

UK-Japan Student Conference

Annual Report 2022



日英学生会議
UK-Japan Student Conference

Table of Contents

UK-Japan Student Conference

Building The Future, Together

One Day Events

London Event

Tokyo Promotion

Summer Conference

Programme Structure

Conference Schedule

Day 1

Dr Misako Nukaga

Mr Ian Clarke

Day 2

Dr Daniela Lai

Dr Mahnaz Arvaneh

Cultural Exchange

Day 3

Ms Pamela Afi Tettey

Dr Yuki Imoto

Day 4

Field trip

Day 5

Free day

Day 6

High School Student Exchange Event

Mr Dirk Hebecker

Concluding Remarks

Appendix: Policy Brief Precis

Conference Details

Organiser List

Participants List

UK-Japan Student Conference

The UK-Japan Student Conference was founded in 2016 as an organisation run by students, for students. We aim to create a space for cross-cultural pollination and a forum for discussion on crucial socio-political issues. We organise a week-long summer conference, alternating between Japan and the UK, and our programme includes academic lectures, social events, fieldwork, and cultural activities.

UK-JP is an opportunity for highly motivated students at British and Japanese universities to come together and create a shared vision towards a sustainable future. Our ambition is to support young people by establishing a thriving network that transcends national borders. We value the idea expressed in an old Japanese proverb: 'Ichigo Ichie' (一期一会), which conveys that we should treasure every meeting, for it will never recur. We never know where we might encounter someone who will influence our lives and our values. We hope to foster such pivotal, long-lasting friendships amongst participants.

We emphasise experiences that challenge our preconceptions and collective biases, and reveal alternative approaches towards the conference theme, which changes each year. Student-led debate is invaluable in proposing solutions to the most pressing contemporary issues. We want to shape the world through global, cross-cultural problem-solving, and ignite new, bold policy ideas. We strive to incorporate a process of discussion, realisation and action into our design of the conference. Having nurtured discussions in an international context, we hope that participants will integrate fresh perspectives into their own communities.

Through UK-JP, attendees are empowered to apply the knowledge they have cultivated during their academic careers. We provide a programme that acknowledges and celebrates a diversity of values through interactions with participants from different academic and social backgrounds. We hope the week they spend with us is a fruitful and memorable one with many discoveries.

Building the Future, Together

Apathy, cynicism and fear tend to be the dominant attitudes towards the future in civil society and public discourse. These negative emotions are fundamentally rooted in a sense of disempowerment– that we, as individuals, have no way of making a difference to various global and national problems and no way of navigating many disorienting changes as time marches on. In this year's conference, we chose the theme 'Building the Future, Together' to respond to this feeling and to empower our participants. Our aim was to challenge those feelings and by meeting the future– both the challenges it presents and potential it holds– head on.

At the same time, we believe that in an ideal society everyone is valued and no one is left behind. Our societies will be much stronger when the full spectrum of human difference within them is meaningfully recognised. If people feel that their individual uniqueness is not a barrier to social participation, they will feel like they belong to a community. In turn, that sense of belonging will engender a desire to contribute to the progress of that community.

This year's UK-Japan Student Conference, 'Building the Future, Together', explored what the future holds for both countries and the wider world we live in. It saw lively discussions and debate amongst our participants and our invited speakers in issues pertaining to equality, justice and inclusivity in different areas of societal development ranging from immigration policy, brain-computer interface technology, education and many more interesting topics.



One Day Events

London Event

For our 2022 outreach event in the UK, we held a Q&A session in English intended to provide interested applicants with more information about our conference and promote our event.

The event was held via Zoom on Saturday, 30th April 2022, at 11.30am (BST). It began with an introductory talk about the UK-Japan Student Conference and a Q&A session where interested applicants could ask committee members any questions they had. In particular, we covered the history and philosophy of UK-JP, an introduction to this year's theme, and a detailed explanation of the application process.

Our online Q&A session was publicised via our social media channels, particularly Facebook, in tandem with our Japanese-language event. This ensured we could provide interested applicants with multiple options to get to know UK-JP better. We believe our outreach events play a crucial role in spreading awareness around UK-JP, and in the coming years hope to expand the scale in line with our return to a physical format.

Tokyo Promotion

In 2022, UK-JP conducted promotional outreach in three ways, UT-BASE, our own promotional event, and universities' Twitter.

UT-BASE is a student-media organisation based in the University of Tokyo. The occurrence of their event was ideal, as it is held almost at the same time of our application term. At the same time, the events coincided with the start of the Japanese academic year, when students search for new societies to join. The event that we joined was targeted at university students who were interested in student organisations and societies with an international focus.

Our presentation was held on 27th March 20:00-21:30. This event included a presentation that we explained about ourselves and a Q&A session, where students were able to ask committee members questions related to the conference. Our presentation featured the mission of UK-JP; how we had adapted to COVID-19; reflections from the fourth Conference in 2019 in Hiroshima, which was the last in-person conference; reflections from the Online sixth Conference in 2021; as well as an introduction to the seventh and first in person Conference after Covid era. We also explained our theme, “Building the Future, together”; and finally, the application processes.

Promotion events by ourselves are new this year. This event aims to get more students from various universities since UT-BASE is based in the University of Tokyo. We held events on 10th and 12th April both from 19:00-20:00. This event included a presentation and Q&A session. Q&A session turned out to be useful for many students, because our committee members were able to share insights from the participants’ perspective and help interested students better understand the conference.

