

Department of Astronomical Science, School of Physical Sciences
The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI
Doctoral Program 2021
Special Admissions for Applicants Residing Abroad
(Privately Financed International Students)

Depending on the circumstances such as further spread of COVID-19, the application procedures, selection schedule, selection method, and other details may change. Please note that information related to the entrance examination will be posted on the SOKENDAI website. Please carefully check the following website during the period before the application and examination, in order not to miss important notices.
<https://www.soken.ac.jp/news/6623/>

1. General Prospectus

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI was founded on October 1, 1988 as one of the national universities of Japan. The basic idea of SOKENDAI is to develop a new system of postgraduate education in Japan. Its key features are as follows;

- 1) SOKENDAI offers both three-year and five-year doctoral programs.
- 2) SOKENDAI consists of six schools with 20 departments operated by 17 Inter-University Research Institutes and Independent Administrative Institutions (“parent institutions”).
- 3) Research and education are carried out in close cooperation with the parent institutions.
- 4) Broad and international visions are fostered by enhanced interchange among all departments and other universities in Japan and abroad.

The parent institutions provide Japanese and foreign scientists with opportunities to conduct advanced joint research in various branches of science. They are equipped with extensive research facilities and function as centers for advanced studies. At present, they are cooperating in establishing a world-class program of postgraduate education in SOKENDAI.

2. Department Outline

The Department of Astronomical Science, School of Physical Sciences, SOKENDAI, is a graduate school based at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, a member institute of the National Institutes of Natural Sciences. The goal of the department is to train researchers capable of doing cutting-edge research, to train specialists capable of developing advanced

technologies, and develop human resources with the highly - specialized knowledge needed to work in the scientific field. To this end, graduate students conduct observational and theoretical research and research on the development of new instruments related to astronomical science in an environment equipped with state-of-the-art observational instruments and supercomputers.

Webpage: <http://www.guas-astronomy.jp/eng/Intro/outline.html>

3. Doctor's Degree Requirements

Doctor of Philosophy shall be conferred to students who have satisfied the requirements of their respective program as prescribed below.

[Three-year doctoral program]

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least three years; additionally, they must earn the necessary credits, receive necessary research guidance, and pass the examination for a doctoral thesis. Students who are recognized as having achieved significant progress may be able to graduate in a shorter time frame.

[Five-year doctoral program]

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least five years; additionally, they must earn the necessary credits, receive necessary research guidance, and pass the examination for a doctoral thesis. Students who are recognized as having achieved significant progress may be able to graduate in a shorter time frame.

4. Programs and Number of Students Accepted

Program	Number of Students Accepted	
	begin in April 2021	begin in October 2021
Three-year doctoral program	A few students	A few students
Five-year doctoral program	A few students	A few students

5. Qualifications for Application

[Qualifications for the three-year doctoral program]

Applicants must fulfill one of the following conditions;

- 1) Applicants on whom a Master's degree or a degree equivalent to a Professional degree has been conferred or is expected to be conferred in a foreign country by the preceding month of enrollment;
- 2) Applicants who hold or are expected to obtain a Master's degree or Professional degree by the preceding month of enrollment in Japan;

- 3) Applicants who have been recognized by SOKENDAI as having academic ability equivalent to, or superior to those who have a Master's degree or a Professional degree by the individual screening of Admission Qualifications of SOKENDAI, and attain the age of 24 by the end of preceding month of enrollment. (Note)

Notes:

*Applicants who intend to apply under the provision (3) above are required to have qualification screening to confirm "having academic ability equivalent to those who have a Master's degree or a Professional degree" before the application can be submitted. If applicable, please contact the Student Affairs Section by email in advance.

* The qualifications concern not the date of completion of the master's course of study, but the date of conferral of a master's or equivalent professional degree. Those who have completed or are expected to complete a master's course before the time of enrollment in the program, but are not expected to be granted a master's or professional degree by that time must take extra screening procedures before the application.

*Other than the qualifications above (Qualification 1 to 3), eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy qualification requirements for admission to SOKENDAI. If you have any questions regarding the qualification for admission, please contact the Student Affairs Section in advance.

