

International Baccalaureate Japanese (ab initio)

@ Durham Sixth Form Centre

Studying Japanese, could open doors to new opportunities in study and travel.

“All “If we spoke a different language, we would perceive a somewhat different world.”

- Wittgenstein ”

Learning Japanese at Durham Gilesgate Sports College & Sixth Form Centre will take you on a linguistic and cultural journey through one of the most fascinating and important areas of the world today. Through readings, video and class discussion, you will learn to communicate on a variety of topics in both spoken and written Japanese. No previous knowledge of Japanese is assumed.

While exploring the language and customs of Japan, you will also be encouraged to question your own cultural practices, beliefs and ways of seeing the world. In this way, it is hoped, you will begin to develop a deeper and more analytical understanding of your own current ‘norms’.

What will I learn?

Studying IB Japanese will introduce you to the language and culture of the world’s third largest economy. You will meet the Japanese writing systems early within your first term of study and will be expected to become quickly familiar with the two ‘alphabets’ (the hiragana and katakana syllabries).

The syllabus covers: The Individual, Education & Work, Town & Services, Food & Drink, Leisure & Travel, The Environment, Health & Emergencies

You will also explore the customs and practises of the Japanese people themselves and, through a process of comparison and critical reflection, be expected to build a deeper awareness of your role as an international citizen, conscious, respectful and knowledgeable of others and their cultural diversity.

How will I learn?

Teaching will be conducted largely in Japanese. This will be done in a challenging but accessible way, so that you are immersed in the Japanese language and quickly grow used to hearing it spoken by native speakers.

You will have access to JSTV, a Japanese satellite TV channel, as well as online Japanese newspapers, available in both English and Japanese. Hard-copy publications on Japanese life and culture, such as the magazine Nipponia will also be made available in both English and Japanese, so that you can read up on Japanese life and culture in English, until you are ready to try this in Japanese.

There will be the opportunity to build language exchange partnerships with Japanese students living and studying locally in Durham. This will provide greater contact with native speakers and an environment where you can practice your evolving language skills.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment in year 13 will be via an internally-marked individual presentation and interactive spoken task (30%) and by means of two external papers in reading & text response (40%) and an extended writing paper (30%).

Studying Japanese could also give you the edge in the working world after being at the Centre.