As for the Twitter, we asked 早稲田サークル紹介, and 慶応サークル紹介 both are accounts that introduce societies to their universities (Waseda University and Keio University) student to promote our account, too. The reason we choose these universities is because both of the universities have many students including international students, and students of these universities often join the societies like us.

Overall, we believe these events contributed to a wider recognition of UK-JP as an international student organisation for Japanese students interested in global exchange opportunities. Since we were able to receive many applicants from Japan this year through these events, we are planning to reach out to a wider range of Japanese universities in 2023, in order to become a well-known student organisation among Japanese university students.

Summer Conference

Programme Structure

Preliminary Sessions

Each year, we begin the conference with our customary preliminary sessions. They serve a dual function of allowing our participants to get acquainted with each other before the actual conference, as well as preparing them for the conference by introducing them to key concepts. This ensures a high level of intellectual rigour and stimulating discussion during the actual conference. In order to bridge the geographical distance between our two countries, we host these sessions on Zoom.

Our first preliminary session explored the concept of intersectionality in tandem with diversity and equality. We believed it would be a useful analytical framework for participants to evaluate the societies they lived in and various social policies that impact the lives of members of these societies. In trying to ‘Build the Future, Together’, we need to critically consider who is represented by “Together”, and how we can include people of all walks of life beyond superficial representation. Participants were encouraged to evaluate the strengths and limits of the various concepts we encountered in the literature in their applicability to British or Japanese society, and how they might share these ideas with others.

In our second preliminary session, we shifted our focus to the use of technology in education, regarding this as a particularly relevant topic to our overall theme. Children are the strongest link to our futures. At the same time, cutting-edge developments in technology can be considered one of the main tools with which the future is created. Thus, we considered it imperative to investigate the overlap of these two areas, taking a comparative approach that looked at education policies in two major countries, the US and China. Our participants contrasted tech-free and tech-intensive approaches and discussed the merits and drawbacks of both, while also drawing on their own educational backgrounds to propose the best synthesis of these policies.

Seminars

Our speakers are our key educational resource, introducing core concepts that serve as building blocks for discussions and presentations. The seminar topics are deliberately diverse and involve unexpected angles to encourage curiosity and intellectual openness. Each lecture is followed by a Q&A session, allowing attendees to direct the conversation in accordance with their interests.

Policy-Making Exercise

As we explore the contemporary legislative ecosystem, we envisage better alternatives. The conference is a space of possibility where participants are invited to complete a policy-making exercise, targeting any area of the topic under investigation. Subsequently, participants present their findings and recommendations to their peers on the final day.

Workshops

Workshops are interactive sessions where participants actively contribute towards research and data analysis in groups.

Cultural Exchange

We supplement the academic experience with fostering mutual understanding between participants that will help them build long-term relationships. Cultural exchange plays a key role in learning about each other's backgrounds.

Group Presentations

Presentations are the heart of the learning experience in the conference. They challenge each participant to actively engage with pressing contemporary problems and formulate responses to them. The final group presentations showcase conclusions formed during the fieldwork, seminars and workshops. Participants propose a viable solution they analysed and delineated together.



Conference Schedule

	21/8 (Sun)	22/8 (Mon)	23/8 (Tues)	24/8 (Wed)
8:30		Opening Ceremony	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00		Lecture 1: Diversity & Equality in Japan <i>Dr Nukaga Misako</i>		
9:30				
10:00		Opening Brunch & Icebreakers	Lecture 3: Peacebuilding & Transitional Justice <i>Dr Daniela Lai</i>	Policymaking
10:30	Lunch			
11:00		Arrival and Registration @ Ravensbourne House	Lecture 2: Diversity & Equality in the UK <i>Mr Ian Clarke</i>	Lecture 4: Technology & Health <i>Dr Mahnaz Arvaneh</i>
11:30				
12:00	Reflection	Reflection	Research Skills	
12:30				
13:00	Policymaking Introduction	Policymaking	Lecture 6: Education <i>Dr Yuki Imoto</i>	
13:30				Policymaking
14:00	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	
14:30				
15:00	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	
15:30				
16:00	Welcome Dinner	Dinner	Social Event: BBQ & Quiz Night	Social Event: Electric Shuffle
16:30				
17:00	Welcome Dinner	Dinner	Social Event: BBQ & Quiz Night	Social Event: Electric Shuffle
17:30				
18:00	Welcome Dinner	Dinner	Social Event: BBQ & Quiz Night	Social Event: Electric Shuffle
18:30				
19:00	Welcome Dinner	Dinner	Social Event: BBQ & Quiz Night	Social Event: Electric Shuffle
19:30				

	25/8 (Thurs)	26/8 (Fri)	27/8 (Sat)	28/8 (Sun)	
8:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	
9:00					
9:30					
10:00	Policymaking	Free Day	Route H Event** / Policymaking	Lecture 8: Migration Issues <i>Mr Dirk Hebecker</i>	
10:30					
11:00					
11:30	Lunch		Lunch	Reflection	
12:00					
12:30	Field Trip: Migration Museum & Free Time		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
13:00					
13:30			Policymaking	Policymaking	Policymaking Presentation
14:00					
14:30					
15:00		Closing Ceremony	Free Time	Free Time	
15:30					
16:00		Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	
16:30					
17:00		Social Event: Movie Night	Farewell Dinner		
17:30					
18:00	Dinner				
18:30					
19:00					
19:30					

Day 1



Dr Misako Nukaga

Dr Misako Nukaga is an Associate Professor in the Graduate School of Education at University of Tokyo.

