

PEARL Information Session (21st August, 2021)

The contents of the presentation are as follows.

About Keio University

Keio University is a private, comprehensive higher educational institution located on six campuses spread across the Greater Tokyo area.

Founded in 1858 by Yukichi Fukuzawa, Keio was Japan's first private institution of modern higher learning.

Keio is recognised both nationally and internationally for its quality as a university. In 2021, The QS World University Rankings 2022 placed Keio University 201st in the world and 45th in Asia.

About Keio Economics

The Faculty of Economics at Keio is one of the leading economics departments in Japan.

The Faculty of Economics at Keio also boasts the largest number of professors and students of any economics faculty in Japan.

Keio economics alumni hold positions of leadership in politics, business, and academia.

Each year, about 350 of our graduates find employment in Fortune Global 500 companies.

PEARL is an acronym for Programme in Economics for Alliances, Research and Leadership

Alliances because we produce graduates who build economic alliances in Asia and beyond, and because we are an international hub of economics research and education.

Research because by following the Keio tradition of "han-gaku, han-kyo" (learning while teaching, teaching while learning), professors and students work together to produce globally recognised research and researchers.

Leadership because as intended by our founder, Yukichi Fukuzawa, our graduates are destined to become leaders who design the future.

Why PEARL?

PEARL is Keio at its most traditional, and at its most innovative. PEARL is designed to help minds grow in wisdom and knowledge like pearls grow in beauty and lustre.

- PEARL is an All-English BA/MA Degree Programme, which offers a world-class education in liberal arts and advanced economics.
- Admission is limited to 100 students.
- The academic year begins in September.
- PEARL is designed to foster the global leaders of tomorrow.

PEARL Offers:

- The opportunity to earn a Bachelor's and a Master's degree within five years.
- Lectures by professors from partner universities abroad, and two-way distance learning using the internet and other resources.
- A chance to study abroad at one of our many partner universities.
- A chance to apply to our BA and/or MA Double Degree Programmes with the Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po), Bocconi University in Milan, Brandeis University, Stevens Institute of Technology, HEC Paris or CEMS
- Classes in economics and the modernisation of Japan, as well as business-related classes and internships.
- Intensive Japanese language courses
- Membership in Mita-kai, a strong global network of Keio alumni who are active in the private and public sectors.
- An ideal location in one of the world's safest and most cosmopolitan cities.

Curriculum at the Hiyoshi Campus: the first and second years

Students in their first and second years are required to take courses in Liberal Arts (General Education), Foreign Languages and Introductory economics.

Liberal Arts: Natural Sciences/Mathematics, Humanities/Social Sciences, Interdisciplinary

Languages: English, German, French, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese (Non-native Japanese speakers only)

Economics and Related Classes, Mandatory Classes:

- Microeconomics
- Macroeconomics
- Economic History
- Introduction to the Japanese Economy
- Historical Perspectives in Economic Analysis
- Statistics

Mandatory Elective or Elective Classes:

- Econometrics
- History of Economic Thought
- Economics and Environment
- Marxian Economics
- Mathematics (Calculus, Linear Algebra, Probability Theory)

Curriculum at the Mita Campus: the third and fourth years

Students in the third and fourth years are required to learn advanced level economics and be ready to write a graduation thesis or research paper.

Fields:

- Economic Theory
- Econometrics and Statistics
- History of Economic Thought
- Economic History
- Labour and Industrial Economics
- Economic Policy and Public Finance
- Modern Economic Systems
- International Economics
- Environmental and Urban Economics
- Economy and Society

Advanced courses:

- Research Seminar
- Professional Career Programme (PCP)
- Independent Research Project

Note:

PEARL Students can take classes taught in Japanese, but the credits do not count towards graduation EXCEPT for Research Seminars and Independent Research Projects taught in Japanese.

Two New Programmes:

- DEEP (Data-driven Economics and Econometrics Programme)
- FACTS (Fieldwork for Active Comprehension of Targeted Subjects)

These new programmes

- respond to the demands of society.
 - DEEP: a data science education programme
 - FACTS: a fieldwork-based programme that develops skills in context-sensitive hypothesis building
- encourage students to take courses systematically over four years.
- award certificates of completion for the programmes to those who have earned the required number of credits and submitted the deliverables.

[NOTE]

* Credits for courses offered in Japanese may also be recognised for the purpose of these programs though they do not count towards graduation credits for PEARL students.

