

Graduate Institute for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI
[Physiological Sciences Program]
Doctoral Program 2026
Special Admissions for Applicants Residing Abroad
(Privately Financed International Students)

1. General Prospectus

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

- 1) SOKENDAI offers both three-year and five-year doctoral programs.
- 2) SOKENDAI consists of 20 programs under one institute operated by 20 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 between various institutions and universities in Japan and abroad.

The parent institutions provide Japanese and foreign scientists with opportunities to conduct advanced joint research in various scientific branches. They are equipped with extensive research facilities and function as centers for advanced studies. Presently, they cooperate to establish a world-class program for postgraduate education at SOKENDAI.

[Admission Policy]

<What SOKENDAI expects of our grad students>

SOKENDAI tends to attract students who have a strong interest in research, who constantly hone their abundant intellect and sensitivity with the aim of conducting research in the new era, while taking a “bird's-eye view” of the entire field of study, and who have the will and enthusiasm to be active on the international stage.

<Basic policy for the selection of our grad students>

In selecting students for admission, SOKENDAI places importance on basic academic ability and logical thinking ability to actively promote research in the 20 cutting-edge research institutes affiliated with SOKENDAI. In order to properly judge such abilities, various selections will be made according to the respective fields of specialization.

2. Physiological Sciences Program Outline

The Physiological Sciences program provides education and research guidance to comprehensively clarify the mechanisms of body functions, from the molecular-cellular level, which is the basic structure of living organisms, to the whole-body level, which is composed of systems. We train researchers to be active participants in the fields of medicine and life sciences, with a focus on physiology and neuroscience.

3. Doctoral Degree Requirements

A Doctor of Philosophy degree shall be conferred on students who have satisfied the requirements of their respective doctoral programs, as prescribed below:

[Three-year doctoral program]

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least three years, earn the necessary credits, receive the 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 timeframe.

[Five-year doctoral program]

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least five years, earn the necessary credits, receive the 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 timeframe.

4. Doctoral Programs and Number of Students Accepted

Doctoral Programs	Number of Students Accepted	
	April 2026	October 2026
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) Master's degree or a degree equivalent to a Professional degree has been conferred or is expected to be conferred by the month preceding enrollment;
- 2) 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 the Admission Qualifications of SOKENDAI and have attained an age of 24 years by the end of the month preceding enrollment.

Notes:

*The qualifications do not concern the date of completion of the master's course of study, but the date of conferral of a master's or equivalent professional degree.

*Applicants who intend to apply under the above provision 2) are required to have a 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.

Additionally, those who have completed or are expected to complete a master's course before the enrollment in the doctoral program but are not expected to be granted a master's or professional degree by that time must undergo extra screening procedures before applying. If applicable, please contact the Student Affairs Section via email before the application period.

*Besides the above qualifications (Qualifications 1) and 2)), eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy the qualification requirements for general admission to SOKENDAI. If you have any questions regarding the qualifications 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) Have completed or are expected to complete a 16-year course of school education in a foreign country by the month preceding enrollment;
- 2) Have graduated or are expected to graduate from a Japanese university as specified in Article 83 of the School Education Law by the month preceding enrollment;
- 3) Have been conferred or are expected to be conferred a degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree by the month preceding enrollment by completing an educational course of three or more years at a foreign university or in a foreign educational institute;
- 4) Have completed a 15-year course of school education in a foreign country by the end of the month preceding enrollment.
- 5) Have been recognized as having academic ability equivalent to a university graduate or higher by the individual screening of Admission Qualifications of SOKENDAI, and have attained an age of 22 years by the end of the month preceding enrollment.

Notes:

Applicants who intend to apply under Provisions 4) or 5) are required to undergo qualification

screening before the application can be submitted. If applicable, please contact the Student Affairs Section via email before the application period.

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

6. Required Conditions and Notes

Applicants are expected to satisfy each of the following conditions.

- 1) Are foreign nationals currently residing overseas.
- 2) Arrival in Japan: Are able to arrive in Japan in time for the semester that begins in April 2026 or October 2026.
- 3) Health: Are physically and mentally healthy enough to complete graduate studies at a university in Japan.
- 4) Language Ability: Have a good command of English or Japanese.
- 5) The applicants are required to have obtained the following score(s) by the time of application. The original copy of score sheet must be submitted by the deadline (first round: Friday, August 1, 2025, second round: Tuesday, January 13, 2026). (Electric submission of the score sheet via email will not be accepted.)
 - TOEFL PBT: 550 or higher
 - TOEFL iBT: 80 or higher
 - TOEIC: 730 or higher
 - IELTS: 6.0 or higher

* Applicants whose native language is English and who have graduated or are expected to graduate from universities through classes and instruction in English may be exempted from submitting the English test score.
- 6) Security Export Control: Depending on the specifics of the education and research instructions they wish to receive upon entering the doctoral 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]

	First round	Second round
April 2025 admission	From Thursday, May 29 to Wednesday, June 25, 2025*	
October 2025 admission	From Thursday, May 29 to Wednesday, June 25, 2025*	From Thursday, November 6 to Wednesday, December 3, 2025*

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

[Contact the prospective supervisor]

Before applying, the applicant must contact the prospective supervisor and confirm whether they can accept the applicant if the applicant passes the examination.

[Application Method]

The applicant must submit a complete set of application documents either by mail or email. For details, please confirm the following points 1) and 2). The application must reach SOKENDAI no later than the application deadline.

1) Mail

The complete set of application documents must be submitted by registered express mail or a similar service. If there are any problems with the submitted documents, SOKENDAI will contact the applicant via email.

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

2) Email

The complete set of application documents must be submitted via email. If the attached files contain more than 10 megabytes, please send them separately, and number each email subject. Additionally, when sending files, please attach them to your email directly without using uploaders.

