

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute in Urawa Training Programmes and new DVD material

by Yuriko Kayamoto
National Adviser : Japanese

For 18 years, the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute in Urawa has organised and coordinated Training Programmes for Teachers of Japanese, also known as "the Urawa courses". Last year about 500 Japanese teachers from more than 50 countries studied Japanese language and teaching methodology at the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute in Urawa, near Tokyo.

New Zealand teachers have regularly participated in three courses over the years:

- Short-Term Training Program for Foreign Teachers of the Japanese-Language (Spring-course, Summer-course),
- Long-Term Training Program for Foreign Teachers of the Japanese-Language, and
- The Intensive Training Program for Primary and Secondary School Teachers of The Japanese-Language from Australia and New Zealand (AUNZ) course (January)

The so-called "short-term course" is not short at all: it lasts about 2 months but it is shorter than the long-term course, which runs for half a year. The AUNZ course is specially designed for teachers from Australia and NZ and it runs for 3 weeks in January. Last year twenty one teachers from Australia and five teachers from NZ participated in this course.

All courses are conducted in a similar way. Participants are divided into groups according to language proficiency and that language proficiency is developed through the study of various topics, such as transportation, sport and hobbies, shopping, family, etc. The programmes include excursions to gather resources with the assistance of volunteer high school students (and opportunities to share them with other

participants), teaching methodology sessions, school visits, a home stay and cultural experiences such as calligraphy, tea ceremony, and flower arrangement. There are also field trips to Kabuki theatre and Kansai Area. At the end of the course, participants make a presentation to sum up the course and they will give you a lot of resources to home.

Course participants live in the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute in Urawa, which provide accommodation in hotel-like rooms. There is a cafeteria on site so that participants can have three meals a day there. On weekends you can cook in the Institute's kitchen or go out to eat. The Japan Foundation will pay about \$40 a day for weekend food. For the duration of the programme, the Japan Foundation takes care of the costs for participation in the official training curriculum (such as transportation and teaching materials).

These programmes are administered in New Zealand by ILANZ, who will pay for airfares and relief teacher costs (only for short-term course) relating to the programme.

For more information: please refer to the website:
www.ilanz.ac.nz/iep/japanese-study.htm ILANZ.

Apart from the various training programmes for Japanese-language teachers, the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language institute also carries out development and distribution of Japanese-Language teaching resources. The Institute has just published a first volume of a DVD teaching material for young learners named "Erin's Challenge! I Can Speak Japanese". This is an all-new Japanese teaching material, which targets young learners of Japanese by using a DVD teaching materials to make the study of beginning Japanese fun.

For more information on the DVD, please refer to the website http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/urawa/j_rsrcs/erin_02.htm

The participants for the AUNZ Urawa course in January 2007 were:

Rachel Austen (Lincoln College)
Lisa Cumberland (Pakuranga College)
Christopher Teague (Catholic Cathedral College)
Jessica Ware (Otago Girls' High School)
Fiona Watene (Opaheke School)

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