

5. DAILY LIFE

1. Climate

Nagaoka city has distinctive change of four seasons. The weather is comfortable in spring and autumn. In summer, it gets quite hot and humid. In winter, it snows a lot.

2. Transportation

(1) Railway

JR (Japan Railway) East operates train lines in Nagaoka area. Express tickets and reservation tickets are sold 1 month prior to the traveling date.

JR offers 20% discount for regular students when traveling over 100 km one way, by presenting a **student discount certificate, *Gaku-wari-sho***, issued by NUT. You may issue one yourself using the certificate issuing machine located near the Academic Affairs or at the entrance of the library. This discount certificate is valid three months from the date of issue. However, this discount is limited to Regular Students only.

Never misuse the certificates. If you wrongly use the certificate, not only you will be punished but also the university may be prohibited from issuing discount certificates to the students.

*Inquiries can be made in English: JR East Infoline 050-2016-1603 (10:00-18:00 *Not available during the year-end and new year)

(2) Bus

Bus lines are operated by Echigo Kotsu Company Ltd. in Nagaoka. *Gidai-Mae* line and Nagaoka New-town line run about twice every hour from Nagaoka station to 'Gidai-Mae stop', which is in front of NUT. The ride is about 30 mins. You can also get off at 'Tomioka stop' of *Oguni* line and *Oyazawa* line, although you may have to walk about 10 minutes from the stop to the university. Two kinds of discount passes are available: Regular Students are eligible for a student pass, *Gaku-wari*, others are eligible for a commuter pass, *Tsukin-wari*. Coupon tickets, *Kaisu-ken*, may be cheaper than the commuter pass; depending on the frequency you ride a bus.

In addition, there are express buses from Nagaoka Station to Niigata, Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka.

* Please refrain from talking loudly in the train or bus.

3. Bicycle

When you buy a bicycle or are given one from your friend, you must complete an Ownership and Security Registration. Be sure to lock and chain your bicycle at all times.

Even if there is a bicycle on campus or store which seems abandoned, do NOT use it. You will be suspected of stealing and may be subjected to punishment.

◆ Ownership and Security Registration

Complete the Ownership and Security Registration at a bicycle retailer, DIY store, etc. where you bought your bicycle. **Necessary items:** the bicycle itself, fee (600 yen), the receipt or warranty slip and Residence Card or other IDs that proves your current address.

*Take a photo or save your registration number. You will need to present your registration number when your bicycle is stolen.

◆ Change of Ownership and Security Registration

When your friend, senior students or others, gives or sells you a bicycle, you must newly register it under your name. The previous owner's name must be deleted before you start riding it to prevent you from being suspected for a theft. **Necessary items** (additional to what are needed in above registration): a document that shows in fact you are the new owner (e.g. letter of property transfer, previous ownership's registration record, or even printed data of e-mails exchanged with the previous owner).

◆ Bicycle Parking Area on Campus

It is not necessary for students to register a bicycle to park on campus. However, students are only permitted to park a bicycle with ownership and security registration (Bohan-toroku) on campus.

◆ Bicycle Liability Insurance

Enrollment in a bicycle liability insurance is mandatory in Niigata Prefecture since October 2022. There have been cases of bicycle accidents in which the perpetrator has been required to pay nearly 100 million yen in damages. Bicycle riders are advised to purchase one of the following types of liability insurance in case of an accident.

For details: <https://www.pref.niigata.lg.jp/uploaded/attachment/385974.pdf>



◆ Comprehensive Insurance for Students Lives Coupled with "Gakkensai"

Comprehensive Insurance for Students Lives Coupled with "Gakkensai" (Inbound futai-gakuso) is optional for international students who are enrolled in "Gakkensai", which covers accidents during private activities. Especially, those who ride a bicycle are strongly recommended to purchase this insurance. Insurance applications are available in English.

English support is available in the event of accident.

◆ Wearing a helmet

From April 2023, people who ride bicycles must wear helmets. It is very important to protect your head by wearing a helmet to reduce the damage caused by bicycle accidents.

◆ Do not ride a bicycle in winter!

In Nagaoka, it snows every year from December to around March. When it snows, the roads become very slippery and the width of the car lanes narrows, making it extremely dangerous to ride a bicycle on snowy roads. Please do not ride a bicycle in winter.

