

## Traffic Rules and Manners

Traffic rules are established by Japanese laws and ordinances. For both international and domestic students who have recently obtained their driver's license, there may be rules that they have just learned. Regardless, there are penalties if you break the law. There are also rules about commuting to school, and students who break these rules will face punishment according to the University Regulations for Awards and Disciplinary Measures.

Those who do not follow traffic laws not only face punishment, but could also hurt someone. Of course, if you are involved in an accident there could be effects that remain long after that could seriously impact your life. A proper understanding of traffic rules can be a part of a successful student life.

### Important Notes for Bicycle Riders

#### Bicycle registration

When buying a bicycle, be sure to register it at the store. If you receive a second-hand bicycle from someone, be sure to check whether or not the bicycle has been registered. If it has been registered, confirm the information and update the registration at the police station.

#### Oita Prefecture Ordinance to Promote Safe and Appropriate Bicycle Use

The Oita Prefectural Government adopted an ordinance that will require bicycle riders to purchase liability insurance from June 2021 to promote bicycle safety. Bicycle accidents involving APU students have been on the rise in recent years. Be sure to use your bicycle in a safe and appropriate manner.

Oita Prefectural Government Website:

<https://www.pref.oita.jp/soshiki/13000/zitensyazyourei.html>

#### Abandoned bicycles

Bicycles in fair condition can often be found in the trash or abandoned on the roadside. While it may appear that nobody owns these bicycles, please refrain from using them. Bicycles in Japan are registered to their owner to prevent bicycle theft. A bicycle that appears abandoned may have been stolen and discarded. If you are stopped on an abandoned bicycle that was stolen, you may be considered a suspect.

### Traffic Rules

#### Drunk driving

One very important law to keep in mind is found in Article 65 of the Road Traffic Act, "No person shall operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol." "Vehicle" in this case also includes bicycles, therefore riding a bicycle while intoxicated is also against the law. Other acts prohibited by law include lending a car to someone who is intoxicated, making someone who plans to drive drink alcohol, and riding in a car driven by someone who is intoxicated. Do not drink and drive!

## Penalties

- Driving while intoxicated (DWI):  
Up to five years imprisonment and a fine of up to 1,000,000 yen
- Driving under the influence (DUI):  
Up to three years imprisonment and a fine of up to 500,000 yen  
※Anyone supplying an impaired driver with a vehicle also faces the same penalties.
- Anyone who supplies alcohol to or rides with a person who is arrested for DWI:  
Up to three years imprisonment and a fine of up to 500,000 yen.
- Anyone who supplies alcohol to or rides with a person who is arrested for DUI:  
Up to two years imprisonment and a fine of up to 300,000 yen



## Driving without a valid license

According to Article 64 of the Road Traffic Act, anyone who does not have a valid driver's license is not permitted to drive a motor vehicle, including scooters and motorbikes. International driving permits are only valid in Japan for up to one year from the date you first arrive in Japan. If you have an international driving permit, be sure you know your expiration date. Driving with an expired international driving permit is the same as driving without a license. (For more information on driver's licenses or the international driving permit, please see page 74-78.)



## Penalties

- Up to three years imprisonment and a fine of up to 500,000 yen.
- You can be charged with aiding and abetting driving without a license if you provide a vehicle to someone who might drive without a license and that person drives it, or if you ask someone to drive you home in your car even though you know he or she doesn't have a license.

## Penalties

- Providing a vehicle: Up to three years imprisonment and a fine of up to 500,000 yen.
- Riding in a vehicle: Up to two years imprisonment and a fine of up to 300,000 yen.

## Speeding

Article 22 of the Road Traffic Act says that it is prohibited to operate a vehicle at speeds faster than the speed limit established for the road in question (see below).

Established speed limits (excerpt)

Vehicle type	Ordinary roads	Expressway
Scooter	30km/h	n/a
Motorbike	60km/h	100km/h
Light automobiles	60km/h	100km/h
Automobiles	60km/h	100km/h



While some countries do not require a license to operate a motor scooter, you must have a valid driver's license to operate a motor scooter in Japan. The speed limit for motor scooters is 30km/h.

## Helmets / Riding Double

Article 71, section 4 of the Road Traffic Law requires that anyone riding a motorbike must wear a motorcycle helmet. This includes passengers as well. Additionally, Article 55 of the Road Traffic Law prohibits two people from riding a motor scooter at the same time.

Other common traffic violations include failing to obey traffic lights or operating a vehicle on the wrong side of the road.



## Traffic Accidents

Whether you are commuting to school or running errands, it is important to be careful and pay attention so that you do not get involved in a traffic accident. If you are involved in an accident you may have trouble continuing your studies, so it is very important that you have additional insurance just in case.

