

# UKPLUS OSAKA NEWSLETTER

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## Cambridge Display

By now all UKPLUS Osaka students should have been introduced to the Cambridge Display on the noticeboard between the Green and Yellow Rooms. If you haven't seen the display, please ask your teacher or a member of the office staff to show you and explain the main points to you.

## Cambridge Exams

UKPLUS Osaka is a Cambridge Exam and Exam Preparation Centre. We regularly run Cambridge Exams in the school from Young Learner (YL) Starters exams to adult CAE tests.

Cambridge Exams are well known around the world and have now been chosen by the Japanese Ministry of Education as one of the four-skills exams to be used for university entrance exams in the changes leading up to 2020.

## Cambridge @ UKPLUS

From this summer, UKPLUS Osaka will start to use Cambridge Mock Tests as part of our continuous assessment of our learners. Every student in the school in General English (GE) classes will take a Cambridge Exam when they come to the end of their course book. The test will be free and will not count as your paid lesson time.

Taking these exams will allow our students to better monitor (check) their own English progress and, we believe, will be extremely motivating.

The tests will be an opportunity for you to show your teacher how much English you have learned.

Who knows, maybe you will want to take a real test soon!

Make sure you check out the noticeboard next time you are in the school!

## Social Events: attend and make friends



All of us at UKPLUS Osaka have always believed in the importance of social events for building a stronger community in our school. We believe that by building a more friendly and relaxed atmosphere, students may feel more confident to communicate in and out of the classroom.

Our two most recent events were a Hanami picnic at Osaka-jo Kouen on April 1st and a Sunday Roast in Tennoji on April 29th. Both were well-attended and a great opportunity to make friends and use English. Don't forget also that you can receive extra loyalty points for attending social events ... see you at the next one? Keep your eyes on the noticeboard!

## Hello sailor!

**Sayaka tells us about why she was absent from school for 6 weeks earlier this year.**

Earlier this year I joined a six-week programme called Ship for World Youth-leaders (SWY) or 「世界青年の船」 in Japanese.

It is hard for me to describe this fantastic programme in such a short text, but overall it was an incredibly diverse experience.

The programme has been organised by an official Japanese government department for over 30 years. Twelve participants from 10 different countries plus 120 young Japanese people aged between 18 and 30 take part and live together for one month on a ship.

It was almost like a floating school. We had many seminars about leadership and project management, for example. Additionally, participants could also organise seminars and other activities themselves to take place on the ship.

This programme mainly focuses on developing participants' understanding of other cultures and learning various management skills to help people become better able to lead other people locally and globally.

I chose the diversity course and in India and Sri Lanka met university students and discussed the topics related to my chosen course.

I was inspired by various aspects of these discussions such as how others see the same things differently. The best part of this programme for me was not only developing my understanding of other cultures but also understanding more about myself.

This experience made stronger my belief that education is my passion.

I think that it is sad that not many Japanese people are aware of this great programme and miss out on the great opportunity I had - to meet new friends from all over the world and develop a deeper understanding of oneself.





## Golden Week holidays

Like many of you, and Japanese people in general, UKPLUS teachers enjoy getting away for a break and Golden Week is a good opportunity to do so as the school is closed for a week.

Can you match the teachers with their Golden Week activities? There is one false story.

Tony B / Tom / Mark / Dean / Tony W / Ken / David

Who ....

- explored Shikoku?
- visited family in Kyushu?
- camped by the sea in West Shimane?
- rented a car and drove to Tokyo?
- rented an AirBnB apartment in Okinawa?
- went hiking with family members?
- watched a Nishinomiya Storks game?
- went island hopping between Shikoku and Kyushu?

Note: we are not going to tell you the answers here. If you would like to know, have a conversation with the teachers and ask them

Tell your teacher what you did, too.

Or, even better, enter our

## GW holiday writing /photo competition

Write 100 words and - together with a photo illustrating your holiday activities - submit them to your teacher or staff before Sunday May 27th. We will display all entries in the school.

We will then judge which photo/text combination best communicates the writer's GW activities.

Don't worry if you didn't do anything special ... you might win by writing about lying on the sofa watching TV. The goal is not about what you actually did but communicating that in writing, with a photo to support and illustrate your writing. You have more chance of winning if you make us laugh, or cry!!

So, get started!!

## Working abroad, you need IELTS

Mark tells us about his recent work-related trip to Seoul

In mid-April I travelled to Seoul for a weekend of training for my IELTS exam work. I didn't have much time for sightseeing, only Monday morning, but it was still an enjoyable experience, especially as it was the first time I had been to South Korea. Both of my daughters are fans of K-Pop, particularly a boy-band called BTS, and I think they were quite jealous that they couldn't come too.



I stayed in Seodaemun, an area in the north-west of Seoul. This area has several universities, embassies and museums, and some small mountains rise up sharply just outside the city. I had a good view of these mountains from my room on the sixteenth floor of a pleasant, modern hotel called The Shilla Stay Seodaemun.

After our training on Saturday there was a 'team dinner' for the thirteen trainees and our trainer. This was a traditional Korean meal, which of course included Kimchi and other kinds of pickled vegetable dishes. We also had a Korean hot pot (nabe) containing fish heads and a very tasty beef dish which was like a thin, flat beef burger. Sunday night was also Korean food, this time in a local restaurant where they spoke no English, so we had to communicate mainly by gesture.

My daughters were pleased to see me when I got home on Monday, but even happier to see the Korean cosmetics and other things I had bought for them.

## Staff News

### Farewell, Tom

After almost 6 years working with us, Tom has decided not to renew his teaching contract at UKPLUS. He wants to move on in order to spend more time on his Masters study and also wants to get some experience teaching in other working environments such as universities and big companies.



In his time with us, Tom has always been a popular teacher and has developed his teaching skills by studying for, and passing, a Cambridge Delta and more recently moving into teacher training and Cambridge examining.

We wish him all the best for his future and we hope that Tom might be available to teach some classes at UKPLUS again in the future.

Tom's last contracted teaching day in the school will be Friday June 29th.

### Farewell, Ami

After a successful internship between November 2016 and November 2017, we were happy for Ami to continue working at UKPLUS as a member of our customer service team. We always knew that this was a temporary situation and that she would be leaving us this summer to go to France for her study abroad experience.

Ami has now confirmed that her last working day will be in the week before the O-bon break. If you have any advice on how to best learn French before she goes to France, or would like to tell her about any of your own experiences of living / studying / working in France, please talk to her when you see her in the school. We are sure she will be very keen to learn from you.

As with Tom, Ami has become a popular member of the team and we will miss her. But we wish her all the best and, who knows, maybe she will come back to work for us next year when she returns.

### Hello, Akari

As a result of the success of our last internship with Ami, we decided to offer another one starting this summer. And the lucky candidate is Akari, who was also a participant in the ship programme which Sayaka took part in earlier this year. Akari impressed us with her enthusiasm to work in a British English language school and she will hopefully start on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Please make her welcome and give her some time to settle in to UKPLUS life. She will also be taking GE lessons from May and, we hope, attending social events, so you should have an opportunity to meet her soon.