◆ Disposal of a Bicycle

Nagaoka City collects bicycles that are no longer used. Call 0258-25-0053 and reserve a date for a collection truck to come to your house. You will be told how much it would cost for the disposal. It is usually about 200 yen. Make sure to purchase a Large-sized Trash Handling Ticket which worth the amount told, then leave the bicycle at your front door with the ticket pasted on it. See page 48 for details.

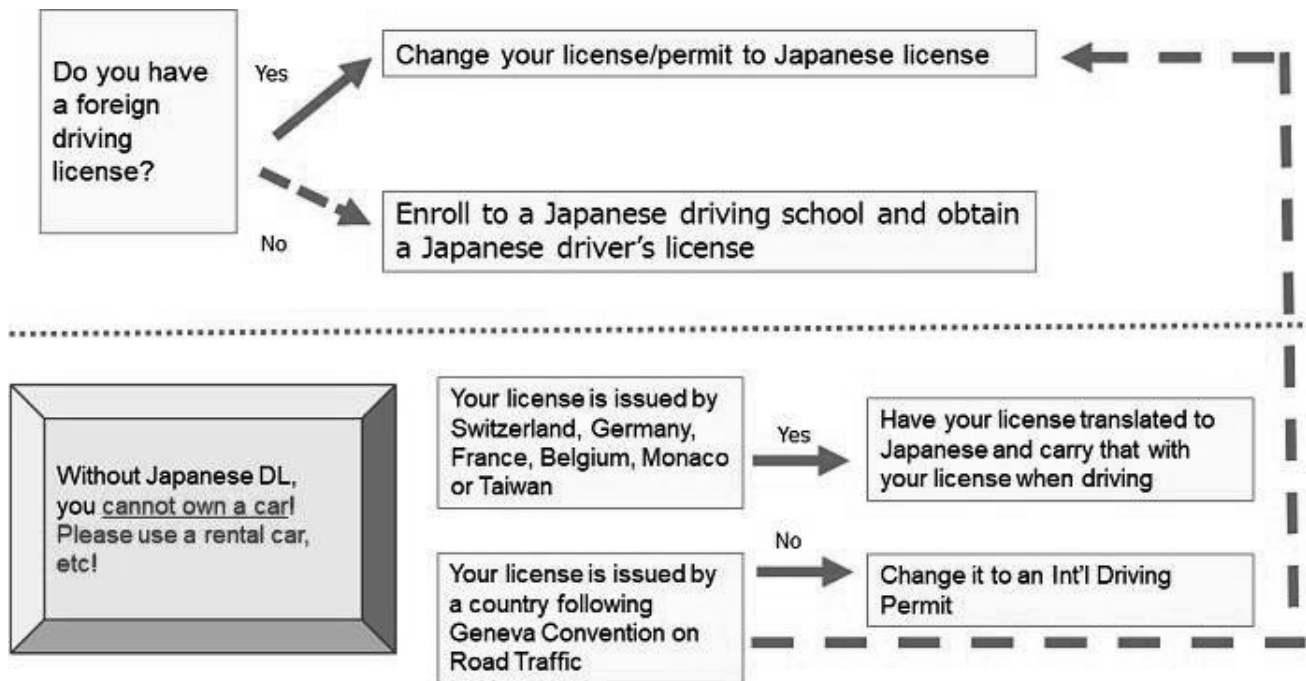
4. A Driver's License of a Car or Motorbike

Traffic accidents and rule violations by NUT students are drastically increasing in the recent years. A traffic accident seriously affects both a victim and offender mentally and financially. If you drive a vehicle in Japan, you must learn Japanese traffic rules and regulations. Please read the following thoroughly and drive safely.

■ For driving in Japan

- ◆ Must switch your foreign driver's license to Japanese license.
- ◆ Make sure to purchase a voluntary insurance required to be renewed annually.
- ◆ Register your car at NUT and have a parking permit.
- ◆ Please answer a questionnaire about a car sent to you annually by the Section of Int'l Student Affairs.

(1) Driver's License



Changing a Foreign Driver's License to a Japanese License

◆ Change Your License/Permit to Japanese License

All of the following conditions must be met.