[Qualifications for the five-year doctoral program]

Applicants must fulfill one of the following conditions;

- 1) Applicants who have completed or are expected to complete a 16-year course of school education in a foreign country by the preceding month of enrollment;
- 2) Applicants who have graduated or are expected to graduate from a Japanese university specified in Article 83 of the School Education Law by the preceding month of enrollment;
- 3) Applicants who have been conferred or are expected to be conferred a degree equivalent to a Bachelor's degree by the preceding month of enrollment by completing an educational course of three or more years in a foreign university or in a foreign educational institute;
- 4) Applicants who have completed a 15-year course of school education in a foreign country by the end of preceding month of enrollment; (Note)
- 5) Applicants who have been recognized as having academic ability equivalent to a university graduate or higher by the individual screening of Admission Qualifications of SOKENDAI, and attain the age of 22 by the end of preceding month of enrollment. (Note)

Notes:

Applicants who intend to apply under the provisions (4) or (5) are required to have qualification screening before the application can be submitted. If applicable, please contact the Student Affairs Section by email in advance.

*Other than the qualifications above (Qualification 1 to 5), eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy qualification requirements for admission to SOKENDAI. If you have any questions regarding the qualification for admission, please contact the Student Affairs Section in advance.

6. Required Condition and Notes

Applicants are expected to satisfy each of the following conditions.

- 1) Applicants must be foreign nationals currently residing overseas.
- 2) Arrival in Japan: Applicants have to be able to arrive in Japan in time for the semester that begins in either April, 2021 or that begins in October, 2021.
- 3) Health: Applicants must be physically and mentally healthy enough to take graduate studies at a university in Japan.
- 4) Language Ability: Applicants who have a good command of English.
- 5) Security Export Control: Depending on the specifics of the education and research instructions they wish to receive upon entering the program, applicants may be subject to regulations on the export/transfer of controlled technologies based on the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law. Please consult the Student Affairs Section of SOKENDAI for further details.

7. Application Procedure

[Application Period]

From October 12, 2020 to November 11, 2020*

*The application must arrive no later than the last day of the application period without fail.

[Application Method]

Please contact a faculty member of the department whom you would like to study under in advance. The complete set of application documents must be submitted **by registered express mail or a similar service.**

The application must reach SOKENDAI no later than the last day of the application period.

Mailing address;

Student Affairs Section, Division of Academic and Student Affairs

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies (SOKENDAI)
Shonan Village, Hayama, Miura, Kanagawa 240-0193 JAPAN
Telephone number +81-46-858-1526

8. Application Documents

Please read "Application checklist" on our website.

1) Application Form (Attached)

Please attach a photograph (sized 4.5cm × 3.5 cm taken within the past six months, upper body, full-faced with no hat) on Application Form. Your signature is required on Application Form.

2) Examination fee: 30,000 yen

For payment details, please refer to "Instructions on how to make a payment" on our website.

3) Certified academic records (originals or certified copies)

The applicant must submit certified academic records of each academic year of all universities attended (issued by the university attended.)

- The applicant who applies for the three-year doctoral program must submit the official transcripts from both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- The applicant who applies for the five-year doctoral program must submit the official transcript from the undergraduate school.

4) Certificate of Graduation or Expected Graduation (originals or certified copies)

- The applicant who applies for the three-year doctoral program must submit the certificate of graduation for both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- The applicant who applies for the five-year doctoral program must submit the certificate of graduation for the undergraduate school.
- The applicant who has not yet graduated from a university must submit an attested document certifying the applicant will graduate from the university before entering the doctoral program.

5) Certified copy of degree diploma

Applicants who have yet graduated from a university must submit a certified copy of degree diploma as follows:

- The applicant who applies for the three-year doctoral program must submit a certified copy of his / her bachelor's degree diploma and his / her master's degree diploma.
- The applicants who applies for the five-year doctoral program must submit a certified copy of his / her bachelor's degree diploma.

6) Recommendation letter from a person who knows the applicant's research / academic activities well (e.g., the applicant's academic supervisor at the university in which the

applicant is currently enrolled or the university which the applicant previously attended.)
addressed to the President of SOKENDAI. (original, free format)

- 7) Your past research work and activities (if applicable)
- 8) Summary of your graduation thesis
If applicant has no thesis or publications, please submit a summary of his/her current research project.
- 9) Field of study and Research Plan (Attached)
- 10) Photocopy of applicant's passport pages showing applicant's name, date of birth, nationality, gender, photograph, and passport number

11) English score record

- This is to indicate the applicant's language skill (TOEFL iBT or IELTS are accepted). Only the score recorded within two years before the application deadline date is acceptable. The institutional code for TOEFL iBT of SOKENDAI is 7564. The score record should arrive at SOKENDAI on or before the application deadline.