* For more information on DEEP, please visit

<https://www.keio.ac.jp/ja/press-releases/files/2021/7/6/210706-1.pdf>

Taking Masters Courses as a 4th Year Student:

- Students enrolled in their fourth year in the Faculty of Economics may take master's courses offered by the Graduate School of Economics prior to entering the master's programme. These courses will not count towards your undergraduate degree, but after joining the Graduate School of Economics, you can apply for credit for the master's courses you passed in the fourth year of your undergraduate programme to be included as "courses taken prior to joining the graduate school".

If you are interested in, please visit the Faculty of Economics Section at the Office of Student Services after your enrolment.

BA/MA Five Year Programme with HEC:

- HEC (The “Etablissement d'Enseignement Supérieur Consulaire Hautes Etudes Commerciales de Paris”) is one of the most selective French grandes écoles. It was created in 1881 by the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- Students enrolled in PEARL at Keio are eligible to apply to the BA/MA Five Year Programme with HEC.
- Keio PEARL students study for 3 years at Keio, then 2 years at HEC.
- If they meet the requirements, they will be awarded a BA in Economics from Keio after their 4th year and a Master in Management from HEC after their 5th year in the programme.
- 2 PERL students are accepted per year

For more information, please visit

<http://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/pearl/hec5yrbama>

Other Options for Studying Abroad:

Details are available here:

<https://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/abroad>

- BA/MA Five Year Programme with Sciences Po (Paris, France): 5 students/year
- BA/MA Five Year Programme with Bocconi U. (Milan, Italy): 5 students/year
- BA/MA Five Year Programme with Brandeis U. (Boston, USA): 6 students/year
- BA/MA Five Year Programme with U. of Cologne:(Cologne, Germany):
5 students/year
- BA/MA Five Year Programme with the Stevens Institute of Technology (New York metropolitan area, USA): 5 students/year
- Double Degree Programme with Sciences Po (10 students)
- Double Degree Programme with Università Bocconi (4students)

- University-wide Exchange Programmes

Please see pages 23-24 in the following booklet.

<https://www.keio.ac.jp/ja/assets/download/about/learn-more/publications/index/keio-university-academics-en.pdf>

- Short-term Programmes

Other Options for Studying Abroad:

■ Faculty-wide Exchange Programmes

* If you meet graduation requirements, it is possible to graduate in four years at shortest after studying abroad for one year.

For more information please visit

<https://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/abroad/exchange-outbound>

EUROPE (欧州)

 **AUSTRIA**
Vienna University of Economics and Business
ウィーン経済・経営大学

 **BELGIUM**
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
ルーヴェン・カトリック大学
Université catholique de Louvain
ルーヴァン・カトリック大学

 **DENMARK**
Copenhagen Business School
コペンハーゲン・ビジネス・スクール

 **FINLAND**
Aalto University
アールト大学

 **FRANCE**
HEC Paris
HEC経営大学院
École Polytechnique
エコール・ポリテクニク

 **GERMANY**
University of Cologne
ケルン大学
Leipzig University
ライプツィヒ大学
Goethe University Frankfurt
フランクフルト大学
University of Mannheim
マンハイム大学
ITALY
Bocconi University
ボツコーニ大学

 **NETHERLANDS**
Erasmus University Rotterdam
エラスムス大学ロッテルダム

 **NORWAY**
NHH Norwegian School of Economics
ノルウェー経済大学

 **SWITZERLAND**
University of St. Gallen
ザンクトガレン大学

 **SWEDEN**
Stockholm School of Economics
ストックホルム・スクール・オブ・エコノミクス

 **UK**
University of Glasgow
グラスゴー大学
University of Kent
ケント大学
University of Warwick
ウォーリック大学

NORTH AMERICA (北米)

 **CANADA**
The University of Western Ontario
ウェスタンオンタリオ大学

 **USA**
Brandeis University
ブランドイス大学
University of California
カリフォルニア大学
University of South Carolina
サウスカロライナ大学

ASIA (アジア)

 **KOREA**
Yonsei University
延世大学

 **P. R. CHINA**
Fudan University
復旦大学
Peking University
北京大学
Nankai University
南開大学
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology 香港科技大学

 **TAIWAN**
National Taiwan University
国立台湾大学
National ChengChi University
国立政治大学

 **THAILAND**
Chulalongkorn University
チュラロンコン大学
Chiang Mai University
チェンマイ大学

OTHER PROGRAMME

 **MALAYSIA**
International Center for Education in Islamic Finance (INCEIF)
国際イスラム金融大学

We send students to study at the INCEIF in order to receive specialised training on Islamic finance.