### In the event you are involved in an accident:

1. Regardless of who is at fault, before discussing any blame or settlement call the police from the scene of the accident right away to report the accident. If the accident is not reported to the police, your insurance may not cover the accident and you may be responsible for extremely expensive medical bills and repair costs.
2. If you need to speak with someone about an accident you were involved in, you should first speak with your own insurance company, or with a public consultation service.

#### Oita Prefecture Traffic Accident

Consultation Office 097-506-2166

Oita Prefecture Traffic Safety Center,  
Traffic Accident Consultation Office

097-532-0815

Safe Driving Center 097-524-6420



## Motorbikes

When operating a motorbike (including motor scooters), you must have 1) a valid driver's license, and 2) compulsory vehicle liability insurance. With international driving permits in particular, we have seen many cases where a student is arrested for driving with a international driving permit that is no longer recognized as valid in Japan. Carefully read the following information, and be absolutely sure you do not drive without a valid license. Students driving without a valid license can also be subject to disciplinary action.

## Motor scooters also require a valid driver's license!

### Receiving a motorbike from a friend or acquaintance

First check whether the bike has been registered as nonoperational or that the ownership has been properly transferred. Do not accept any motorbikes that have not been properly transferred. At the same time, make sure that the compulsory liability insurance is still valid. Don't accept a motorbike just

because it's free or cheap. Likewise, when you choose to transfer your motorbike to another person, be sure to follow the proper procedures.

## Driver's Licenses

When driving, you must carry a driver's license that is recognized as valid in Japan. If you are stopped without a valid driver's license, you could face imprisonment of up to three years and a fine of up to 500,000 yen. International students must have a valid license obtained through one of the following methods in order to operate a motorbike while in Japan.

### Method 1:

Get a Japanese driver's license.

In order to get a Japanese driver's license, inquire at the office below.

Oita Prefecture Driver's License Center Phone: 097-528-3000

<https://www.pref.oita.jp/site/keisatu/menkyo-index.html>

How to get there: At JR Oita Station, take the bus from boarding area #7 (for detailed information, contact Oita Bus at 097-532-7000.)

### Method 2:

Converting the driver's license from your own country to be able to drive in Japan.

- You cannot undergo an examination without an appointment.
- If there are many applicants, you may have to wait one to two months, so carry out the procedure while your overseas license is still valid.

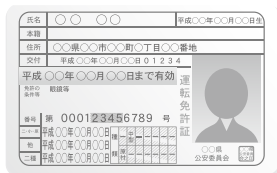
#### (1) Application conditions

1. Must possess a valid overseas driver's license.
2. Must be able to prove that you stayed for a total of three months or more in the relevant country after obtaining your overseas driver's license.

※Your passport or Certificate of Enrollment, etc. may be used as proof. (Copies are not allowed)

#### (2) Required documents, etc.

1. Overseas driver's license (valid)
2. A Japanese translation of your overseas driver's license. (Must be created by the embassy or consulate of the relevant country or the Japan Automobile Federation)
3. Certificate of residence which lists your legal place of origin (nationality in the case of a foreigner. Copies are not allowed)
4. Certificate of stay (document which proves that you stayed for a total of three months or more in the relevant country after obtaining your overseas driver's license.)
5. Japanese driver's license (for those who currently possess or who have received a license in the past)
6. Two ID photos to take the examination (taken within the last 6 months, size: height 3 cm, width 2.4 cm, two photos for each license class)



### 7. Eyeglasses, contact lenses (color contacts are not allowed)

※ There is a qualification screening (eyesight test, etc.), so please bring such items if you require them.

### (3) Examination dates

#### 1. Monday - Friday every week (except for holidays and the year-end and New Year holidays.)

※ A reservation is required for the specific time, so please contact the Licensing Department in advance.

#### 2. The reception hours are from 1 to 2 p.m. for those who are retaking the written test or practical test.

### (4) Examination details

#### 1. Document screening

#### 2. Interview regarding the licensing status

#### 3. Qualification screening (eyesight test, etc.)

#### 4. Written test (Japanese, English, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Persian, Thai, Russian, Vietnamese, Tagalog)

#### 5. Practical test (Using Oita Driver's License Center on-site course)

### (5) Fees (may change, so be sure to check when you apply)

#### 1. Examination fees

Motor scooter license	1,500 yen
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Standard (first-class) license	2,550 yen
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Motorcycle / Heavy special vehicle licenses	2,600 yen
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Large, middle, and semi-middle motor vehicle licenses	4,100 yen
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#### 2. Examination vehicle usage fee: 1,450 yen (except for the moped)

#### 3. License issuing fee 2,050 yen

### (6) Specially designated countries and regions

People from the 29 specially designated countries and regions are exempt from the written and practical tests.