- Have a valid foreign driver's license
- Have resided in the issuing country for more than 3 months after obtaining the above mentioned license. (must be verifiable with documentation, such as a passport)
- Have the legal status of residence (have a valid residence card)
- Be a registered resident in Niigata prefecture

◆ Steps to Switch a Foreign Driver's License to a Japanese One

1. Inquire about required documents (by phone). (Have your foreign license translated into Japanese by JAF.)
 2. Once you have all the documents, make an appointment to submit them (by phone).
 3. Bring the documents → Screening of documents
 4. Driver's License Center contacts you once the screening of documents have been completed.
 5. Make an appointment for tests to change the foreign license to a Japanese one.
 6. Take tests. Aptitude Test → Written Test (also in EN) → Driving Test
 7. A Japanese driver's license will be issued after passing all the tests.
- from 1 to 4 at Driver's License Center Niigata (in Seiro-machi), from 5 to 7 at Driver's License Center Nagaoka Branch

◆ **Necessary Documents**

Call Driver's License Center in Niigata beforehand to make an appointment and check all of the necessary documents. Walk-in is not accepted.

- If you are unable to communicate in Japanese, take a helper who can interpret for you.
- A valid foreign driver's license (Documents certifying the license acquisition date (first acquisition date))
 - Your Residence Card
 - Your passport and its copy. If you have more than one, bring all of them.
 - Certificate of Residence, *Jumin-hyo*, issued at the city office, w/ your nationality and w/o Individual Number (My Number)
 - A Japanese translation of your license issued by your embassy, consulate, or JAF*
 - Your photo (30mm high×24mm wide, no hat or cap, plain background, face front, chest-up)
 - Application fee
 - Since the driver's license is an IC card type, you will need two sets of 4-digits PINs. Please think about them in advance.

*JAF: Japan Automobile Federation...translation made at 4,000 yen per a license

◆ **Expiration Date**

After passing all examinations, you will receive a Japanese license. It is valid from the date of issue to 1 month after your 3rd birthday.

◆ **Contact Information**

Driver's License Center: 025-256-4040 (Seiro-machi, Kitakanbara)

Nagaoka Driver's Testing Center: 0258-22-1050 (Kami-maejima, Nagaoka)

Japanese translation of License: JAF Niigata Branch: 025-284-7664 (Shinko-cho 11-6, Niigata)

(2) **Car Insurance**

There are two types of car insurances.

◆ **Liability Insurance**

- Compulsory insurance
 - Primarily to protect third parties from injury by any vehicle in an accident
 - Required to be renewed at the timing of a compulsory automobile inspection every 2 years
- Not applicable for the following cases:

- Any repair or replacement for damage to the car itself (third parties and driver's own car)
- Driver's own injuries
- Exceeding the payment limit of the liability insurance even for personal injury accidents

◆ **Voluntary Insurance**

Make sure to purchase a voluntary insurance since a liability insurance alone is NOT enough to cover your accident.

- The amount of coverage should be unlimited for bodily injury and property damage.
Purchasing a voluntary insurance is required to register your car at NUT.
- Make sure to renew the voluntary insurance annually!
- **Bodily Injury Accidents**
 - Covers the where compulsory insurance only is not enough
- **Property Damage**
 - Compensatory damages
 - Driver's own injuries
 - Damages to the car itself

✧ If you are involved in a car accident, please immediately report to the Student Affairs, Student Affairs.

(3) Owning a Car or Motorbike

A **Garage Space Certificate, *Shako-Shomei***, is required when owning a car. For dormitory residents, you can get it from the Student Support, Student Affairs.

You must notify the officials a **change of vehicle ownership, *Meigi-Henko***. It is necessary to register the new owner's name. When you are no longer in need of a vehicle, **declaration of disuse of a vehicle, *Haisha-Tetsuzuki***, is required. Otherwise, you will have to pay for the car tax in the following years. ***You must also inform your insurance company to cancel your insurance. You may receive a refund of unearned premium. And please inform Int'l Student Affairs when you get your own car as soon as possible.**

◆ **Compulsory Automobile Inspection, Shaken**

Any car or motorbike over 250 cc is required to have a Compulsory Automobile Inspection, Shaken, every 2 years by law. For a new vehicle, Shaken is not needed for the first 3 years. It is a violation of the law to drive a car or motorbike without a Shaken certificate.

◆ **Change of Ownership**

When you purchase a car or transfer the ownership, you need to use your officially registered seal, *Jitsuin*. For details of seal registration, ask the Citizen's Affairs Division, *Shiminka*, at the Nagaoka City Office.