She studies acculturation processes of immigrant children in Japan and the US, focusing on the effects of cultural and structural contexts of the host society.

Her recent work looks at identity formation and educational achievement of second-generation immigrants and considers culturally relevant practices for minority students in Japan.

Of Japan's 125 million citizens, 2.6 million are foreign residents. At just 2% of the population, this figure may seem low, but there is a trend of a steady increase in foreigners living in Japan. Traditionally homogenous, Japanese society has begun to change, and in 2022 Japan is more ethnically diverse than it ever has been. As the rate of immigration rises and children of immigrants grow up to participate in society, it seems logical that government policy should adapt and change to reflect this. Yet a reluctance to do so has led to already-marginalised people being left behind in a gap between policy and the multicultural reality, according to Dr Misako Nukaga. The government's refusal to employ the term 'immigrant' on a political level means that immigrants and their families are excluded from the conversation. Meanwhile, limited data collection on foreign residents means the image portrayed by statistics cannot accurately reflect society, leaving them 'invisible'. In the first talk of the conference, Dr Nukaga used her research to highlight some of the problems faced by immigrants, and what might be done to resolve them.

Despite the lack of data on immigration and foreign residents in Japan, what exists is indicative of the struggles faced by these groups. Attendance at high school, for example, is markedly lower for Filipino and Brazilian children relative to the general population. The number of students in need

of Japanese language support has risen significantly over the past 20 years. In her research, Dr Nukaga asks questions to get to the heart of these statistics. Why are high school attendance rates so much lower for these ethnic groups, compared to Korean or Chinese students? How can we aid students in need of extra support? How do we identify barriers and challenges faced by immigrants and their families?

We observed how a language and cultural barrier creates problems for some parents. A limited understanding of Japanese leads to difficulties understanding materials distributed by and communication with schools, hindering parental involvement in their children's education. Dr Nukaga also shared a case study in which one Filipino mother felt despondent when she was unable to prepare a beautiful obento (lunchbox) as other Japanese mothers do.

We also looked at two strategies adopted by immigrant children in their school life. Children from different ethnic backgrounds often feel an assimilative pressure at school, which can lead to internalised negativity towards their ethnicity and a reluctance to vocalise problems they may have with Japanese language. By either attempting to assimilate and conform to Japanese norms, or rejecting this pressure by self-distancing and isolating themselves from society, children can fade into the background, not asking for or receiving the help they need.

Through stories like this, we were able to see how the problems facing immigrants are complex and wide-ranging – there is no one solution to support integration in Japanese society. Dr Nukaga also emphasised the importance of data collection; not only must we work to find resolutions, we must also highlight the problems and emphasise their urgency.

Yet a range of challenges inspires a range of solutions. In our policymaking sessions throughout the week, some groups chose to take Dr Nukaga's research and come up with their own ideas for encouraging integration and inclusion among foreigners in Japan. As we presented our policy proposals on the final day, it was affirming to see viable and actionable steps that could be taken. Unafraid of the big problems, UK-JP participants stepped up to imagine a more diverse and inclusive Japan, and how we might achieve it.

Mr Ian Clarke

Founder of multi-award-winning culture transformers Deilight Consulting, Ian Clarke is also a Psychologist, Therapist, Investment Banker, Author and himself a multi-award-winning Activist and Philanthropist. In 2021 he authored a 45-page report documenting the nature and costs of oppression in global financial services that led to the first black appointments on the board of Europe's largest bank in history.

Who am I? What is my purpose? The human experience, Mr Ian Clarke told us, can be distilled into these questions. These essential questions about our true identity are questions that we can all relate to; there are no definitive answers. We might look to our personality traits or physical characteristics to help us answer the question, but we might find that the answer falls short. I was born in the UK, and I am British, but is being British my entire identity? This struggle to define ourselves and to define our purpose unites people across the globe, irrespective of language spoken, ethnicity or anything else. However it is easy to forget about this common experience that we share, because as Mr Clarke observes, it is easier to divide people than unite them.

After 14 years of working at HSBC, Mr Clarke quit his senior position when he felt that the board failed to tackle discrimination within the bank. He had witnessed resignations from his colleagues on account of the racism and prejudice they experienced, and a system that awarded rights and opportunities to a specific group of people: white, male, heterosexual men, often over the age of 55, with no presenting disability. Perhaps the most astounding part of the story was that when Mr Clarke presented the board with a plan to address the problem by facilitating inclusivity within the workforce and diversifying their customer base, the board said no.

Why? The strategy was free to implement, the 'right' thing to do, and furthermore economically beneficial to the company. Rejecting this strategy sent a clear signal about attitudes and opinions held about diversity and inclusion by those at the top.



Yet it appears that diversity is an essential part of the human experience. We covered a breadth of topics over the course of an hour, from astrophysics and extra-terrestrial life, to a brief history of human development. We touched on the concept of sapience, the ability to suppress instinct and choose free will, and how we know we're not living in a simulation. At the centre of all of these topics, diversity was the inevitable and progressive constant. Mr Clarke expressed his conviction that it is diversity that has allowed us, as a species, to survive and thrive.

We return to those essential human questions, who we are, and what legacy we will leave on Earth. As young people we are inheriting a world with problems, with simulated differences and ideas that take years to unlearn. Yet all is not over, Mr Clarke emphasised as he ended his talk. It is up to us to champion unity, celebrate diversity and decide to do something different, united under our common identity: human beings.