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, The United States of America (limited to the State of Virginia, the State of Hawaii, the State of Maryland, and the State of Washington), Monaco, Portugal,

Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan (as of February 6, 2020)

### (7) Other

#### 1. An advance reservation is required for the first examination.

#### 2. Applications are limited to the first-class driver's license.

#### 3. Please bring the original copies of all documents. The examination cannot be taken with copied documents.

#### 4. Persons taking the practical test should wear clothing which is suitable for driving.

#### 5. Persons who can not speak Japanese should be accompanied by an interpreter.

#### 6. Japan Automobile Federation (JAF)

Please see the following website regarding the "Japanese translation" for converting an overseas driver's license to a Japanese license.

Contact information: JAF Fukuoka Branch 092-841-7731, 5-12-27 Muromi, Sawara Ward, Fukuoka Prefecture

The "JAF Overseas Support Translation" search site is listed below.

<https://jaf.or.jp/common/visitor-procedures/switch-to-japanese-license>

※The same day issuing of translations of overseas and other driver's licenses from the JAF Oita branch service window ended on April 1, 2014.

#### (8) Where to apply and contact information

License Division, Oita Driver's License Center

6687 Oaza Matsuoka, Oita City 870-0401 License Division Tel:097-528-3000

### Method 3:

Get an international driving permit (according to the Geneva Convention). Please note that these are typically valid only for one year after you first arrive in Japan.

International driving permit: Only permits that have been issued under the 1949 Geneva Convention (see below) are valid. In order to use an international driving permit, the following three conditions must be met:

#### 1) You must have the appropriate permit for the vehicle you are operating.

To ride a motorbike, you must have a type A permit. Type B permits only allow you to operate four wheeled automobiles. Motorbikes are not included.

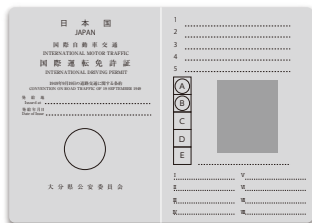
#### 2) Expiration date.

The permit expires one year from the date printed on the front of the permit.

#### 3) Valid only for your first year in Japan.

The permit is only valid for one year from the date you first arrive in Japan.

If you drive using an international driving permit and all three of these conditions are not met, you could face severe penalties for driving without a valid license if stopped by the police.



Countries where an international driving permit is valid (List of State Parties to the 1949 Geneva Convention) Current as of: October 1, 2019

Asia	Bangladesh	America	Argentina
	Cambodia		Barbados
	India		Canada
	Lao People's Democratic Republic		Chile
	Malaysia		Cuba
	Philippines		Dominican Republic
	Republic of Korea		Ecuador
	Singapore		Guatemala
	Sri Lanka		Haiti
Near and Middle East	Thailand		Jamaica
	Cyprus	Europe	Paraguay
	Israel		Peru
	Jordan		Trinidad and Tobago
	Lebanon		United States
	Syria		Venezuela
Africa	Turkey		Albania
	United Arab Emirates		Austria
	Algeria		Belgium
	Benin		Bulgaria
	Botswana		Czech Republic
	Burkina Faso		Denmark
	Central African Republic		Finland
	Congo		France
	Cote d'Ivoire		Georgia
	Democratic Republic of the Congo		Greece
	Egypt		Hungary
	Ghana		Iceland
	Lesotho		Ireland
	Madagascar		Italy
	Malawi		Kyrgyzstan
	Mali		Lithuania
	Morocco		Luxembourg
	Namibia		Malta
	Niger		Monaco
	Nigeria		Montenegro
	Rwanda		Netherlands
	Senegal		Norway
	Sierra Leone		Poland
	South Africa		Portugal
	Togo		Romania
	Tunisia		Russian Federation
	Uganda		San Marino
	Zimbabwe		Serbia
Oceania	New Zealand		Slovakia
	Papua New Guinea		Slovenia
	Fiji		Spain
	Australia		Sweden
			United Kingdom
			Vatican

Special Administrative Region etc.	Aruba
	Bailiwick of Guernsey
	Cayman Islands
	Curacao
	Gibraltar
	Isle of Man
	Jersey

Special Administrative Region etc.	Macau
	Sint Maarten
	Territories of France(French Polynesia etc.)
	Territories of the United States(Guam,Puerto Rico etc.)
	Hong Kong

**Note:**

- Even if your permit has not expired, you cannot use it to drive in Japan if more than one year has passed since you first arrived in Japan.
- In order to renew an international driving permit, you must leave Japan for at least three months. Therefore, it is effectively impossible to renew an international driving permit while being a student at APU.
- You must carry your international driving permit with you at all times when driving. You will be considered an unlicensed driver if you do not have your permit with you.