(4) Parking Permit on Campus

All the international students who own a car need to register your car.

Parking on the university campus requires parking registration.

Note) Residents of the student dormitories are not allowed to commute by car. Parking registration is required to use the parking lot (in front of the student dormitories) in the campus.

To register your vehicle, please read the QR code at the right and click 駐車登録申請 (学内専用ページへ) . Available in Japanese only. Afterwards, place the permit on the dashboard when you park your car on campus. To register your motorbike, please go to the Student Affairs. For a motorbike, paste the parking permit on the fuel tank.

<https://jreserve.nagaokaut.ac.jp/>



(5) Other precautions

◆ **Motorbikes**

For scooters and other motorbikes 250 cc or less, there is no mandatory vehicle inspection, so please remember to renew your compulsory insurance. Riding a motorbike with expired compulsory insurance is a violation of the law.

◆ **Illegal Parking and Abandoned Vehicles**

When you are no longer in need of your car or motorbike, you are responsible for discarding your vehicle with proper legal procedures. If you leave your vehicle anywhere on campus without permission, you will be heavily penalized by NUT. In addition, all the cost for the disposal will be charged to the driver or the owner of the vehicle.

◆ **Driving in Winter**

In Nagaoka, a snowing season usually starts from the beginning of December until March. Since it is very dangerous and a violation of the law to drive on snowy and icy roads with regular tires, please make sure to change your tires to studless snow tires before it starts snowing.

5. Bank

Most banks in Japan are open from 9:00 to 15:00 weekdays nationwide. ATM service is available during/after office hours. You may be charged an extra handling fee for the ATM service depending on the time of use. If you use an ATM of other banks which you don't have an account with, you may also be charged an extra handling fee.

◆ Opening an Account

To open an account, please visit a bank with required documents and items.

Please note that students with a temporary visa for 90 days cannot open a bank account in Japan.

There are ATMs of Japan Post Bank, Daishi Hokuetsu Bank, and Taiko Bank on campus near the Campus Store, *Baiten*.

Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship students must have a Japan Post Bank account to receive a monthly grant.

What you need to open a bank account:

- Your passport
 - Your Student ID Card
 - Your personal seal 'inkan' (Some banks accept signature; however, it is recommended to have your own seal.) *JA Bank accepts a seal only. Japan Post Bank requires Chinese students to have a seal.
 - Please create and print the application forms from the website in advance, and bring them to the counter of Japan Post Bank. https://jp-bank-kaisetsu.japanpost.jp/account_open/0010.php
- Please make sure to make a reservation before visiting the Japan Post Bank.



◆ Daily transaction limit at ATMs

Basically, the daily limit for cash withdrawals is up to 500,000 yen. Cash transfers are limited to 100,000 yen, however, not available at Japan Post Bank.

Points to consider when opening a bank account

◆ “Non-Resident” (Japan Post Bank)

At Japan Post Bank, international students who have been in Japan for less than six months are considered non-residents and a 'non-resident' stamp will be stamped on the facing page of your bankbook. During the period of “non-resident”, you have to pay the same fees as for overseas remittances when transferring directly from their own account to another bank account. In addition, you cannot transfer money directly from your own account to another bank account at a Japan Post Bank ATM.

The following methods can be used to avoid your bank transfer to be treated as “International Remittance” while the mark “Non-Resident” is stamped.

- Complete procedures for automatic bank account withdrawal
- Pay in cash

When 6 months have passed since your entry into Japan, please make sure to go to the Japan Post Bank to have the stamp of “Non-Resident” deleted.

◆ Other points to note

- When opening a bank account, the various checks (such as your name) by the bank may take time, and you may not be able to open an account on the day of reception. In such cases, your passbook may be mailed to your home at a later date.
- If you have renewed your Residence Card, make sure to bring your new Card to the bank immediately, otherwise some transactions (withdrawing cash from the ATM, etc.) may be temporarily restricted.
- If you return to your home country or leave Japan, make sure to close your bank account.
- Never transfer or sell your account, passbook or cash card to others for the purpose of having them use it. It is illegal.