Day 2

Dr Daniela Lai

Dr Daniela Lai joined the Department of Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway University of London in July 2020. Her research focuses on transitional justice and peacebuilding, the politics and political economy of international interventions and post-war transitions. She has a particular interest in the gendered dimension of these processes and feminist approaches to the study of justice, peace and political economy. Her book Socioeconomic Justice: International Intervention and Transition in Post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina was published by Cambridge University Press in 2020.



When building the future, we must also acknowledge the past. If you want to build a house, you cannot just simply build, onwards and upwards. It is essential to take the time to assess the land, the foundations, any faults that may exist. If neglected, cracks in the foundations grow and splinter, with potentially disastrous consequences. Peacebuilding, a process of strengthening and solidifying the peace in societies, might be seen as creating a solid foundation upon which to build, so that when a storm arrives your house is less likely to topple.

Peacebuilding and transitional justice were concepts introduced to us by Dr Daniela Lai, as she asked us to consider how we can begin to respond to the legacies of mass violence. In her talk, Dr Lai covered three mechanisms of transitional justice: the work of the International Criminal Court, truth commissions, and the activist-led women's court. Each has their own strengths and successes, but also points that create tension and draw criticism, demonstrating (as we might expect) that the path of peacebuilding is not a straight and easy one. Furthermore, these mechanisms themselves draw each other into conflict. While the trial of a

war criminal by the ICC centres bringing the perpetrators to justice, truth commissions typically centre victims in the conversation, in an attempt at reconciliation. Those who have suffered as their country has been ravaged by violence will surely have passionate, emotional ideas of how justice can be served – whether everyone agrees is another matter.

Dr Lai asked us to broaden our idea of justice beyond the traditional perpetrator and victim narrative. Our immediate image of war might be of soldiers, typically men, fighting on a battlefield; the violence as a gun-shot wound, or a death in an explosion. Yet Dr Lai encouraged us to look beyond this heavily gendered image of wartime violence, to the victims of sexual, domestic and socio-economic violence.

The victims of this ‘continuous violence’ are more likely to be women, who may struggle with affected access to social services and healthcare, economic difficulties and sexual trauma. To that end, Dr Lai asserted that the end of conflict does not equal peace, and the consequences of this kind of violence should not be left out of transitional justice.

Yet is this definition of violence too broad? By extending transitional justice beyond the focus on physical violence and violations of human rights, do we remove it too far from its original goals? While some critics may disagree the idea of transitional justice ‘has always been broad’, Dr Lai is among those who believe that including other forms of violence brings us closer to the real, lived experiences of conflict, of the soldier and the civilian. A more nuanced, socially-conscious consideration of the consequences of wartime violence – can we imagine this as a thorough, inclusive assessment of the foundations of a house? Consider every structural flaw, address the problems, acknowledge the trauma - and perhaps we can construct a more stable house, a more peaceful home.

Special note: Day 3 of the conference also marked day 182 of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, an ongoing act of aggression that we couldn't ignore when talking about rebuilding societies after sustained periods of violence. What kind of peacebuilding and transitional justice will we see after the war ends, in whatever circumstances that may be? We can imagine that the research of Dr. Lai and her peers can inform in some way the long path to peace that lies ahead, should that opportunity arise.

Dr Mahnaz Arvaneh

*Dr Mahnaz Arvaneh is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Automatic Control and Systems Engineering (ACSE), University of Sheffield. Her research focuses on Brain-computer Interface, neural signal processing, machine learning and their applications in monitoring and enhancing physical and mental health. She is Director of the Physiological Signals and Systems laboratory, where she conducts theoretical experimental as well as translational research to develop therapeutic neuro-technologies. Her work on BCIs has received international recognition and high-profile media coverage, e.g. BBC Tech Tent, BBC Radio 4, Sky News, etc. She was one of 15 UK academics invited to the steering committee for the "Royal Society expert perspective report on neural interface technologies" launched in 2019. Mahnaz has been an investigator on multinational projects, in collaboration with engineers, psychologists, neuroscientists and neurologists, funded by UKRI, Royal Society, A*STAR Singapore, MS Society, Research England.*



Prior to the conference, all participants were guided to discuss the use of technology in education during their preliminary session, and one example for education with intensive technology is the use of neurological headbands to monitor students' participation and attentiveness during lessons. However such use of neurological technology has sparked controversies -- the appropriate and functional use of neurological technology are some of the various topics Dr Mahnaz Arvaneh has addressed in her lecture of neurological technology.

Neurological technology involves the use of a brain-computer interface system, which converts and then processes the signal given by the brain into controllable actions by the human body. It is mostly used in research and medical rehabilitation, including collecting brain wave data for studies and direct training in certain patients' neurofeedback, though currently neurological technology is also developed for machine learning and as a possible remedy for certain mental illnesses or younger patients with special educational needs.

Dr Arvaneh also stated neurological technology has been developing rapidly in recent years, and the quality of data collected via neurological technology has become progressively accurate. Yet, the advancement of such technology also leads to questions of ethical and moral access to neurological technology, such as the purpose of using the technology, and how we should handle the neurological data collected. Besides enhancing technological development, she explained we also have to consider the appropriate use of neurological technology from the perspective of humanities and social science. It is up to us, a new generation of leaders, to carefully assess the use of certain technologies in assisting us building a better future for our future generations.

Cultural Exchange

On Tuesday, after a busy day filled with lectures and policy making, the participants got engaged in sushi making to experience Japanese food culture. Traditionally, sushi would require fish, however, to make it vegetarian-friendly, we mainly used vegetables as ingredients. It is very nice to see that traditional culture can be accessible despite any dietary or cultural, religious requirements by adding a slight twist to it.