After receiving the applicant's email, SOKENDAI will send the applicant a confirmation email. If the applicant does not receive our email within a week of submitting the documents, please contact us.

Email address; gakusei@ml.soken.ac.jp (Student Affairs Section, SOKENDAI)

Notes: If the applicant is accepted for enrollment, the applicant must submit the original official transcript and certification of graduation.

8. Application Documents

Please read "Application checklist" on our website.

1) Application Form (Attached)

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

- Applicants applying for the three-year doctoral program must submit the Official Transcripts of each academic year from both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- Applicants applying for the five-year doctoral program must submit the Official Transcripts of each academic year from their undergraduate school.

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

- Applicants applying for the three-year doctoral program must submit Certificates of Graduation for both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- Applicants applying for the five-year doctoral program must submit a Certificate of Graduation for undergraduate school.
- Applicants who have not yet graduated from a university must submit an attested document certifying that the applicant will graduate before entering the doctoral program.

5) Certified copy of degree diploma

Applicants who have already graduated from a university must submit certified copies of degree diplomas, as follows:

- Applicants applying for the three-year doctoral program must submit certified copies of their bachelor's and master's degree diplomas.
- Applicants applying for the five-year doctoral program must submit a certified copy of their 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 that 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 the applicant has no theses or publications, please submit a summary of their current research project.
- 9) Field of Study and Research Plan (Attached)
- 10) Photocopy of the applicant's passport pages showing the applicant's name, date of birth, nationality, gender, photograph, and passport number.
- 11) Qualifications that prove the applicant's language skill such as TOEFL, TOEIC and IELTS score sheet and specific knowledge of their field (if any). Applicants are required to submit the original copy of score sheet at the time of application. If it is impossible for you to obtain the score record by the application period, you must submit the score record by the deadline (first round: Friday, August 1, 2025, second round: Tuesday, January 13, 2026). (Electric submission of the score sheet via email will not be accepted.)
* Applicants whose native language is English and who have graduated or are expected to graduate from universities through classes and instruction in English may be exempted from submitting the English test score.

Notes:

- The application documents must be prepared in Japanese or English. If the documents are prepared in languages other than Japanese or English, an official English translation must be included.
- The application documents mentioned above must be prepared using word processing software. Print all the required documents on A4 size paper (if possible).
- 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

<Schedule>

	First round	Second round
April 2026 admission	Monday, August 18 to Tuesday, August 19, 2025	
October 2026 admission	Monday, August 18 to Tuesday, August 19, 2025	Tuesday, January 20 to Wednesday, January 21, 2026

<Method>

Three-year doctoral program:

Document screening and Interview will be conducted.

(a) Document screening: Screening will be conducted regarding the content of each applicant's transcript and associated materials.

(b) Interview: A 30 minutes interview will be conducted, mainly regarding the research performed by the applicants to date and the content of their anticipated future research. *The interview will be conducted through the Internet.

Important notes for the interview:

- An interview will last up to 30 minutes.
- The interview will be conducted remotely via Zoom web.
- For 15 minutes, the applicants will explain the content of previous research (or, for applicants with no previous research experience, the content of their program(s) of study), reason for applying, and research ambitions. The applicants will use their own computer and software such as PowerPoint for the presentation. Note that the applicants will not be allowed to use devices other than their own computer or to distribute supplemental materials for presentations.
- In the remaining 15 minutes, the committee members will ask questions about the content of the applicants' submitted documents and of their presentation.

Other notes:

- The applicant can take the examination at home or in some other place as long as the space is isolated, and the contents of the examination are not leaked to a third party.
- The examiner record during the examination, and video recording will not be used for any purpose other than the examination.
- The applicant and examiner will make a Zoom test on the day before the examination.

Five-year doctoral program:

Document screening, written examination (i.e., short essay), and interview will be conducted.

Important notes for the written examination:

- The written examination (essay) will last up to 90 minutes.
- The written examination will be conducted remotely via Zoom web and email. The applicant will receive a password-locked question sheet file and an answer sheet file by email by the day before the examination. The applicant will receive the password for the sheets by email or Zoom when

the examination starts.

- At the end of written examination, the answer sheets must be submitted via email immediately. Failure to submit the answer sheets within 20 minutes after the end of the examination will, in principle, result in disqualification.

Important notes for the interview:

- The interview will last up to 20 minutes.
- For 10 minutes, the applicants will explain the content of previous research (or, for applicants with no previous research experience, the content of their program(s) of study), reason for applying, and research ambitions. The applicants will use their own computer and software such as PowerPoint for the presentation. Note that the applicants will not be allowed to use devices other than their own computer or to distribute supplemental materials for presentations.
- In the remaining time, the committee members will ask questions about the content of the applicants' submitted documents and of their presentation.

Other notes:

- The applicant can take the examination at home or in some other place as long as the space is isolated, and the contents of the examination are not leaked to a third party.
- The examiner record during the examination, and video recording will not be used for any purpose other than the examination.
- The applicant and examiner will make a Zoom test on the day before the examination.

For details, please contact the Physiological Sciences Program.

10. Announcement of Result

First round: The result will be mailed to all applicants in September, 2025 by email

Second round: The result will be mailed to all applicants in February, 2026 by email

11. Admission Procedures

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

The middle of March 2026 for the enrollment of April 2026

Late September 2026 for the enrollment of October 2026

Successful applicants must complete the admission procedures during the prescribed period.

Further details will be provided separately to successful applicants.

(2) Fees required for admission are as follows:

Entrance Fee: JPY 282,000

Tuition Fee for six months: JPY 267,900

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

12. Student Visa

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