**Method 4:**

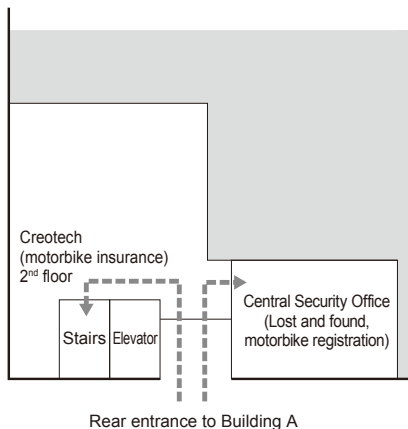
If you have a driver's license from the following special countries and regions, you can also drive in Japan if you are carrying your driver's license and a translation from a public institution at all times. However, the required period of validity and conditions are the same as an international license. (Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Monaco, Switzerland, Taiwan)

**Traffic Rules and Manners for Commuting to APU**

Students should use public transportation to commute to and from school. Commuting by automobile is not permitted at APU. Motorbikes or cars are not allowed on campus without permission.

Do not park where parking is not permitted (e.g. in areas and on roads around campus, in the Beppuwan Service Area, in the highway bus parking lot, at AP House, and other areas). Students who continue to park where parking is not permitted even after being warned by the University will face severe disciplinary measures under University regulations, including suspension or suspension of scholarships. You must notify the Student Office if you need to use the highway bus parking lot so that the University can inform the service area.

The University receives a number of complaints from local residents about unauthorized parking, abandoned bicycles or motorbikes, bicycles parked near bus stops obstructing traffic, or vehicles using customer parking for local shops.





**In the event that...**

- ...you need permission to commute to APU by car because you are unable to use public transportation (because of a physical handicap or other reason):
  - ⇒ You will need to provide a written statement explaining why you are requesting permission to commute by car, a medical certificate from a doctor explaining why you would have difficulty using public transportation, other documentation that objectively confirms your reason, proof of voluntary insurance, and any other documents that would support your request. Once your request has been received, it will be screened. Please consult the Student Office.
- ...you wish to commute to the University by motorbike:
  - ⇒ You must register your motorbike with the University and affix the issued parking sticker to your motorbike. Application forms were distributed to all students when they entered APU; make sure you have all the required documents before applying. Please complete the procedures at the Central Security Office.
- ...you want to get permission to bring a vehicle on campus to transport equipment or supplies for an extracurricular activity:
  - ⇒ Temporary vehicle entry permit applications can be received from and submitted to the Student Office. Bringing a vehicle on campus without first obtaining the necessary permission may make you subject to disciplinary action as described above.
- ...you want to purchase a bus pass:
  - ⇒ Bus passes go on sale in the Student Union right after enrollment. Please carefully note the dates and times when passes will be available.

**Insurance**

Compulsory automobile liability insurance provides minimum coverage for death or injuries to other parties in the event of an accident. It is illegal to operate a motorbike without this insurance. When purchasing a new motorbike, be sure to go through the required steps to register for this insurance where you purchase the motorbike. The dealer will typically prepare the necessary paperwork for you. If you are receiving a motorbike from a friend or acquaintance, be sure to verify that the motorbike has undergone the proper procedures for nonoperational vehicles or transfer of ownership. You must carry your compulsory insurance certificate with you at all times when driving. If you do not have it with you, you can be fined up to 300,000 yen. If you have not registered for this insurance, you can be fined up to 500,000 yen. In order to commute to APU by motorbike, you must also purchase voluntary insurance (unlimited bodily injury liability, minimum two million yen property damage liability, minimum two million yen passenger liability). While compulsory liability insurance offers coverage to injuries sustained by third parties, it does not cover third party property damage (e.g. automobiles, motorbikes, or other damage). Additionally, health insurance does not cover expenses for medical treatment required as a result of an accident. For this reason, students commuting to APU are required to purchase voluntary insurance to cover property damage or personal injury as a result of a traffic accident.

Compulsory liability insurance and voluntary insurance may be purchased through Creotech, located on the second floor of Building A.

### Maximum Liability Insurance Coverage

In case of death: 30,000,000 yen per person

In case of residual disability: 75,000-40,000,000 yen per person (actual amount depends on the injury)

In case of injuries: 1,200,000 yen per person

### Example of a traffic accident:

Mr. A is riding his motorbike when he collides into the rear end of Mr. B's motorbike while stopped at an intersection. Mr. A is judged to be 100% at fault.

Damages: Mr. A must reimburse all of the following amounts for damage and injury.

Personal injury: 1,000,000 yen in medical expenses to Mr. B (the victim) for a broken left arm (a)

Property damage: 1,000,000 yen in motorbike repairs (b)

1,000,000 yen in medical expenses to Mr. A (the individual at fault) for a broken right arm (c)

### Insurance coverage:

(1) Compulsory vehicle insurance  
covers only (a)

(2) Voluntary insurance

If Mr. A has taken out the appropriate voluntary insurance, damages for (a), (b), and (c) are all covered.