On Wednesday, the participants took a bus and the DLR to Canary Wharf to experience shuffleboard, which is a popular recreational activity in the UK. The participants were separated into two groups and competed with each other. It was a great experience for the participants as they learnt about British culture and got to know each other more at the same time.



Day 3

Ms Pamela Afi Tettey

Miss Pamela Afi Tettey graduated from Hiroshima University with a Master of Philosophy in Bioresource Science during which she was awarded The Hiroshima University Excellent Student Award twice. She is passionate about climate change issues and their associated impacts on aquatic ecosystems. She is currently a first-year Ph.D. student at Hiroshima University where she is pursuing research in Aquatic Science.

When it comes to doing insightful research, finding an impactful topic that you, as a researcher, also care about is only half the battle won. That's why in this year's UK-JP we collaborated with one of our graduate participants, Ms Pamela Afi Tettey to deliver a Research Skills Workshop for the benefit of our undergraduate participants. Having graduated from her Master's programme at Hiroshima University as a two-time award-winner of The Hiroshima University Excellent Student Award, she was the ideal candidate to guide her more junior academic peers in UK-JP through the ins and outs of research skills.

Her talk began with a comprehensive overview of what research actually is, at its core. With an engaging presentation style that she maintained from start to finish, she encouraged participants to share their thoughts on various important questions pertaining to the nature of research. Ms Tettey also contextualised the value of research skills in business settings, before analogising these to academia. Since some people may conceive of research as merely something done by scientists in white lab coats, it was important to establish just how many professions require a solid set of research skills.

How do we define 'good' research? There is no clear cut answer to this, but Ms Tetty provided some key characteristics that were necessary to produce a solid piece of research. In particular, she emphasised a meticulous process of data-gathering and analysis that was coupled with a clear vision of the research goals and also future potential avenues for deeper study.

Moreover, good research must be in conversation with the literature around it– as researchers, we stand on the shoulders of giants, specifically the wealth of research efforts that our predecessors have conducted.

The second half of Ms Tettey's presentation covered her ongoing research as a PhD student at Hiroshima University in Aquatic Science. This provided participants an excellent example of how to put into practice the skills they'd just acquired and to internalise this new knowledge. As someone with limited experience with the natural sciences, I felt like I benefited greatly from Ms Tettey's careful step-by-step explanation of her research that helped me understand better the philosophy and research design that guided her current project. Most valuable of all was the connection between her research– examining the temperature tolerance of a particular aquatic insect– and the broader issue of climate change, which threatens ecosystems with the phenomenon of global warming. To me this seemed a perfect example of a participant who embodied the optimism of our theme 'Building the Future, Together', by tackling one of the biggest challenges that will inevitably affect our collective futures.



Dr Yuki Imoto

Dr Yuki Imoto is assistant professor at the Department of Liberal Arts and Languages, within the Faculty of Science and Technology, Keio University. She obtained her PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Oxford. Her current research explores Social Emotional Learning and contemplative, somatic, arts-based approaches within Japanese education.

In this lecture, Dr Yuki Imoto sought to connect the diversity we learnt throughout the UK-JP conference and our education systems. With the progress of globalisation, multiculturalism is going to be familiar phenomenon around the world, not only in the UK or Japan. However, the Western notion of “multiculturalism” emphasises sameness and facilitates assimilation. This feature could not contribute to the common society that all citizens jointly have a stake in. Therefore, Dr Imoto stated the importance of education that praises difference and diverse cultures.

Subsequently, she reflected on the philosophical basis of education, and introduced two models of “intimacy” and “integrity”. The “intimacy” model essentially establishes the self in a manner that is not sharply distinguished from others. Knowledge would be attained through immersion in the culture. Meanwhile, the “integrity” model is premised on the importance of establishing a clearly-defined autonomous self in the individual learner. The learner obtains objective knowledge at their will. Multicultural education has thus far been developed based on the latter model. Dr Imoto suggested the value of an “intercultural education” that is rooted in “intimacy” model.

Based on this theory, researchers at Emory University invented a contemplative approach. This approach combines ‘Western’ modern science with traditional ‘Eastern’ knowledge for nurturing compassion and empathy. The whole process starts with acquiring the self-understanding and self-love skills, and gradually expanding the boundaries of this from the self to the wider community and society. At the end of the lecture, Dr Imoto demonstrated meditation to experience this approach. With her words, the

audience was asked to imagine affection and spread it bit by bit from the self, to one's loved ones, then to enemies and finally society.

Undoubtedly, this education would facilitate mutual understanding among people. However, it requires intensive care for the students not only academically but also psychologically. Nevertheless, the schools providing this support might be so competitive that the admission limited the number of students. In that event, I wondered what the standard for admission would be, in other words, who should be chosen and who should not. Dr Imoto shared the same concern and with a careful manner, answered that this remained an obstacle. Her answer reminded me of the saying, "Easier said than done". To achieve this goal, we have to turn the issue of 'how to combine multiculturalism and equity' over in our minds ceaselessly, even after this conference.

Day 4

Field trip: Migration Museum

Yuka (participant): On a day with typically British temperamental weather, UK-JP members got on the bus to Lewisham, and headed to the Migration Museum. Our conference was held in Catford where billboards on the street advertised Pakistani restaurants, Caribbean barbers and Eastern European grocery shops. As if reflecting the diversity on the road, the museum exhibited how migrants and their descendants contributed to UK culture. I was amazed by how many businesses I had experienced here that had been established by immigrants and how the majority of society accepted “their” culture as a part of “our” daily life. People tend to label different cultures as substantially uninterpretable, but this represented the opposite—concession and inclusion.

