



The University of Glasgow and Japan

International University

The University of Glasgow is a leading international institution, which has welcomed students from all parts of the world throughout its history. Its leading edge research and dynamic student centred teaching as well as Glasgow's status as one of the most culturally exciting cities in the United Kingdom, has made it a popular choice.



Japanese Students

The first Japanese students matriculated at the University of Glasgow in the 1870s. They came to study a wide range of subjects, although most came to study engineering and applied science. The majority were sponsored by the Japanese government and part of their education included apprenticeships and practical work in Glasgow companies. Most came from Samurai families and returned to Japan to occupy leading positions in industry. The University has always sought to build on these links and a long and fruitful history has involved student exchange and joint technological research and development.



Recognition of Japanese Language

In 1901, the University Court decreed that Japanese was to be an entry subject - one of the language choices in the preliminary examination for aspiring students. Sampachi Fukuzawa, the son of Yukichi Fukuzawa, the founder of the University of Keio in Tokyo, was the first person to sit this examination in April 1901. He was to graduate with a BSc three years later. His external examiner was Kinnosuke (Soseki) Natsume, the famous Japanese novelist, who was studying in London at this time. During the University's Ninth Jubilee celebrations in 1901 Professors Joji Sakurai and Isao Iijima of the University of Tokyo were awarded honorary degrees.

Scottish-Japanese cultural links

Today's students at the University of Glasgow can also benefit from an active Japanese Society that organises events such as Japanese cookery parties and the showing of Japanese films. One of the main aims of the society is to help all explore the cultural heritage that underlies Japanese society today, and to help provide a bridge between the Japanese and Scottish cultures. The University's Europe-Japan Social Science Research Centre has an annual programme of activities that include public lectures and Continuing Professional Development programmes for Japanese managers in Scotland.

The University of Glasgow holds many research materials that can enhance the study and understanding of Scottish-Japanese cultural links. Its collections contain photographs and diaries of visits to Japan by Western travellers in the 19th century, photographs and records of the Japanese imperial and merchant navy, as well as many documents relating to the students who came to study in Glasgow at both the University and in the engineering and other trades.

James McNeill Whistler was one of many artists who was greatly influenced by Japan and Japanese art. The University of Glasgow has held Whistler's artistic and literary estate since it was donated to the University by his sister-in-law Rosalind Birnie Philip. It includes letters, works of art, selected items of furniture and his personal collections of china and silver.



More than 1000 of his works are housed in the University's Hunterian Art Gallery, making the University a primary focus of scholarship in this field.

