GORDONSTOUN
Japan

Plus Est En Vous

Candidate pack



GORDONSTOUN
Japan

Principal's welcome



Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining Gordonstoun Japan.

For nearly a century, Gordonstoun has believed that education should prepare young people for life. In Wakayama, we are building on that remarkable heritage to create a school shaped by its own place, people and community.

Having served at Gordonstoun in Scotland, I have seen how profoundly its philosophy can influence young people and the adults who work alongside them. Academic ambition, challenge, service and responsibility give purpose to everyday school life. Bringing that ethos to Japan is both a privilege and a responsibility.

Joining a founding team offers a rare opportunity. The people who join us will help establish our traditions, shape our working culture and create the daily experiences through which our values become real. Whatever your role, your judgement, ideas and example will matter.

I am looking for colleagues who bring expertise, curiosity and generosity of spirit; people who care deeply about young people and take pride in their work. Establishing a school will ask us to be resourceful, flexible and willing to learn from one another. It will also offer the satisfaction of building something together, with a contribution that will endure well beyond our opening year.

If this opportunity speaks to your own sense of purpose, I warmly invite you to consider joining us.

Natasha Dangerfield
Founding Principal
Gordonstoun Japan

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Founders and Governance



Gordonstoun Japan is established under a formal strategic alliance with the original Gordonstoun in Scotland. More than a franchise, it is a true sister school, sharing educational standards, curricula and pupil exchange opportunities.

This partnership is supported by OCC Educational Corporation, which has over 120 years of experience in education in Japan.

As the employing organisation for Gordonstoun Japan staff, OCC provides the institutional framework, local governance and knowledge of the Japanese educational landscape. Together, Gordonstoun and OCC are building a school that combines Gordonstoun's educational heritage with a strong foundation in Japan.

Masakuni Negishi, Chairman of OCC and founding Chairman of Gordonstoun, is driven by a vision to redefine 21st-century education. Rooted in the belief that "there is more in you than you think", Gordonstoun Japan goes beyond exams to forge character through real-world challenges.

By combining Gordonstoun's heritage of resilience and service with the spirit of Japan and educational technology, he aims to create a new global standard where character, action, and purpose matter as much as academic success.
Ultimately, his goal is to cultivate the very leaders who will thoughtfully shape tomorrow.



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About Gordonstoun

Founded in 1934 by educationalist Kurt Hahn, Gordonstoun is a co-educational boarding school on Scotland's north-east coast. Its philosophy rests on the belief that education should develop intellect, character and a sense of responsibility towards others.

Hahn understood that young people discover their capabilities through experience. Facing challenges, accepting responsibility and contributing to a community help develop confidence, resilience and judgement. Today, academic ambition sits alongside sailing, expeditions, sport, the arts and service as connected parts of a Gordonstoun education.

Character education runs through daily life. Students learn through their decisions, their relationships and the example of adults around them. Boarding provides opportunities to practise cooperation, independence and care for others, while service encourages them to use their strengths beyond their own interests. The school's motto, Plus est en vous, expresses this conviction: there is more in you.

Opening in Wakayama in September 2027, Gordonstoun Japan will bring this philosophy to a new setting. Working to the principles of the Scottish school, it will combine Gordonstoun's educational foundations with the culture, landscape and community of Japan. Wakayama's coastline and mountains will offer opportunities for exploration, challenge and practical learning.

Our founding staff will help bring these principles to life, shaping a boarding community with its own identity and a shared commitment to academic achievement, character and service.



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Vision and Philosophy

Vision statement

We believe character is shaped by experience. From our holistic approach, through physical activity, creative processes and academic challenge, we will use our learning environment to develop a full understanding of ‘Plus Est En Vous’. Through success and through failure, our students will find their own unique and individual path to their personal potential.

Philosophy

At Gordonstoun, education is purposeful and extends beyond the curriculum. As a member of our team, you will help students develop the values, understanding and behaviours to act with integrity, take responsibility and grow as leaders.

Inspired by Kurt Hahn, our approach encourages students to step beyond their comfort zones within a supportive community.Through physical, intellectual and emotional challenge, you will help prepare young people to lead with confidence in a changing world.



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Our Campus

Set within 15 hectares in Wakayama, Gordonstoun Japan's campus is being developed to support a full and varied boarding school life. Teaching spaces, specialist facilities, seven boarding houses and outdoor areas will bring learning, activity and community together.

The campus will accommodate the different rhythms of each day: focused study, creative work, physical challenge and time for friendship and rest. Our boarding houses will be central to this experience, creating smaller communities where students feel known, supported and increasingly confident in their independence.

In its first year, Gordonstoun Japan will welcome students into Years 7-10, expanding year by year to offer provision across Years 7-13. At full capacity, the school will accommodate approximately 700 students, the vast majority of whom will be boarders.



Illustrative image of the proposed campus

Beyond the school grounds, Wakayama's coastline, mountains and open spaces will extend the learning environment, providing opportunities for sailing, expeditions and exploration. Connections with the surrounding community will help root the school in its Japanese setting.

For our founding staff, there will be opportunities to shape how the campus is used, bringing Gordonstoun's educational philosophy to life through everyday teaching, care and shared experience.

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Our Campus



A striking campus designed with the local context in mind.



Large dining spaces

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Our Campus



Elegant, light design rooms built for modern teaching and learning.



Welll-equipped spaces in an inspiring setting.

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Our Campus



Purpose-built boarding houses for modern living.



Warm and friendly homes for our boarding community.

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Life in Wakayama

Wakayama offers a distinctive setting for life in Japan, with a beautiful coastline, green mountains and the character of a historic regional city. Wakayama Castle, local food and the wider Kansai region give staff plenty to discover, while Osaka and Kansai International Airport are within easy reach.

For those joining Gordonstoun Japan, the landscape will be more than a backdrop. The sea, mountains and open spaces will help bring the school's educational approach to life, creating opportunities for challenge, exploration and service. Across Wakayama Prefecture, places such as the Kumano Kodo pilgrimage routes and Koyasan reveal a deep connection between nature, history and culture.

Wakayama offers the chance to build a life rooted in its own community and culture, with the wider opportunities of Kansai close by. It is a place where outdoor adventure and everyday life can sit side by side, and where the setting itself will become part of the Gordonstoun Japan experience.









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Benefits

Joining Gordonstoun Japan offers a unique opportunity to help establish a new school, shape its culture and contribute to the lives of young people. We offer a competitive remuneration package that reflects the expertise and commitment of the staff who will bring this vision to life.

Alongside the opportunity to contribute to a new school as part of the founding team, staff will benefit from a personalised development plan, ongoing development opportunities and access to the campus's extensive sports facilities, including tennis courts, a swimming pool, sports centre and fitness suite. Beyond the workplace, Wakayama's coastline, mountains and rich cultural heritage provide a rewarding setting for life in Japan, with opportunities for sailing, outdoor adventure and exploring the local community.

Our benefits include:

· Competitive salary
· Full Japanese social insurance
· On-site accommodation (depending on role) or a housing allowance
· School meals and car parking allocation
· School fee subsidy for staff children at Gordonstoun Japan (where applicable)

Relocation support for international staff moving to Japan:

· Relocation flight (and annual return) to Japan to the employee's country of residence
· Allowance for packing and shipping personal belongings to Japan
· Visa sponsorship and immigration support by OCC
· Japanese language and cultural classes








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https://www.gordonstoun.jp