

# Reflection on Study Abroad Experience

Shayma Ahmed Saad

My study abroad experience in Tokyo has already proven to be one of the most transformative experiences of my life. From the moment I arrived, I felt myself stepping into a version of life that was exciting, unfamiliar, and full of growth. Being immersed in a completely different culture has pushed me to see the world, and myself, through a new lens. Each day brings moments of reflection, gratitude, and discovery, reminding me why I chose to challenge myself in this way.



## Cultural Discovery

One of the most meaningful aspects of my experience so far has been engaging deeply with Japanese culture. Wearing a kimono was more than just trying on traditional clothing; it was an opportunity to understand history, symbolism, and the care placed into cultural expression.



Visiting Nikko allowed me to connect with nature in a way that felt both grounding and awe-inspiring. Surrounded by mountains, shrines, and forests, I found a sense of peace that contrasted beautifully with the busy city life. These moments helped me slow down and truly appreciate my surroundings.



## New Experiences

This time abroad has also made me far more comfortable stepping outside my comfort zone. I've become more open to trying new things, whether that's attending Pilates classes or navigating unfamiliar places on my own. Doing things solo has strengthened my connection with myself and boosted my confidence. I've learned to enjoy my own company and trust my instincts, which has been incredibly empowering. Overall, this experience has encouraged personal growth, independence, and a deeper sense of self that I will carry with me long after my study abroad journey ends.