*NOTE: This is not a student exchange program.

1

Where did our first PEARL graduates go in 2020? - Firms

(Based on surveys of students and their professors conducted by the Faculty of Economics)

Japanese Firms employing PEARL2020 students include the following:

CyberAgent, Inc.	Daikin Industries, Ltd.
Hitachi, Ltd.	Indeed Japan
Kao Corporation	Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc.
Mizuho Bank, Ltd.	Mizuho Securities Co., Ltd.
Nippon Express Co., Ltd.	Nomura Research Institute, Ltd.
Oriental Land Co., Ltd.	Rakuten, Inc.
RGF Professional Recruitment Japan	SoftBank Corp.
Sumitomo Corporation	Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
Tokyo Broadcasting System Television, Inc.	
TV Asahi Corporation	ZUU Co., Ltd.

International Firms employing PEARL2020 students include the following:

Amazon Japan	BlackRock Japan Co., Ltd.
Bloomberg	Boston Consulting Group
Colliers International Japan	Credit Suisse
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu	EY Strategy and Consulting Co., Ltd.
Goldman Sachs	IBM Japan
Loewe	Morgan Stanley

Where did our first PEARL graduates go in 2020? – Graduate Schools

(Based on surveys of students and their professors conducted by the Faculty of Economics)

Compared to Type A/B, a larger proportion of PEARL students go on to graduate school.

PEARL 2020 students either joined one of our 5 year BA/MA programmes, or gone on to schools that include the following:

Columbia Business School (NY, US)
Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po, Paris, France)
Institute Francais de la Mode (Paris, France)
Keio University (Japan) (Graduate School of Economics)
London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) (London, UK)
Parsons School of Design (NY, US)

Application Schedule for 2022 Entry and Application Documents:

The information can be found on the following page:

<https://www.keio.ac.jp/en/admissions/undergraduate/pearl/>

Admissions Statistics 2020-21:

	Number of Applicants			Number of Successful Applicants		
	Total	Male : Female	Japanese : Other Nationalities	Total	Male : Female	Japanese : Other Nationalities
2020	505	253 : 252	245 : 260	191	86 : 105	86 : 105
2021	575	270 : 305	288 : 287	174	73 : 101	85 : 89

For more information, please read the Application Guidebook for September 2022 Entry available at <https://www.keio.ac.jp/en/admissions/undergraduate/pearl/>

Tuition and Application Fee

Application Fee: Applicants are required to pay an application fee of JPY 35,000.

Tuition: FY2021

(JP Y)

Admission Fee	200,000
Registration Fee	60,000
Tuition Fee	880,000
Facilities Fee	200,000
Other Fees	8,350
Total (1st year)	1,348,350
Total (2nd-4th year)	1,148,250

There is no additional fee for participating in and completing the PEARL programme.

Students' Housing Information:

Limited availability, especially to September entrants.

These links provide some information:

- Housing for Japanese students:

<https://www.keio.ac.jp/ja/student-life/housing.html>

- Housing for international students (students who stay in Japan with a student visa):

http://www.ic.keio.ac.jp/en/life/housing/ryu_boshu.html

Scholarship Information:

For the Scholarship Information please visit

- * Some of the linked pages from the webpages below are available for enrolled students only.
- * If you find questions on the scholarships after your enrolment, please ask the scholarship section at the Office of Student Services.

- Scholarship webpages (in English)
(Keio University website)
<https://www.keio.ac.jp/en/student-life/scholarships.html>

- Scholarship webpages (in Japanese)
(Keio University website)
<https://www.keio.ac.jp/ja/student-life/scholarships.html>

- Scholarship Information for the students seeking admission to Keio Univ.
(Keio University International Center website)
http://www.ic.keio.ac.jp/en/life/scholarship/intl_student.html

Q & A about the PEARL programme

Q. Are students able to take Research Seminars in English?

A. Yes, they are, though the choices of fields (professors) are less than those taught in Japanese. If your Japanese ability is sufficient, you can also choose a Research Seminar taught in Japanese.

Q. Can PEARL students study abroad?

A. All PEARL students can apply to exchange programmes that Keio has with foreign universities. Keio has University to University exchange programmes operated by Keio's International Center, and Faculty to Faculty exchange agreements operated by the Faculty of Economics.

