

October 2026 Admission
Application Guidelines for the Admission
to the Higher Agricultural Specialist Program for the Republic of Kazakhstan
for the Doctoral Degree at the Graduate School of Science and Technology, Niigata University

The Graduate School of Science and Technology, Niigata University, offers a program, *the Higher Agricultural Specialist Program for the Republic of Kazakhstan*, which was selected as one of the International Priority Graduate Programs (PGP), Advanced Graduate Courses for International Students, by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Therefore, the Graduate School of Science and Technology, Niigata University, accepts applications for October 2026 admission from those interested in pursuing a doctoral degree in this program as follows.

1. Outline of the Program

As the gateway to the Sea of Japan, Niigata University makes great efforts in promoting education and research opportunities with Central Asia which is located at a strategic point in the Central Corridor linking Asia and Europe. This program, based on a request from the Kazakhstan's scientific institutions, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and others, aims to foster advanced agricultural specialists urgently needed by the Government of Kazakhstan and to nurture researchers who possess international as well as local perspectives. Student participants in this program will be matriculated at the Graduate School of Science and Technology, Niigata University, as full-time regular students and pursue a doctoral degree by taking required courses and conducting research within three years, the standard period required to complete the program.

2. Number of Students to be Admitted

Major	Number of Students	Major	Number of Students
Life and Food Sciences	Several	Environmental Science and Technology	Several

3. Eligibility for Application

An eligible applicant is considered to be someone applying as an international student, conforming to any of the conditions listed below.

- (1) Those who have a Master's degree or a professional degree (prescribed in Article 5-2 of the Degree Regulations (Ordinance of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture No. 9 of 1953) based on the provisions of the School Education Act, Article 104-1 (the same hereafter)), or those who expect to obtain such a degree by September, 2026.
- (2) Those who have a degree equivalent to a Master's degree or a professional degree in a country other than Japan or those who expect to obtain such a degree by September, 2026. **(Refer to [Note])**
- (3) Those who, while in Japan, have completed a course of study by a distance learning program provided by a school in a country other than Japan and have a degree equivalent to a Master's degree or a professional degree in that country, or those who expect to obtain such a degree by September, 2026. **(Refer to [Note])**
- (4) Those who have a degree equivalent to a Master's degree or a professional degree upon completion of a course of graduate study, in Japan, that is conducted at an educational institution in a country other than Japan and recognized as being part of the educational system of that country, and that is specifically designated by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, or those who expect to obtain such a degree by September, 2026.
- (5) Those who have a degree equivalent to a Master's degree upon completion of a course of study

at the United Nations University (hereinafter referred to as the “United Nations University”) founded based on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution of December 11, 1972, prescribed in Article 1-2 of the Act on Special Measures Incidental to Enforcement of the Agreement between the United Nations and Japan regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations University, or those who expect to obtain such a degree by September, 2026.

- (6) Those who have graduated from university and have engaged in research for a minimum of two years at a university, research institute or other such institution, and who, on the basis of the outcome (performance) of that research, are approved by the Graduate School of Science and Technology (hereafter the Graduate School) as having academic ability equivalent to or greater than those with a Master’s degree. **(Refer to [Note])**
- (7) Those who, after completing 16 years of school education in a country other than Japan, or after completing 16 years of school education by a distance learning program in Japan provided by a school in a country other than Japan, have engaged in research at a university, research institute or other such institution for a minimum of 2 years and who, on the basis of the outcome (performance) of that research, are approved by the Graduate School as having academic ability equivalent to or greater than those with a Master’s degree. **(Refer to [Note])**
- (8) Those who, following the individual screening of their eligibility for application, are approved by the Graduate School as having academic ability equivalent to or greater than those with a Master’s degree or a professional degree and who will be 24 years old by September 30, 2026. **(Refer to [Note])**

[Note]

Those eligible to apply on the basis of (2), (3), (6), (7), (8) as outlined above should submit the “Application Documents” to the program director by Monday, December 22, 2025.

Eligibility screening results will be announced individually by the program director **on or after Friday, January 9, 2026.**

4. Submission of Application Documents and Any Inquires

For submitting application documents and any additional question or inquire about the program, should contact to the program director.

Program Director: Hideo HASEGAWA, Professor
Institute of Science and Technology, Niigata University
TEL/FAX: +81-25-262-6690 Email: hsgw@agr.niigata-u.ac.jp

Postal Address: 8050 Ikarashi 2-no-cho, Nishi-ku, Niigata, 950-2181, JAPAN
Faculty of Agriculture, Niigata University
To: Hideo HASEGAWA, Professor

5. Application Period

Wednesday, January 14 -Thursday, January 15, 2026 by 16:00 (Japan Standard Time)
(Application documents must arrive within this period)

6. Application Procedures

(1) Application Methods

Applicants should submit the following documents to the program director.

