

Tohoku University Gateway College – Admissions FAQ

This information is accurate as of October 22, 2025. However, it might be subject to change. Please, refer to the Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>) and the Application Guide 2027 (to be published in June 2026) for the most accurate and up-to-date information.

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1. Basic Information

1-Q1: What is Gateway College?

1-A1:

Gateway College is a new undergraduate education program that Tohoku University will launch in April 2027. Under this program, students will not choose their field of study (faculty or department) at the time of admission. Instead, they will engage with various academic disciplines before deciding on their specialization from the third year onward, based on the concept of *late specialization*.

The program offers an international learning experience unique to Tohoku University, a nationally designated University for International Research Excellence, allowing students to engage with the world-leading research while still studying. All classes will be conducted in English within an international learning environment where Japanese and international students learn together.

Gateway College itself is not a faculty but a special education program. Upon admission, students will be affiliated with a university-wide organization and, after selecting their specialization from the third year onward, will be formally affiliated with the relevant faculty to complete their degree.

1-Q2: What is the difference between the special undergraduate education program, Gateway College, and traditional faculties?

1-A2:

With the traditional faculty-based education, students pursue their chosen field of studies from admission to graduation, applying to a specific faculty, taking the required classes and conducting research within a specialized field.

However, the global issues we face today, such as large-scale natural disasters, environmental issues, SDGs, disputes, conflicts, and economic problems, are complex and interconnected. Therefore, seeking solutions requires creativity, innovative ideas, and the ability to work alongside individuals with diverse backgrounds, rather than expertise limited to highly specialized fields fostered by traditional faculties.

Tohoku University has been nationally designated as a University for International Research Excellence in recognition of its top world-level research capabilities that can impact society and the economy. To carry out this mission, Tohoku University launches Gateway College, a new undergraduate education program reaching across faculties, with an aim to educate leaders able to solve global issues.

Notable differences between Gateway College and traditional faculties are as follows.

- ① Students do not choose their specialization (faculty) at the time of admission but instead explore multiple fields of study. This way, they learn to see problems from many perspectives and develop critical thinking skills.
- ② By choosing classes individually from various fields, students can assess their compatibility before deciding on a specialization.
- ③ Students develop abilities to contribute on a global stage, studying with their peers from abroad, gaining understanding and respect for different cultures, backgrounds, and values. Also, as they take English-taught and discussion-based classes until graduation, they develop the ability to think critically in this language.

Detailed curriculum will be announced on Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>) and in the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

1-Q3: Why is Tohoku University creating a new undergraduate program?

1-A3:

The program aims to cultivate individuals who will thrive in the rapidly changing global society.

Traditionally, candidates were required to choose their field of study (faculty) at the time of application. Gateway College allows students to select their own course of studies, by engaging with various academic disciplines. It also provides an international collaborative learning environment where students from diverse backgrounds can study side-by-side and explore different perspectives. This lets them cultivate flexible thinking skills and global awareness, ultimately nurturing individuals who can thrive in complex, interconnected societies.

1-Q4: What is the difference between admission for April and October intake?

1-A4:

The April intake (1st term) aligns with the Japanese academic calendar, while the October intake (2nd term) aligns with international academic calendars and will be conducted primarily in English.

The application requirements and selection methods differ between the two. Students admitted in April will first take courses designed to improve their English proficiency, and from October onward, they will study together with the October-entry students in a shared international learning environment.

1-Q5: Students choose their faculty from the third year onward. Does it mean that they will attend the same classes as faculty students?

1-A5:

Once admitted to Gateway College, students learn within the program and select a specialization from the third year onward. However, they still follow a curriculum with English-taught classes meant for Gateway College. (Should their research require it, they may, in part, follow a Japanese-taught curriculum.)

Even after choosing specialization in the third year, taking classes (e.g. laboratories, seminars) across faculties, rather than just one faculty, is under consideration.

2. Admission Quotas

2-Q1: How many students will be admitted?

2-A1:

The total number of students to be admitted is 178.

This includes 88 students for the April intake (1st term) and 90 students for the October intake (2nd term).

These numbers will be officially confirmed in the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

2-Q2: Will the total enrollment capacity of Tohoku University increase?