6. Hospitals and Clinics in Nagaoka City

Minor injuries may be treated at Health Care Center on campus. (Please refer to the Student Life Guidebook.) If your sickness or injury is more than minor one, you need to go to the hospital or clinic. When choosing a hospital/clinic in Nagaoka, we recommend you to consult with Health Care Center or people around you first. Most Japanese hospitals/clinics, other than dental clinics, do not require a prior appointment. Do not forget to take your National Health Insurance Card with you when you go see a doctor. Most Japanese doctors can speak English to some extent, but not for nurses and receptionists. It might be a good idea to take someone who can interpret for you, if possible. Hospitals and Clinics near NUT are listed on page 82.



◆ Student Life Guidebook (Refer to Page 86)

The Student Life Guidebook contains information about student life at Nagaoka University of Technology, such as Campus Life, Extracurricular Activities, how to use Library and Centers and Safety Measures in Everyday Lives. It contains a lot of useful information, so please make use of it.
https://www.nagaokaut.ac.jp/gakusei/ryugaku_shien/ryugakusei/Guidebook2023.html#cmsDF462

7. Post Office

Post offices are open from 9:00 to 17:00 on weekdays to handle letters and parcels. Main offices such as Nagaoka Post Office near Nagaoka station may open on weekends and in late hours.

Please check all the letters sent to your mailbox to prevent from missing important information. If you have hard time understanding those letters, ask people around you or Int'l Student Affairs for help.

Details of postage: <https://www.post.japanpost.jp/fee/>



◆ Address Notification/Confirmation

A delivery to you may not be made if you don't register your address. If you live in Japan for the first time or move to a different address within Japan, please visit Post Office to inform your new address. You can do this procedure by online application as well. It also acts as a request to forward any mail delivered to your previous Japanese address to your new address for a year with free of charge.

Online Address Confirmation: <https://welcometown.post.japanpost.jp/etn/>



◆ Delivery Notice/Redelivery Request

When you are not home and unable to receive a parcel that needs to be handed in person, a post officer will leave a delivery notice. If you do not inform Japan Post how you wish to receive or collect the undelivered package within 7 days, it will automatically be returned to the sender.

Practical Guide for International Students:

https://www.post.japanpost.jp/int/ems/ryugaku/intl_student/



8. Parcel Delivery Services, *Takuhaibin*

Besides the post office, there are many private courier companies that deliver parcels and documents.

The rates vary depending on the parcel size, weight, and destination. You can send parcels from the Campus Store, *Baiten*, and from most convenience stores. In addition, courier services are useful for transporting belongings when moving-in and out. See page 81 for their contact information.

✧ **Delivery Notice/Redelivery Request** When you are out and unable to receive a parcel that needs to be handed in person, the postal officer will leave a delivery notice. If you miss to reschedule a delivery date and time, the parcel will automatically be returned to the sender.

(YAMATO Transport) <https://www.kuronekoyamato.co.jp/en/receive/redeliver/howto/>

(SAGAWA Express) <https://www.sagawa-exp.co.jp/send/redeliver.html>



Yamato Transport→

←Sagawa Express



9. Mobile Phone

Depending on the carriers, payment plan, and conditions, necessary documents, initial cost, and monthly charges differ a lot. Please gather information and advises from other international students and your lab mates in advance.

Bringing a credit card from your home country to Japan may give you a wider variety of plans and allows you to open the account smoothly.

◆ Purchasing a Mobile Phone or Smartphone

You may purchase a phone in installments if you have a credit card. If you don't have one or your study period is short, you may need to pay for your phone in one lump sum in cash. Online stores and recycle stores in town may offer a mobile device at a lower cost.

◆ Long-term Contract

In many cases, mobile phone carriers in Japan require you to have at least “2 years of period of stay”. Please research which carrier suits your situation and usage the best.

◆ SIM Card Only

If you have a SIM-free phone, you need to purchase a SIM card only. Carrier stores, home electronics stores, and many online stores sell SIM cards. Please be aware that a SIM card you purchase may not compatible with your phone you use in your country, so please check it beforehand. In this case, you can save both initial cost and monthly expense. But again, you will need to pay with your credit card most of the time.

◆ Technical Standards Compliance Mark

To bring your own WiFi and/or Bluetooth device(s) into Japan, you must obtain technical regulations conformity certification in Japan – thus, only devices carrying the technical standards compliance mark are allowed to be used inside the country (Japan).

<https://www.tele.soumu.go.jp/resource/j/others/wifi/en.pdf>