Details on the faculty of economics' programmes are available here:

<https://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/abroad>

For details on the University to University exchange programmes which Keio University has with over one hundred top universities in Asia, Oceania, North America, South America, Europe, and the Middle East, please see pages 23-24 of the following booklet:

<https://www.keio.ac.jp/ja/assets/download/about/learn-more/publications/index/keio-university-academics-en.pdf>

In general, the Faculty to Faculty exchange programmes provide more flexibility regarding the period of study abroad (one semester or one year) and the timing of the start of the study abroad (spring and fall semesters) provided the partner university agrees.

Q. What is the goal of PEARL? What are the strengths of PEARL?

A. PEARL aims to turn out graduates who can design the future, and who are ready to tackle challenging issues and thrive in the global arena. Unlike many other all-English programmes in Japan, we are a programme focused on economics that offers education both in liberal arts, introductory economics and advanced economics. Our strengths are the faculty members who are world-class researchers and educators at the same time, and the strong tradition of Keio as an incubator of economic and political leaders with a world-wide network.

Q. What is the intention behind creating the PEARL programme?

A. A key word is “diversity”. We welcome students with diverse backgrounds and aim at turning out graduates who understand cultural sensitivities, who can think outside the box and hit the ground running. This would be beneficial not just for Keio, but also for the entire economy and society. We are not just looking for gender balance and a balance between Japanese and foreign nationalities, but for a mixture of individuals with greatly varying experiences.

Q. Do the faculty members have experiences abroad?

A. Many of the professors have degrees from foreign universities and/or research/teaching experience abroad. Our faculty includes scholars from Germany, France, the UK, Korea, China, Australia, and the USA. We will also invite professors from our partner universities from all over the world to take courses in our Faculty.

Q. PEARL students start their academic year in September, while other students start in April. Would this be a source of confusion and/or concern?

A. Some students other than PEARL students also start at Keio in September. These are students in the Double BA Programme with Sciences Po, and other exchange programmes. If anything, such students have positive influences on the students already at Keio, expanding the latter's horizons and encouraging flexibility.

Q. What subjects can I study in the PEARL Programme?

A. The curriculum for PEARL is nearly identical in content to the regular BA programme offered in Japanese by the Faculty of Economics at Keio. As a reference, here is the page explaining our curriculum:

<http://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/pearl/curriculum>

Q. How big are the classes in the PEARL programme?

A. Classes vary in size. Major subject classes are mandatory, so all of the approximately 100 PEARL students will be taking them. For elective classes such as language classes and seminar classes, class sizes are much smaller.

Q. How can I apply to the Double Degree Programme with Sciences Po or Bocconi, or the five year BA/MA Programme with HEC?

A. - For information about the Double BA Programme between Keio University and

Sciences Po, please visit

<http://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/abroad/sciences-po>

* Please note that the screening of the Double BA Programme with Sciences Po is usually held in March, immediately after results of the Application Period II are announced. Therefore, students who would like to apply to PEARL and join the Double BA Programme with Sciences Po need to apply to PEARL by the Application Period II at latest.

[Important Note] Please keep checking both the PEARL admissions webpage and the Double BA Programme webpage because they are constantly being updated.

- For information about the Double BA Programme between Keio University and Università Bocconi, please visit

<http://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/abroad/bocconi>

* It is highly likely that PEARL students will require more than four years to complete all the graduation requirements of these two degrees as many of the courses Bocconi requires you to take at Keio are offered only in Japanese, and their credits cannot be counted towards graduation from PEARL.

- For information about the BA/MA Five Year Programme between Keio University and HEC (a BA in economics from Keio and a Master in Management from HEC), please visit.

<http://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/pearl/hec5yrbama>

Q & A about the Admission Procedures

Q. Are there minimum required standardized test scores?

A. No, there are no “cut-off” scores.

Q. Please tell us the average score of each Standardised test obtained by successful applicants.

A. We do not disclose average scores for the Standardised tests because ours is a holistic selection process so that any particular score level does not guarantee admission.

Q. What factors are considered in the admissions process?

A. Admissions decisions are never based on a single factor. It is important to remember that we review the applications holistically.

Q. Do I need to sit an interview?

A. No. Interviews are not part of the PEARL programme admissions/selection process.

Q. How long should the letter of reference be?

A. There is no requirement regarding the length of the letter(s) of reference.

Q. Do I need to prepare new application documents, including the written statement of the applicant's academic goals, if I apply multiple times?

