

RENFORDT MATTHIS ALEXANDER

(Sep. 2025 - Feb. 2026)

TU Dortmund University



1. Why did you decide to come study in Japan and choose Chukyo University?

I've always been interested in Japan, Japanese culture, design and language and wanted to experience it firsthand rather than just studying it from afar. Chukyo looked like the perfect option to do so, offering an inviting international program on a beautiful campus. The Japanese language program appealed to me as a way to truly immerse myself in the cross-cultural experience and gain new perspectives on topics I'm researching for my bachelor thesis. Nagoya was particularly interesting to me as I wanted to experience 'real' Japanese urban life without the overwhelming intensities of Tokyo.

2. How do you think you have matured through your studies at Chukyo? Please share your experiences, events, or feelings while studying at Chukyo University.

Despite always dreaming of it, living in Japan has definitely pushed me out of my comfort zone more than I expected. In the first few weeks, the language barrier, the societal norms in everyday behaviour and cultural differences took some time to adjust to. However, once I got settled in, the experiences taught me extremely valuable lessons about navigating different academic systems, connecting with the amazing people of Chukyo and myself. The support from both international and Japanese students helped me navigate these challenges, which ultimately made me more resilient and self-aware.

3. How do you hope to make use of this experience in the future?

The adaptability and problem-solving skills I've developed here will be valuable in any future context - whether navigating unfamiliar professional environments or tackling complex academic questions. The cross-cultural perspectives I've gained, particularly around Japanese values, philosophy and cultural approaches, will directly inform my bachelor thesis research. Beyond these practical skills, I think the most significant takeaway has been understanding myself better - what environments help me thrive, how I respond to challenges, and what actually drives my growth. That kind of self-knowledge shapes the decisions you make going forward, whether in further studies or beginning a career.

4. Finally, please give a message to juniors who are considering studying at Chukyo University in the future.

Be prepared for challenges, but know that they're part of what makes the experience worthwhile. Try to connect with Japanese students and explore Nagoya beyond the typical spots - that's where the real cultural immersion happens. Don't compare your experience to others' social media; everyone's journey looks different. Make use of Chukyo's support systems and international office - they're genuinely helpful. Give yourself grace during the adjustment period, and remember that growth often comes from the uncomfortable moments. If you're open to it, Japan will teach you things about yourself and the world that you couldn't learn anywhere else.

