

# Exchange Semester Experience

Exchange Semester Experience Fall 2025 ~ February 2026

## University of Malaya, Malaysia



Participating in the JOY program at Yokohama National University was an incredible pivot from my usual studies. While my academic background is numerical, my time in Japan was defined by the beauty of language and the depth of Japanese tradition. At YNU, I chose to dedicate my time primarily to mastering the Japanese language. The intensive environment allowed me to progress much faster than I ever could have back home. Beyond the classroom, every interaction in Yokohama from ordering food to chatting with local students became a valuable lesson.

One of the most meaningful parts of my exchange was joining a local volunteer group to experience the Japanese tea ceremony. Learning the intricate movements and the philosophy of "harmony, respect, purity, and tranquility" gave me a profound appreciation for Japanese culture. I also took the opportunity to travel and explore historical sites. My favorite destination was Kamakura. Walking through its ancient temples and seeing the Great Buddha provided a peaceful contrast to the modern energy of Yokohama and allowed me to feel the historical heart of Japan.

Throughout the program, I met friends from all over the world. Sharing this experience with other international students at YNU created a unique bond. We explored Japanese food together, traveled to new cities, and supported each other through our language-learning journeys. These global friendships are just as important to me as the cultural knowledge I gained.

I am extremely grateful to YNU and the JOY program for hosting me in my semester abroad. This was my second time in Japan, and it has been incredible. Thank you!