(2) Application Documents

Documents and Forms	Instructions																																																
a. 2026 Application Form for Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship (RESEARCH STUDENTS)	• Use the attached form (Print double-sided) • Affix a photograph (4.5cm x 3.5cm), showing the applicant’s upper body, full face view with no hat, and facing the camera directly, to the designated area. (Photo data acceptable) • Be sure to accurately enter the year and month of the entrance and graduation dates in the designated areas.																																																
b. Field of Study and Research Plan	• Use the attached form. (Print double-sided)																																																
c. Letter of Recommendation	• Submit a letter of recommendation, from someone in a higher position than a director of a research institute at the applicant’s university, addressed to the President of Niigata University. • No specific format required. * Ref e. below: in cases where the academic transcript conversion table cannot be converted to the specified format, the letter of recommendation should show that “results at graduate school or research department are within the top 30 percent.”																																																
d. Copies of International Passport Pages	• Submit copies of applicant’s international passport pages, showing the applicant’s photograph, name, and nationality. (or a copy of other identification issued by the government of the applicant’s home country)																																																
e. Academic Transcript(s)	• Submit the original academic transcript, with certifying seal or signature from the appropriate authority, issued by the most recent graduate school attended. • Those who are expected to complete the graduate program and still enrolled in the program must submit the most updated transcript. • In cases where the grading system is based on letters, such as A, B, C, etc., submit the grade conversion table, converting from letter grading to the point system (100 points maximum). Please also submit a certificate describing the passing grade point. * Where the conversion table cannot be converted to the following format, the Letter of Recommendation (referred in c. above) is required. <table><tr><th>Classification</th><th colspan="5">Academic Transcript</th></tr><tr><td>4-step grading</td><td></td><td>Excellent</td><td>Good</td><td>Acceptable</td><td>Fail</td></tr><tr><td>4-step grading</td><td></td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>C</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>4-step grading</td><td></td><td>100-80 points</td><td>79-70 points</td><td>69-60 points</td><td>59 points or less</td></tr><tr><td>5-step grading</td><td>S</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>C</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>5-step grading</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>C</td><td>D</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>5-step grading</td><td>100-90 points</td><td>89-80 points</td><td>79-70 points</td><td>69-60 points</td><td>59 points or less</td></tr><tr><td>Points</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	Classification	Academic Transcript					4-step grading		Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Fail	4-step grading		A	B	C	F	4-step grading		100-80 points	79-70 points	69-60 points	59 points or less	5-step grading	S	A	B	C	F	5-step grading	A	B	C	D	F	5-step grading	100-90 points	89-80 points	79-70 points	69-60 points	59 points or less	Points	3	3	2	1	0
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f. Certificate of (Expected) Completion	• Submit the original Certificate of (Expected) Completion, with certifying seal or signature, or diploma issued by the most recent graduate school attended.
g. Documents Certifying Academic Excellence at the Last Institution Attended	• Please submit a document certifying the applicant's academic excellence at the most recent graduate school attended. For example, GPA, ABC classification, or student ranking (out of total number of students)
h. Abstract of Thesis	• Submit the abstract of the master's thesis. • No specific format required. • In case the applicant cannot submit the master's thesis, provide a document certifying the reason, such as that there is no thesis-related course available in the curriculum.
i. Certificate of Health	• Use the attached form.
j. Documents Certifying Language Abilities	• Submit documents certifying that one of the following conditions is met. a. Score of B2 or above in English in CEFR or score in proficiency test such as TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS. b. Documents certifying that applicant has completed an educational curriculum meeting the entrance requirements for a doctoral degree at a Japanese graduate school and in which the main language was English. c. In cases where there are no documents showing applicant's language ability, please submit documents such as any awards received at international conferences or publications in academic journals proving that applicant has appropriate language ability as indicated under a. above.
k. Examination Fee	• Payment is not required at the moment of submitting an application. However, in case you are not selected as a Japanese government (MEXT) scholarship student, please pay an examination fee of 30,000 Japanese yen.

※Application documents must be completed in English and printed double-sided in A4 size, by using document creator software, if possible.

※Attach English or Japanese translation if the original certificates are in a language other than English.

※Submitted application documents will not be returned for any reason.

7. Method of Admission Selection

Admission selection shall be made upon the evaluation of application documents and interview.