The recent increasing number of migrants in Japan do not typically receive a warm welcome from the majority in Japan. Even if you asked people to name migrants with successful businesses, most Japanese people probably would scarcely be able to answer you. However, while dining at immigrant restaurants, I realised that with even just one condiment, you not only change a dish but also society, by learning about its history and the people it embodies. This attitude exemplifies inclusivity, rather than the compulsory assimilation that is the dominant attitude in Japan. This museum, situated in the heart of a shopping mall, is indicative of the support for migrants and the celebration of diversity in British citizenship. For many who immigrated to the UK, this place shows them the bright future that allows them to dream. The Museum shop sells the graffiti art of Paddington, saying, “Migration is not a crime.” How about Japan? In the UK, this field trip gave us a fruitful insight.

Taisei (participant): For our field trip, UK-JP went to the imigration museum. Even though I was not familiar with immigration, the museum was interesting to me. I again realised how chaotic, global, and diverse the UK is. In the museum, the booth where we could listen to many personal stories of immigrants was my favourite. It touched me since each immigrant lives their life strongly and I could listen to their story via their voice. After the museum, we went to the city of London, and visited the National Gallery.

Since I am not a cultural person, I usually do not visit galleries or museums, however, many famous works there fascinated me. After that, we worked around the city of London. That was a great experience for me because that was my first time to do that. The city is like a mixture of old stuff and new stuff. There is no city quite like itthat, so my brain was confused but excited as well. In addition, my enjoyment was enhancedI enjoyed that since I had UK-JP members by my side during this new adventure. It was especially interesting to me to talk with English friends about the royal family at Buckingham Palace. In short, I did a great cross-cultural understanding on that day.



Day 5

Free Day

Yuka (participant): Even before the alarm rang, my heart was beating too much to stay in bed. On Friday morning, my free day started with walking to Lewisham for breakfast. Taking a train to Victoria station, I passed by Hyde Park and reached Portobello Market near Notting Hill. On both sides of the street, thrift shops surrounded the countless number of visitors chatting, trying on everything that caught their eyes. Owners of each shop mostly drank a cup of tea and read a book, occasionally giving an indifferent glance to the customers. Walking down Portobello Road, I found a group of vintage shops that intertwined with each other like patchwork on a quilt. One of these shops featured a beautiful yellow shirt which was a little over my university student budget. The owner asked me to try it on in the cosy fitting room, with distinctive Persian scarfs lining the walls. With excitement and a bit of horror, I looked at myself in the mirror. Perfect, unexpectedly. Only the price stood in my way. Maybe my look was so stunning that the lady offered me a small discount. I rushed to change my lame outfit to this London style.

After the market, I went to see a West End show. Because of my lack of planning, I impulsively bought a ticket to “The Play that Goes Wrong”. This play was a comedy about an amateur theatre club attempting to perform a murder mystery play that ended up being full of technical errors. The audience’s laughter filled the theatre the whole time, and I joined along.

With the end of the free day, there was only two days left before UK-JP would be over. Now, everyone had to focus on their presentation and lecture, but the leisure day was a great experience of London culture.

Taisei (participant): On the free day, I went to the city of London with some participants and a committee member. First, we went to the British Museum. The museum was much bigger than I had expected, and there were many interesting exhibitions. The Egyptian pavilion was especially exciting to me. The Rosetta Stone and the mummies were fascinating. The Japanese pavilion was interesting as well. A stranger talked to us about the anime that was being exhibited, so we translated it into English and had a conversation, which was a great experience. After we left the museum, we went to Camden Market to have lunch. The market was beautiful and there were many delicious foods from around the world. I ate Mexican food, which was nice. After that, we went to the Tower of London and rode a boat on the Thames river. At last, we had dinner at a fancy church. In Japan, I cannot do such a thing, so that is one of my precious memories of the week. In short, I had a great tour of the city of London with great company of other members on the free day.



Day 6

High School Student Exchange Event

Every year, the UK-Japan Student Conference collaborates with Route H and Global Learning Center to hold an exchange event with high school students who aim to apply for universities in the UK. At the height of the global pandemic, we have transferred the event online which allows us to connect university and high school students all over the world into one space. This year, we had our conference participants from University of Cambridge, University of Oxford, University of Sussex, SOAS University of London and King's College London to give a presentation on university life and how their degrees look like. In the second half of the event, we moved onto an interactive Q&A session and students freely asked questions including but not limited to application and English learning tips. UK-Japan Student Conference would like to show great gratitude towards Mr Ozawa Akihiro from Benesse Cooperation who has been organising this event. We also wish the very best for the high school students who participated in the event in their future.

Mr Dirk Hebecker

Mr Dirk Hebecker is a former UNHCR Representative in Japan, a position he held from 2016-2020. He has an extensive background in UN Humanitarian and Human Rights work, across the period of 1993-2016, in over 15 countries such as Vietnam, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Korea as well as Georgia, Albania and Russia. He retired from the UN in 2021 and currently conducts research and teaching of global issues and international relations at Rikkyo University in Tokyo and other academic institutions mainly in Japan. He holds an MA in International Relations and South-East Asia Studies.