A. If you apply multiple times, you will be required to submit some of the application documents including the written statement of the applicant's academic goals each time you apply. For more detailed information on the application and application documents, please read the following application guidebook carefully:

https://www.keio.ac.jp/en/admissions/undergraduate/pearl/application_guidebook.pdf

Q. Can students apply to other universities at the same time as applying to PEARL?

A. Yes.

Q & A Others

Q. What is the ratio of Japanese students to students of other nationalities in the PEARL programme?

A. For the screening for the September 2020 entry, the ratio was about 4.5:5.5, the ratio of the September 2021 entry was about the same number.

Q. Will I be able to join sporting activities and other "circles" at Keio?

A. Yes, but please consult the persons in charge of these activities regarding the fact that you are entering in September while most other students enter in April.

*Please note that you can find more Q&A here:

<https://www.keio.ac.jp/en/admissions/undergraduate/pearl/faq.html>

Information on The Faculty of Economics and PEARL

- Faculty of Economics website: <https://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/>
- PEARL web pages: <https://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/undergraduate/pearl>
- Web page where you can download brochures:
<https://www.econ.keio.ac.jp/en/about/brochures>
Available brochures: The Faculty of Economics,
 PEARL
 and The Graduate School of Economics

Information on Keio University

- Keio University website: <https://www.keio.ac.jp/en/>
- Keio University booklet:
<https://www.keio.ac.jp/ja/assets/download/about/learn-more/publications/index/keio-university-academics-en.pdf>

Introduction of the PEARL Programme by current PEARL students

Speech by Emiri Jimbo (Second Year*)

Good morning! I am Emiri Jimbo, and I am a second-year student, moving onto third year next semester.

Different students look for different aspects when choosing a university. Especially with the ongoing pandemic, I am sure some students may be considering how universities conduct classes online. Although I have spent most of my two years studying remotely, I was very fortunate to have spent my first semester on campus. Based on my experiences, I would like to share what I believe the PEARL program can offer students in terms of 'academic culture', regardless of whether the classes are conducted on-site or online. More specifically, I would like to focus on two virtues that I believe is the most rewarding: 'hangaku-hankyo' and 'dokuritsu-jison'.

Growing up in the same international school from kindergarten to high school, one of my biggest apprehensions when entering university was familiarizing myself with new faces in a completely new environment. However, once I entered, I absolutely loved it here. In PEARL (as Professor McKenzie mentioned at the beginning), I have been given the opportunity to learn from professors and make friends of diverse backgrounds, individual experiences, and perspectives. After taking many courses of a wide variety and meeting a plethora of people, I found that PEARL is a community of unique, curious, and caring individuals, aspiring to make positive contributions to society.

The virtue 'hangaku-hankyo' (as Professor Kaji mentioned earlier) means "learning while teaching, teaching while learning". I believe that the diverse interactions you have with your professors and connections you make with your friends here will help you grow as a person. They will challenge you to become a better version of you, but also equally support you. PEARL, as an international department, will offer you an extensive opportunity to exchange various ideas, perspectives, and knowledge. These exchanges offer everyone to both teach each other and learn from one another, and ultimately grow together to become better individuals.

Yet, while connections and interactions are vital, independence is also equally valued and taught. For instance, creating my own schedule for both within and outside of university, as well as ensuring I have fulfilled my required credits, were two aspects that I found to need quite a lot of self-determination. While it sounds rudimentary, the relative freedom you obtain in university is both a luxury and a responsibility. Similarly, independence is both a challenge and an opportunity. Your newly acquired independence not only pushes you to think and act for yourself, but also presents you with an opportunity for self-exploration and self-realization. For my IB Diploma Programme, I primarily studied Geography and Environmental Science. After entering PEARL, the

independence I was given to explore and take different courses enabled me to realize what kind of topics I wanted to learn and issues I cared for with regards to Economics.

The virtue 'dokuritsu-jison' means "independence and self-respect". Given the choice to study a variety of courses, I believe PEARL is a place where students can explore what kind of individuals they aspire to be, as well as realize what kind of position and responsibility they would like to take on as global citizens.

Whether the classes are conducted on-site or online, I strongly believe that PEARL's 'academic culture' allows you to discover your true strengths, your true beliefs, and your true potentials. While there are many more virtues and aspects of the PEARL program that I love, I would like to pass the microphone to two first year students, for them to share a more detailed insight of their experiences.

Speech by Na Young An (First year*)

Hello, I am Na Young An, and I am a rising second-year student in the PEARL programme. I am an international student from South Korea and went to an international school with an IB Diploma Programme. Thank you so much for showing your interest in the program, and I would like to share my experience in PEARL so far. Definitely, Keio University embodies the values of the joy of learning, diversity, and inclusion that I have envisioned as a student.