* If the relevant document will not be available before the submission due date, the applicant can (1) send a screenshot of online score report or a copy of term reports to the Graduate Student Affairs Section in NAOJ (daigakuin@nao.ac.jp) by e-mail, on or before November 25, 2020 and (2) arrange the official records to be sent to SOKENDAI.

- The applicants who have taken more than half of their high school classes in English do not need to submit English score record regardless of their nationality or the place they were born. The applicants have to ask the Graduate Education Support Office in NAOJ (daigakuin@nao.ac.jp) in advance of application and ensure that they are eligible to skip submitting English score record.

12) GRE Subject Test (Physics) Score Report (five-year doctoral program only)

- Note that the minimum GRE Subject Test (Physics) score in the paper screening is 700.
- If the official score report will not be available before the submission due date, the applicant can (1) include a copy of registration confirmation e-mail from ETS to the application documents, (2) send a screenshot of online GRE Subject Test (Physics) Score Report to the Graduate Student Affairs Section in NAOJ (daigakuin@nao.ac.jp) by e-mail, on or before November 25 2020 and (3) arrange the official records to be sent to SOKENDAI.

Notes:

- Application documents must be prepared in Japanese or English. If the documents are prepared in languages other than Japanese or English, the official English translation must be attached.
- The application documents above must be prepared using word-processing software. Print all the required documents on A4 size paper (if possible).
- SOKENDAI cannot respond to inquiries regarding the receipt of individual application documents. The applicant is responsible for tracking and receipt of all materials. SOKENDAI strongly recommends that applicants send the documents by registered mail, courier service or a similar service that provide tracking numbers and receipt verification services.
- SOKENDAI will not return the submitted documents nor provide photocopies of the submitted documents under any circumstances. Please keep a copy of all documents for personal reference. In the case that a document is not re-issuable, please submit an attested (notarized) copy instead.
- Your admission may be rescinded at any time even after enrollment if the application documents are found to be invalid or contain false information.

9. Selection Schedule and Method

We will carry out the selection by two steps. The first step is paper screening and the second step is interview. Only the applicants who passed the paper screening can proceed to the interview.

[Five-year doctoral program]

(1) Paper screening

We will review English score record (TOEFL iBT or IELTS), GRE Subject Test (Physics) Score Record and other application forms carefully and decide whether the applicant can proceed to the interview or not. We will notify the result of the paper screening to the applicants via e-mail by two weeks before the interview day.

(2) Interview

We will ask applicants of their past study, research plans and other general matters. The interview will be held on December 11, 2020.

[Three-year doctoral program]

(1) Paper screening

We will review English score record (TOEFL iBT, or IELTS) and other application forms carefully

and decide whether the applicant can proceed to the interview or not. We will notify the result of the paper screening to the applicants via e-mail by two weeks before the interview day.

(2) Interview

Applicants are asked to have a presentation on their past study first. PC projector can be provided for the presentation. Then an oral examination follows. At the oral examination, applicants are provided with a text about basic physics and astronomy in English and to answer questions based on it. Following that, interview is carried out to review the applicant's research plans and other general matters. The interview will be held on December 11, 2020.

10. Announcement of Result

Result will be mailed to all applicants no later than January 31, 2021.

11. Admission Procedures

(1) The period of admission procedures is scheduled as below:

The middle of March 2021 for the enrollment of April 2021

Late September 2021 for the enrollment of October 2021

Successful applicants must complete admission procedures during the prescribed period.

Further details will be notified to successful applicants separately.

(2) Fees required for admission are as follows.

Entrance Fee: JPY 282,000

Tuition Fee for six months: JPY 267,900

*If the entrance or tuition fees are revised at the time of or during enrollment, the revised fees shall be applied from the date of revision.

12. Student Visa

Each candidate who is selected as a privately financed student must apply for a student visa in person at the nearest Japanese consulate to enter Japan after receiving the Certificate of Eligibility which will be mailed from SOKENDAI.

13. Contact details for inquiries

Student Affairs Section, Division of Academic and Student Affairs

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI

E-mail: gakusei@ml.soken.ac.jp