(Note) Interviews will be conducted either face to face or by interactive vocal or visual communication via Internet.

8. Interview Date

The interview will be held on one day from Monday, January 19 to Friday, January 30, 2026 (EXCEPT weekends)

Individual interview date and time will be informed from the program director.

9. Announcement of Admission Decision

Friday, March 6, 2026

The successful applicants will be informed of the admission decision by mail.

The list of successful applicants' Examinee Numbers shall be posted on the Graduate School of Science and Technology website at 11:00 (Japan Standard Time) of the day of announcement. (<https://www.gs.niigata-u.ac.jp/>)

No telephone inquiries regarding the admission decision will be answered.

10. Scholarship for Accepted Students

Students who are accepted to the program and meet the eligibility requirements to apply for the Japanese Government Scholarship Program may be recommended as MEXT student nominees. When they are granted the scholarship, they will receive the following support;

(1) Monthly stipend: JPY 145,000

(2) Period of Scholarship: For the period of the standard number of years required to complete the doctoral program (from October 1, 2026, to September 30, 2029)

(3) Transportation:

Students will be provided an airline ticket when entering Japan, and when completing the degree program and returning to their home country by the final month of the scholarship period. The provided airline ticket will be an economy-class ticket for the flight between the international airport closest to the student's residence (in principle, the country of nationality) and the international airport used for the normal route to/from Niigata University.

(4) Fees Necessary for Entering Niigata University:

Student participants are exempted from the entrance fee and tuition for the period of the standard number of years required for completion.

(5) Other: If the student participants' stay at Niigata University exceeds the standard number of years required for completion, if they are expelled or transferred, or in any way violate the oath made to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, even after matriculation, the scholarship stipends will not be provided.

11. Eligibility Requirements to Apply for the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship Program

(1) Nationality: Applicants having a nationality from the CIS countries at the time of application will have preference.

(2) Age: Applicants must have been born on or after April 2, 1991.

(3) Academic Background: Those who have been granted a Master's Degree or are expected to obtain such a degree by September, 2026; those who graduated from a university and have been engaged in research for a minimum of two years at a university or research institute and who are considered, by the Graduate School of Science and Technology, Niigata University, to have academic ability, considering their research achievement, equivalent to the level required for a Master's Degree; or those who, following the individual screening of their eligibility for application, are approved as having academic ability equivalent to or greater than those with a Master's Degree and who will be 24 years old by September 30, 2026.

(4) Major Field of Study: Those who studied one of the following fields at a university are eligible to apply: Management of Food and Resources; Plant Resource Production; Animal Resource Production; High Level Use of Plant Functions; Enhancement of Microorganism Functions; Elucidation of Food Functions; Sustainable Agricultural Produce; Conservation and Use of Forest Resources; Local Management Engineering; Agricultural Engineering; Fluctuation of Water Circulation; Atmospheric Environment

- (5) Academic Grades: Those who have had a GPA of 2.30 or higher, based on the calculation formula specified by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), in the past years and are also expected to maintain a GPA of 2.30 or higher for the period during which they receive their scholarship stipend.
※Niigata University will calculate the students' GPA upon receipt of the application documents.
- (6) Recommendation: Those who are recommended officially by the president or dean of the Graduate School of a university in the CIS countries with which Niigata University has concluded an agreement for cooperation or where there are some close collaborations with Niigata University.
- (7) Other: Any applicant who falls into any of the following categories is NOT eligible to apply for the scholarship.
- a. Those currently in the military service.
 - b. Those who are unable to arrive in Japan by the date specified by Niigata University.
 - c. Those who apply for this scholarship from another university and who have been granted any other international student scholarship from the Japanese government (MEXT) or the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO).
 - d. Those who expect to obtain a scholarship or fellowships from Japanese government, a Japanese government-related and others.
 - e. Those who do not meet the expected eligibility requirements or conditions by the specified date.
 - f. Those who have dual nationality at the time of application and cannot prove that they have renounced their Japanese nationality by the time they arrive in Japan.
 - g. Those who in the past were international Japanese government (MEXT) scholarship students and who would not have at least three years of educational or work experience from the month after the final payment of the previous scholarship to the starting month of the new scholarship.
 - h. Those who from the time of application hope to undertake fieldwork or an internship in a country other than Japan.
 - i. Those who failed the entrance examination for the doctoral degree program at this research department.

12. Admission Procedure

The following is general information about the university admission procedure. Details will be notified to successful applicants.

(1) Admission Procedure Period

Mid-September, 2026 (tentative)