of events. Miss Tsujimoto at the GSE office has helped me with all registration and also some living problems. The QTEM coordinator Mr. Hisatoshi Tanaka has taken great care of us, from academic to cultural topics. We have experienced together Tokyo Stock Exchange and huge airplane maintenance factory from JAL, and Japanese traditional Fugu hotpot and Buddhism Matsuri (festival). I feel very lucky to be an exchange student at GSE faculty.

As for university-wide events, ICC (Intercultural Communication Center) is a wonderful organization and office for international students and is supported by the university. Here you can make good friends and get to know Japanese cultures intensively. Interesting events like culture introduction (traditional Japanese arts, music, other Asian cultures), language workshop (JPN, GER, ENG etc.), elementary school visit, autumn sports with Japanese students in countryside are provided almost every week. Here is the best place if you can't really understand and speak Japanese but still have great passion to know the culture and people!

STUDENT LIFE AND LIVING IN TOKYO

In my opinion, it is very nice to be a student at Japanese university, since there are so many cultural festivals every semester and student clubs in all directions. If you are here, it is maybe a must to experience the Waseda Matsuri, as students perform in groups and sell self-made food with great atmosphere full of happiness. Go to baseball match as Waseda student will also deliver you powerful impression of Japanese team spirit. Tokyo Hike around the central Tokyo area is a good opportunity to know the place you live, which is also important for Japanese modern and ancient history. If you want to join the students, you may join a student club and even participate in the performance. WIF (Waseda International Festival) Student Club provides you a chance, even if you can't speak the language. With sound Japanese you could also find student clubs with more interesting topics like Animation, Sweets, Sports and Hunting etc.

Living in the capital city is never cheap. Renting and entertainment costs depends largely on your choice, however with a minimum of about 700 euro per month. Because of large influence from western, you can consume both Japanese and some western food at the supermarket. Pizza pasta and cheese are provided, however a bit "Japanized". And you will never be boring in Tokyo! All kinds of events are here for you, cultural, political, arts etc. However, you should be aware that most of Japanese people are poor in foreign languages, so it may be difficult to communicate if you can't speak a word.

USEFUL TIPS AND GOOD TO KNOW

1. Learn basic Japanese and get to know the culture (Do & Don't) before you arrive. It will make your life here a lot easier and happier!
2. Plan for your time in Japan in advance. Since so many interesting places, events and much information are given, you may feel stressful sometimes. Moreover, it is useful to split your travel plan, since there

are already enough to see in Tokyo, and some sightseeing places in Japan like Mount Fuji are open only for specific months.

3. Japanese people are shy, polite and indirect, so please try to ask and consider the feeling of others a bit more. Then you will better adapt to Japanese living!
4. Don't be noisy! It is often very quite in public places in Japan, such as subway, some restaurants, even though there are many people, so take notice of your voice.
5. It is okay to make mistakes. Japanese people are kind to foreigners and allow them to be wrong due to cultural difference. However, they will be very happy if you know.

ENJOY YOUR TIME AND MAKE USE OF THE CHANCE TO EXPLORE JAPAN!