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JAPANESE, SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY

Senior School Subjects

- Year 11: English, Japanese, Religion and Society, Sociology, Legal Studies, Psychology
- Year 12: English, Japanese, Sociology, Legal Studies, Psychology

Why did you choose these subjects? I've had a passion for Japanese since primary school and have always wanted to become an interpreter, so studying Japanese is very important to me. Psychology, Sociology and Legal Studies always interested me as subjects, which is why I chose to continue them in Year 12.

What resources did you use to choose subjects? I asked students that were in the year level above mine in my Learning Mentor about what they thought of their subjects, such as Psychology and Sociology, and consulted with my teachers and the Senior Course Guide about what subjects would suit me.

What is your course like? I study a Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Japanese at Swinburne University of Technology in Hawthorn, Melbourne. The teachers are fantastic and very helpful when it comes to learning and memorising the material. In order to help us memorise new vocabulary and Kanji characters, there are usually two tests a week – while this seems a little tough, it's significantly helpful with learning new material and benefits everyone greatly.

What do you love about your course? Honestly, everything about it – the teachers in my course are approachable and helpful, and have created many ways to make it easier for students to learn new material. They are always happy to assist with anything and respond to queries, both in person and through email, efficiently. Because everyone in my course is basically studying the same thing, and everyone wants to be there to study, we all get along and help each other. I made great friends right from the first day in my course, which has been really amazing.

Give students an example of a 'day in the life' of your course: There are two Japanese classes which both go for two hours, and there is no lecture. In the first class, the first half is dedicated to learning and practising new grammar – the second half, with a new teacher, is dedicated to Kanji and reading comprehension. The second class, with just one teacher, typically revises the grammar learnt earlier in the week and also teaches new vocabulary. This is the case for the Advanced Japanese Stream at Swinburne, which is for students who have completed Year 12 Japanese.

In addition to the regular Japanese classes last semester I also had to do the subject Introduction to Language, or, simply, Linguistics. Linguistics consists of one two-hour lecture and an hour long tutorial, where we analyse and look at the way words are pronounced and constructed in languages all around the world. Next semester, as part of my Japanese course, I will be studying Japanese and Chinese civilisations.

How did your senior school subjects prepare you for your course?

Japanese: Because I studied Japanese all through high school, it really helped with understanding the topics in my course, and allowed me to enter the Advanced Stream at Swinburne so that I can get more out of my subjects.

Psychology and **Sociology** were also helpful when it came to Linguistics, as we did cover areas of the brain that focus on language among other things I had previously studied in high school.

What have been some of the highlights of your course so far? All the friends I've made, I think. It's very different from high school – you're studying the subjects you want to study, and everyone else is in the same boat as you, so you make friends really easily, and that really helps when it comes to understanding what you're learning and also studying with friends.

The teachers in my course are all really wonderful and have been able to help me with everything, especially the material I have trouble understanding at first. Swinburne's online system is immensely useful when it comes to asking for help or clarification on subject material and teachers always respond quickly.

What is the best piece of advice you've received about following your career goals? Probably just to keep at it, and to do what you enjoy. Try and find a mix of what you're good at and what you like to study, and follow that – if you aren't enjoying what you're studying then look for something else.

What advice can you offer students considering studying this course? Definitely try and attend the Swinburne Open Day, as it's a really fun and informative day where you can get a lot of information on this course. Keep your Japanese books and other materials from high school with you, they'll be incredibly helpful when it comes to going over things you have previously learnt at school. Try and get as much practice with Japanese in as you can each week, whether it be going over grammar or Kanji, as the course here is somewhat fast-paced.

What are your future career goals? In the long-term, I want to become a Japanese interpreter, whether it be for a business or for tourism. A short-term goal I have is to interpret for Australian athletes at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, which I can volunteer for, so I hope to achieve that as it would be an incredible experience.

Course information: Bachelor of Arts (Japanese), Swinburne University, <http://bit.ly/1M3OpLt>