Our last yet fruitful lecture day was a talk about Refugees and Marginalised People by Mr Hebecker who was the ex-representative of the Japan UNHCR Office in Tokyo. Mr Hebecker was a professional practitioner who focused

on peacebuilding and especially on helping refugees and migrants in and from various countries. Interestingly, he was also receiving his education at one point from the past Soviet Union, now Russia. His rich experiences alone could offer us tremendous different academic inputs, which also correspond to our theme of “Building the Future, Together”, as we will need guidance and wisdom from a character-wise rich figure like Mr Hebecker.

We started off the lecture by understanding the current unsolved global issues such as economic downturn, major disruption of supply chains and vital supplies, loss of livelihoods, reversal of SDG gains such as more poverty, and even possibly slowing of progress on climate change, and so many more. All of these problems result in record-high displacement (refugees) and “irregular” migration, people are forced to abandon and flee away from their homes to another foreign nation. Not to mention the current Ukraine and Russia war that is worsening all these issues.

Mr Hebecker proceeded to explain the situations of Japan and the UK. Both nations are unfortunately notoriously known as one of these nations which are often too restrictive on refugees and asylum seekers related policies. Japan in particular, even with the Ukraine war that happened, took only around 1000 marginalised people and granted them “special humanitarian status”. This kind of reality certainly made us realise that we are still doing too less to help people in crisis. Perhaps the silver lining in this topic is that Mr Hebecker explained to us what exactly is the UNHCR planning and doing to help these people, despite some limitations they often encounter in the reality.



In the Q&A sessions, we had a rather heated discussion about the harsh situations of how people know too little about this issue, and how even UNHCR could not fully protect people who were marginalised in Japan due to reasons such as illegal entry. In the end, Mr Hebecker admitted to us that this is an especially troubling time with too many problems yet too little solutions. Nevertheless, there is always something we all can do, especially students in the UK-JP conference who will be the next sustaining generation of the world. We all have to learn the reality around us so that we can do better to approach the problem.

Concluding Remarks

The seventh UK-Japan Student Conference, 'Building the Future Together' was UK-JP's long-awaited return to a physical setting since the pandemic. The conference ran for 8 full days, concluding with our customary farewell dinner on the 28th of August. Throughout the conference, we engaged critically with challenges our societies face amidst an uncertain future, and more importantly, what solutions we can pursue to overcome these challenges.

Being able to return to a physical conference format was a truly rewarding experience. This was only possible thanks to the tireless efforts of previous committees that ensured our organisation survived the difficult pandemic circumstances, as well as this year's committee working to achieve a smooth transition back to a physical setting. We are greatly appreciative for the unfailing enthusiasm of our participants this year, who are certainly the heart and soul of our conference. We are humbled and grateful that they devoted a week of their summer to our conference, and we hope they found the conference both intellectually stimulating and personally meaningful.

We also extend a hearty thank you to our fantastic speakers for their kind support and for taking the time to engage us: Dr Misako Nukaga, Mr Ian Clarke, Dr Daniela Lai, Dr Mahnaz Arvaneh, Ms Pamela Afi Tettey, Dr Yuki Imoto, and Mr Dirk Hebecker. Their informative talks shaped the lively debate between participants throughout the conference. We believe their ideas will continue to inspire us long after this conference, be it in our professional careers, our academic studies, or in our everyday lives. We also wish to thank the Migration Museum in Lewisham for welcoming us to their exhibition for what proved a most educational field trip.

Above all, UK-JP would not be possible without our partners and sponsors: Benesse Corporation, Route H, Global Learning Center and Sojitz Foundation. We extend our deepest gratitude for their continuing support this year. We truly value the strong relationships with our sponsors that allow us to bring the youth of our two countries closer together through UK-JP.

Lastly, we would like to give special thanks to Nicole Doyle, Mizuho Ina, An Yokota, Sakura Doi, Yee Hang Chong, Yuka Iriguchi, Taisei Hirano, and Laura Melville for crafting this year's final report.

We hope to continue the tradition of seeing familiar faces in forthcoming conferences, and we urge you to join us for UK-JP 2023, on the theme of National Identity: Britishness and Japaneseness.



Appendix: Policy Brief Precisis

Group 1 (Anna Matthews, Riku Sato, Satomi Nakano and Yuka Iriguchi): Public policy for ethnic minorities in Japan: how to achieve a multi- beneficial work environment

This policy recommendation is aimed primarily at the Japanese government and secondarily at companies. We hope that the government will recognise that Japan is at a crucial juncture in its relationship with those from immigrant and ethnic minority backgrounds in light of projections that this population will greatly increase in the next few decades. It should lead the way in creating a welcoming environment for these residents and encourage or even compel, companies to do likewise.

Our recommendation focuses specifically on improving the rights and equality of such people in the workplace, where they are shown to be greatly disadvantaged. It is a broad policy which can be usefully divided into three main objectives in the realms of raising awareness through data collection, diversification of job recruitment, and providing a welcoming working environment for such workers. Firstly the government is expected to recognise the issue through improved data collection and to convey this to companies. This should then facilitate the adoption of more progressive recruitment techniques to diversify the workforce of companies, especially those of considerable size. This is also dependent on the cultivation of a comfortable working environment for those from minority backgrounds, that is considerate of their individual/ cultural needs, supports their wellbeing, and gives them the opportunity to succeed professionally. Looking to the future, it is essential that the government is active in maintaining the momentum of the policy so that improvements are made for years to come and do not falter shortly after inception as has been the case for such schemes in the UK.