2-A2:

No. The total enrollment capacity of the university will remain the same.

Accordingly, with the establishment of the Gateway College, the admission quotas for existing faculties—both for the General Entrance Examination and AO Entrance Exam (Comprehensive Admission)—will be reviewed and adjusted to maintain the overall balance.

2-Q3: What are the admission quotas for the humanities and science stream?

2-A3:

For the April intake (1st term), the estimated number of admitted students is 17 for the humanities stream and 71 for the science stream (88 students in total). For the October intake (2nd term), the estimated number of admitted students is 17 for the humanities stream and 73 for the science stream (90 students in total).

The exact quotas will be announced on Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>) and in the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

3. Eligibility and Requirements

3-Q1: Who is eligible to apply?

3-A1:

Candidates who have completed (or are expected to complete) high school or its equivalent, either in Japan or abroad, are eligible. Candidates who have obtained (or are expected to obtain) an internationally recognized university admission qualifications, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB), Abitur, French Baccalaureate, GCE A Levels, International A Levels, or European Baccalaureate, are also eligible.

For more information, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

3-Q2: Are there any nationality restrictions?

3-A2:

No. The program is open to candidates of all nationalities.

Both Japanese and international students are welcome to apply under the same conditions. Prior educational background in the Japanese school system, or lack thereof, does not affect eligibility.

For more information, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

3-Q3: Are there any academic performance requirements?

3-A3:

For April intake, candidates who have attended high schools in Japan must have an overall grade rating of “A” (4.3 or higher on a 5-point scale) on their official school activity report (*chōsasho*). Candidates who graduated from overseas institutions are expected to demonstrate equivalent academic achievement.

Specific academic criteria for international qualifications (such as the IB, A Levels, etc.) will be set individually.

For more information, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

3-Q4: Are there any English proficiency requirements?

3-A4:

For April intake, a recommended level of English proficiency may be specified as an admission requirement to ensure a smooth academic progress after enrollment. For October intake, candidates will be required to submit their scores from an official English proficiency test specified by Tohoku University.

For more information on the exact requirements, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

3-Q5: Is Japanese proficiency required for admission to October intake?

3-A5:

For candidates who wish to pursue Humanities or Social Sciences, a certain level of Japanese proficiency may be required, depending on the research field, as these areas sometimes involve study or communication in Japanese. For those aiming for Science, Engineering, or Life Sciences, Japanese proficiency is generally not required. Regardless of specialization, all enrolled students will have opportunities to study Japanese.

For more information on this criteria, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

4. Selection Process

4-Q1: Is the selection conducted by faculties or departments?

4-A1:

No. The Gateway College introduces a new selection process that is not based on faculty, school, or department. Unlike traditional admission, in which candidates choose a faculty at the time of application, students admitted to the program will engage with various academic disciplines and later select a specialization according to their interests and aptitudes.

4-Q2: What are the selection methods?

4-A2:

- April intake (1st term):
The selection will consist of two stage screening: a written (1st stage screening) and oral exam (interview) (2nd stage screening).

The Japanese Common Test for University Admission (*Daigaku Nyūshi Kyōtsū* Test) will not be imposed.

- October intake (2nd term):
The selection will consist of documents screening, a written and oral exam (interview) in English. Applicants residing overseas will not need to travel to Japan for these examinations.

For more information, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

4-Q3: What will be included in the written examination for April Admission?

4-A3:

Specific details will be officially announced in the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

The examination is expected to assess students' ability to think across different academic fields, as well as their flexibility and creativity. Questions will likely evaluate reading comprehension, logical expression, problem identification and analysis, and overall critical thinking skills.

4-Q4: What documents are required for application?

4-A4:

In addition to high school academic transcript,

- Candidates for April intake will be required to submit documents demonstrating their academic performance in high school, as well as evidence of learning achievements, extracurricular activities, and qualifications.
- Candidates for October intake will be required to submit internationally recognized university admission examination and English proficiency exam scores.

For more information, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

4-Q5: What will be evaluated in the interview?

4-A5:

The interview will assess candidates' academic motivation, intellectual curiosity, collaborative mindset, cross-cultural communication skills, and capacity for critical and ethical thinking. Since the Gateway College is an English-taught program, the ability to communicate effectively in English will be part of the evaluation for both April and October admissions.