In terms of academics, there are different options of courses from diverse fields offered to PEARL students. The mandatory, general education core courses are linked primarily to the field of Economics. As a first-year student, you would take courses such as Intro to Japanese Economy, Macroeconomics, and Statistics. The mandatory courses, such as the English Academic Skills offered in the first year, allow you to conduct in-depth research and write an academic research essay on your chosen topic. There is also a wide variety of general education courses that are linked to social sciences and natural sciences. Since I am personally interested in working within the corporate business management sector, I chose many general education courses such as Topics in Contemporary Business and Marketing. What I have noticed is that all of PEARL's courses allow students to learn in-depth theoretical knowledge and acquire practical skills necessary in various career pathways.

You would also wonder about how your academic level is going to be assessed by Professors in the PEARL programme. The assessments primarily come in the format of in-class tests, written reports or essays, and live presentations. The Japanese language classes also conduct live speaking tests with the Professor. Apart from the academic grades, students are able to genuinely extend the scope of knowledge and find their passion through constructive and detailed feedback from the Professors and active communication with other students.

The PEARL community has a very diverse pool of students who come from diverse backgrounds and are open-minded! In order to further extend your connection and apply your personal interests in real life, you could also be part of the diverse student clubs created within the PEARL community. I am currently a member of two clubs: the Keio Business Society Club and the Keio Pearl Information Club. Within the clubs, you would have the experience to initiate change within the PEARL and local community by conducting business analysis and creating business newsletters. The experiences within the clubs and collaboration with club members provided me with an opportunity to apply the learned knowledge in real settings.

In essence, Keio University's PEARL programme is definitely a place for you to take one step closer to your career by learning in-depth knowledge in Economics and building a global perspective with networks from diverse people. Depending on your interests, you will be able to independently design your university life by balancing academics, work, and social life. Thanks to the program and diverse opportunities, I was also able to find my passion and specify my future career. Lastly, I wish you all luck with your university applications, and thank you so much for listening!

Speech by Angelina Shiming Gong (First Year*)

A big welcome and thank you to everyone who joined today's information session. My name is Angelina Gong and I am a first-year international PEARL student who will be sharing some more specific information on my experiences and insights into my first year at Keio University. I would like to start off with some background information. I am from Sydney, Australia, and came to Japan last year in November. I know for most of you, this transition may be very daunting. However, this PEARL journey you may embark on is remarkable, to say the least.

Those who are wondering how the Keio dorm life is, well I am here to give an inside exclusive. Having lived in Keio's SST International dorm located in Tsunashima, I can definitely confirm that you will encounter many experiences that will encourage you to learn and become more independent. The SST dormitory has high-quality rooms and shared facilities where you have the opportunity to interact with other non-Japanese and Japanese students. Although SST does not offer pre-made meals, it is located in a convenient area as there is a massive shopping center that has various restaurants and supermarkets just a minute walk away. It is also around a 20-minute walk to Hiyoshi Station/Hiyoshi campus.

For academics, I would like to provide some specific information about the Intensive Japanese course which the PEARL program offers. For the past year, this course has been

held as a compulsory live online course where you learn an extensive range of Japanese grammar and culture. But, just a heads up for those who are unfamiliar with the hiragana and katakana alphabets, this course may be difficult to keep up as the professors do move through these contents quite quickly. However, I really encourage those who cannot speak Japanese to challenge themselves and elect this course as it has helped me tremendously with my life in Japan.

Although PEARL is an international program, this does not limit the number of extracurricular activities in which you are able to participate. So I would like to share my experiences as a current first-year member of an official Keio Sports Club also known as a 体育会. For those who would like to experience the unique Japanese sports club culture, I would recommend them to join the official 体育会. However, the official clubs have many rules and requirements which you have to abide by, and may also be very difficult for those who are not Japanese to adapt to this club system as most of the activities and meetings are conducted in Japanese. So, if you would just like to have fun and interact with new people, Keio also has student-run clubs called Circles which cover a wide variety of fields, such as music, sport, theatre, and more. Personally, being a member of an official Keio club has both been a very tiring yet rewarding experience as the bond which you will create with the members of your team is one that is unbreakable. So I highly encourage you all to explore your passions and interests and join in as many extracurricular activities as possible.

On that note, I wish everyone the warmest welcome and best wishes during this difficult period and hope to meet you all 'in real life' very soon!

* His/her year at the time of the speech.