**Group 2 (Angelica Marcelo, Momoko Nakamura, Natsuki Kashiwabara and Hiromi Egusa): Language & Cultural Programme in Japanese Public Schools
~Providing Japanese Language support to children of immigrants and promoting cultural understanding amongst all students~**

This policy brief believes that the concept of mutuality in enhancing diversity and inclusion programs to be the core for the flourishing of multicultural education in Japan. The concept of diversity and inclusion should not limit itself to the culture of English speaking countries, but should be altered to fit the reality in which the majority of foreign residents in Japan come mostly from East and Southeast Asian countries.

Methodology includes: (1) Enhancing active participation in afterschool language support classes (volunteering), (2) Certificate system integrated with active volunteering in language support classes and (3) Diversity and inclusion curriculum being the core of Japanese language support system which includes (a) Cultural events; (b) Reading literature from different parts of the world; (c) Trying different foods from other cultures; (d) General meet-ups of students from different/same backgrounds.

**Group 3 (Ayda Ogura, Yutaro Wada, Hoi Ching (Tillie) Lam and Ema Uno):
Rectification in English as Foreign Language (EFL) education policies of Japan to establish Japan as an immigrant-friendly country**

With the renewal of foreign workers policy in 2018, this policy recommendation is for the Japanese government, especially for the Ministry of Education, to rectify the existing English as Foreign Language (EFL) education policy in Japan in order to make the country more immigrant friendly. The policy recommendation aims to (1) eliminate the language barrier for the incoming immigrants by improving the English proficiency of Japanese, and (2) change the mindset of Japanese people so that they will be more receptive to foreigners. To improve the English proficiency of Japanese, the first measure is to increase the amount of time for discussion and debate in English classes and to provide English-only time in classes. This could be done by outlining clear guidelines and financially supporting schools to create an environment where students are forced to speak English, including partnering with schools overseas and implementing online English conversation services. Also, early introduction of EFL education in Japanese schools should be considered. (Continues to the next page)

Besides, inviting native English speakers from abroad as English teachers, instead as a teaching assistant, would be significantly beneficial to the EFL education of Japanese pupils. Moreover, to change the mindset of Japanese people so that they will be more receptive to foreigners, our new policy incorporates provisions to increase students' exposure to different cultures. Compared to other countries, although there are fewer foreigners in Japan, visiting refugee camps and U.S. military bases allows students to learn about different cultures when recognizing the importance of English as a worldwide lingua franca. Also, supporting Japanese who wish to study abroad with sufficient government financial aid will encourage students to take the initiative in learning English. As a supplement, free or financially aided Japanese language classes can also be offered to immigrants, allowing more opportunities for them to integrate into Japan. Language and cultural barriers are often the most significant obstacles for immigrants in adapting to their new home. We hope the above measures would alleviate such barriers.

Group 4 (Takaya Inoue, Laura Melville, Taisei Hirano and Miku Matsubara): Integration through Education programme for Asylum Seekers

This policy mainly focuses on educating asylum seekers in the UK. We suggest the new policy to the British government introducing an integration programme which involves English language education and English culture and life education. We name our policy “integration through education programme”. This policy aims to educate asylum seekers who are waiting for refugees to enable asylum seekers to live in the UK easily. The biggest issue of implementing policies is the source of income. Public voluntary contributions and a company scheme help to solve the potential financial problems. We recommend that the UK government can partially fund the programme through public engagement. This gathering money method for the integration programme should be straightforward and made widely known so that the programme can be widely publicized. Companies get the opportunity to invest in the integration programme through this scheme. Participating companies have the merits to hire new employees from the integration programme once they have been granted refugee status. We hope to achieve asylum seekers engaging in work that pays enough to earn a standard of living. In addition to succeeding in our first goal, we hope asylum seekers are able to become one of the workforce and contribute to the British economy.

Conference Details

Organiser List

Name	Educational Institution	Subject
Nicole Doyle	University of Oxford	MA Japanese Studies
An Yokota	King's College London	BSc History and Political Economy
David Watson	Aston University	BA International Business, French and Spanish
Mizuho Ina	Nanzan University	BA American and English Studies
Sakura Doi	Keio University	BA Literature
YeeHang Chong	Nagoya University	MA International Development
Yume Araki	Sophia University	BA International Legal Studies

Participants List

Name	Educational Institution	Subject
Anna Matthews	University of Cambridge	BA Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (Japanese)
Angelica Marcelo	University of Glasgow	BA Philosophy
Hiromi Egusa	SOAS University of London	BA Politics and International Relations
Laura Melville	SOAS University of London	BA Korean
Tillie Hoi Ching Lam	University of Sussex	BA English Literature
Ayda Ogura	Sophia University	BA Liberal Arts
Taisei Hirano	International Christian University	BA Liberal Arts
Momoko Nakamura	University of Yamanashi	BSc Medical Science
Natsuki Kashiwabara	Keio University	BA Law and Politics
Riku Sato	Akita International University	BA Global Business
Satomi Nakano	Sophia University	BSc Economics
Takaya Inoue	Soka University	BSc Computer Science
Yuka Iriguchi	International Christian University	BA Liberal Arts
Yutaro Wada	Akita International University	BA International Liberal Arts
Ema Uno	Keio University	BA Law and Politics
Miku Matsubara	Sophia University	BA International Business and Economics
Pamela Afi Tettey	University of Hiroshima	PhD Bioresource Science
Shunichi Masaoka	Keio University	BA Law
Shafi Abdullah Imam	Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University	BA International Relations & Peace Studies



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