For more information, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

5. Selection Schedule

5-Q1: When will the selection take place?

5-A1:

For the 2027 Admission, the schedule is planned as follows:

- April intake (1st term):
The admission selection is expected to be conducted by November 2026, and successful applicants will be announced by December 2026.
- October intake (2nd term):
The admission selection is expected to be conducted by March 2027, and successful applicants will be announced by April 2027.

For more information on the admission selection schedule, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

6. Multiple Applications

6-Q1: Can I apply to Tohoku University through multiple admission processes at the same time?

6-A1:

Yes. It is possible to apply simultaneously to the General Entrance Examination, AO Entrance Examination, or Special Entrance Examination of Tohoku University. However, candidates cannot apply to multiple admission processes that are conducted on the same examination dates.

For more information on the admission selection schedule, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

6-Q2: Can I apply for both April and October intake?

6-A2:

No. Candidates may apply to either the April intake (1st term) or the October intake (2nd term), but not both.

6-Q3: Can I apply to other universities at the same time?

6-A3:

For the April intake (1st term), “the will to enroll if admitted” is one of the admission requirements. Therefore, those who receive an offer of admission must commit to enrolling at Tohoku University.

For the October intake (2nd term), the detailed conditions for concurrent applications will be announced in the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

7. Pre-enrollment education

7-Q1: What does pre-enrollment education entail?

7-A1:

The English skills improvement curriculum is considered to better prepare the students for English-taught classes they will take after enrollment. Especially the students admitted for the April intake, who will share the learning environment with October-entry peers from abroad, need to sufficiently prepare by studying in English even before enrollment.

7-Q2: Is pre-enrollment education compulsory?

7-A2:

Pre-enrollment education is offered to ensure a smooth transition to Gateway College classes, so successful candidates are expected to complete it.

7-Q3: Am I expected to attend pre-enrollment classes in person at Tohoku University, even if I am based outside the region?

7-A3:

While it is planned to be conducted online, a visit to Tohoku University might be needed. In that case, we will make an announcement after considering the personal circumstances of accepted students, including high school schedules and their places of residence.

8. Education After Enrollment

8-Q1: What will students study after enrollment?

8-A1:

Students will take a combination of liberal arts and interdisciplinary foundation courses to explore a broad range of academic disciplines before choosing a specialization. Classes will be conducted in English from the first year through to advanced levels, enabling students to develop strong skills in expressing ideas and engaging in academic discussions in English. For international students, Japanese language courses will be offered to help them acquire the language skills necessary for studying and living in Japan. Based on their interests and aptitudes, students will choose their specialization in the third year or later. Throughout the program, students will build both academic and research skills, preparing for graduate study in Japan or abroad.

Key features of the program include:

- A flexible curriculum that allows for diverse pathways and specialization choices.
 - An international learning environment where Japanese and international students study together.
 - As a requirement, students will reside in an international mixed dormitory, so they can be immersed in an international environment even outside of the classroom.
 - Practical learning opportunities such as fieldwork, study abroad programs, and project-based learning focused on real-world problem solving.
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8-Q2: How will students join faculties?**8-A2:**

The specifics are under discussion, but the decision process will likely take a form best aligned with interests and wishes of students. A consultation system will also be established.

More information will be announced on Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>), in the student handbook distributed at the enrollment and during post-enrollment orientation.

**8-Q3: How will students choose their specialization after admission?
How many students will each faculty accept?****8-A3:**

The Gateway College adopts a curriculum where students choose their specialization after enrollment. During the first and second years, they will take a wide range of general and foundational courses across multiple disciplines. Then, from the third year onward, students will choose their specialization based on their interests and academic strengths. As stated in **Q2.**, a suitable decision process will be established to ensure all students can choose a specialization that aligns with their interests.

At present, admission quotas for each specialization (faculty) are estimated as follows. However, they might be subject to change.

Faculty of Arts and Letters: 12 students
Faculty of Education: 6 students
Faculty of Law: 8 students
Faculty of Economics: 8 students
Faculty of Science: 34 students
Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences (4-year curriculum): 5 students
Faculty of Engineering: 89 students
Faculty of Agriculture: 16 students

Updates regarding decision process and deadlines will be published on Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>).

8-Q4: Will students be able to study in the School of Medicine or School of Dentistry?

8-A4:

Tohoku University is currently exploring a framework that may allow students who complete designated courses within the Gateway College to transfer to the standard programs of the School of Medicine or School of Dentistry. If established, it would likely be available to only a few students. Details on this matter will be announced on Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>) as soon as they are finalized.

8-Q5: What degree will students receive upon graduation?

8-A5:

Graduates will be awarded a Bachelor's degree with the name of their chosen field of study indicated.

For example: *Bachelor of Arts (Literature)*, *Bachelor of Science (Science)*, etc.

8-Q6: Once I complete my studies, can I put “Gateway College Graduate” on my resume?

8-A6:

Gateway College is not a faculty degree course but an undergraduate education program. Degrees such as Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science are awarded by faculties. “Tohoku University, <Faculty Name> Graduate” is the correct information to put on your resume.

Gateway College students upon graduation also complete the program, so they may add “Completed Gateway College Program at Tohoku University” to their resume. It is not yet decided whether this information will appear on their diploma.

9. International Students and Internationality

9-Q1: Can international students apply?

9-A1:

Yes. Applications are open to students of all nationalities and diverse educational backgrounds. The Gateway College is designed to provide a globalized learning environment where Japanese and international students study together and peers from diverse cultural backgrounds can challenge and inspire one another.

9-Q2: Do candidates based abroad need to come to Japan for the selection process?

9-A2:

For the October intake (2nd term), the entire selection process—from application to result announcement—is planned to be conducted online, so candidates do not need to travel to Japan.

For more information on the admission selection schedule, please refer to the *Application Guide 2027* (to be published in June 2026).

9-Q3: What kind of English and Japanese language courses will be offered?

9-A3:

For Japanese students, English courses will focus on developing the ability to communicate fluently and confidently in academic settings, enabling them to engage in discussions and presentations with international peers and researchers. These courses emphasize not only the four core language skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—but also academic presentation skills.

For international students, Japanese language courses will be offered to help them adapt to academic and daily living in Japan.

10. Preparation before Application

10-Q1: What kind of preparation is recommended before applying?

10-A1:

Students in the Gateway College program are expected to study in English alongside

international peers in a globalized learning environment and to take a broad range of liberal arts and interdisciplinary foundation courses after enrollment.

Therefore, candidates are encouraged to cultivate broad academic interests, critical thinking from multiple perspectives, and a global mindset before applying.

We recommend engaging in the following activities:

- In addition to regular schoolwork, broaden your perspectives through reading in various academic fields, volunteering or other extracurricular experiences
 - In preparation for studying in an international collaborative environment, strengthen your English communication skills, stay informed about global issues and challenges, and develop the habit of thinking independently about them.
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10-Q2: Are past exam questions available?

10-A2:

No. Since Gateway College admissions are held for the first time for the 2027 intake, no past examination questions are available.

11. Other Information

11-Q1: Are there any financial support programs?

11-A1:

Yes. To ensure that students from a variety of financial backgrounds can enroll, Tohoku University is preparing several financial support schemes, including tuition and admission fee waivers as well as the establishment of original scholarship programs.

Details will be announced on Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>) once finalized.

11-Q2: Is residence in the international mixed dormitory mandatory?

11-A2:

Yes. To experience an immersive intercultural environment outside of the classroom, Gateway College students are expected to reside in the international mixed dormitory during their 1st year. However, individual circumstances will be taken into account, and exceptions may be considered where appropriate.

Further details will be announced on the Tohoku University Gateway College website (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>) once confirmed.

11-Q3: Where can I find the latest information?

11-A3:

The most up-to-date information will be provided on the official websites of Tohoku University Gateway College (<https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp>) and Admissions Center (<http://www.tnc.tohoku.ac.jp>).

The *Application Guide 2027* will be published in June 2026 on the Admission Center website.

Admission Center website <http://www.tnc.tohoku.ac.jp/>

Gateway College website <https://tu-gwc.tohoku.ac.jp/>

—Tohoku University Admissions Center