



Building the foundation for workforce success with Microsoft Office Specialist



Yanagawa High School

Located in Fukuoka, Japan, Yanagawa High School has a rich 83-year history of blending tradition with cutting-edge education. The school has established itself as a leader in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) education by incorporating subjects like neuroscience and space education into its curriculum. By integrating the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification, Yanagawa High School provides students with a strong foundation for future employment and academic success.

The MOS certification program became a crucial element of this course, offering students a pathway to demonstrate their proficiency in Microsoft Office and increase their employability. During the course, each student sets an individual goal to take the certification exam as they progress through the Excel, Word, and PowerPoint course content.

Since students have varying levels of understanding and proficiency, teachers review practice test results to determine the optimal time for each student to take the official certification exams. While MOS certification is not mandatory, every student in the course ends up taking the exams, with many passing soon after completing the relevant classes. Additionally, a significant number of students go on to achieve expert-level certification through self-study.

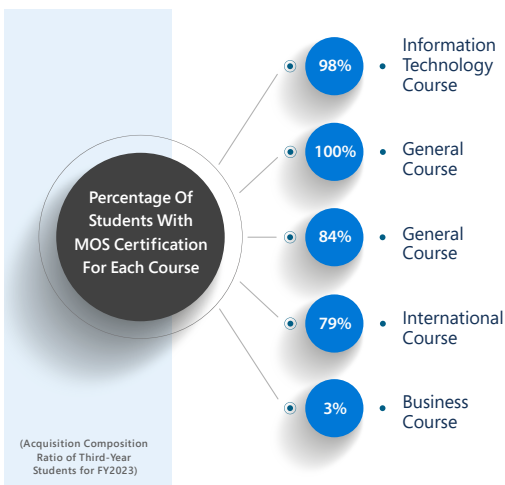
Empowering students with MOS certifications

The “Microsoft Course” transitioned into the Information Technology (IT) course due to growing demand, further enhancing students’ opportunities to pursue advanced IT education and careers. Students in this course now typically graduate with an average of 15 certifications, including MOS.

Building a future-ready curriculum

The school first introduced the “Microsoft course” in 2001 as part of its business coursework, after being selected by Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) for a next-generation IT utilization project.

Through this project, the institution was able to switch all its computers to Windows machines and secure permission to establish a course in teaching Microsoft Office. This effort led to a partnership with Microsoft Japan, establishing Yanagawa as the only officially recognized “Microsoft course” in Japan.



Number Of Applicants For Microsoft Course

Year	Capacity	Applicant
2021	40	238
2022	60	246
2023	60	217
2024	80	217



Moreover, the MOS certification program is no longer limited to students in the Information Technology course. It encourages students from various academic tracks to pursue this in-demand certification. With the school serving as an official MOS testing center, students can take the exams on campus, fostering motivation and convenience.

Our school has been a pioneer in ICT education among Japanese high schools. Establishing the IT course and incorporating programming education were driven by the desire to equip students with the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for advanced IT education and careers," explained Mr. Koji Yamada, Chief of Academic Affairs.



"While AI and programming education are now in the spotlight, we position MOS certification as the foundational learning step before these advanced studies. We plan to continue pursuing MOS certification to build a solid foundation and step up to more advanced areas of learning."

Mr. Koji Yamada,
Chief of Academic Affairs

Transformative outcomes and proven success

Since implementing MOS certification into its curriculum, Yanagawa High School has earned the distinction of being the top MOS-certifying high school in Japan for 19 consecutive years. They have also produced many top-ranking students in [Certiport's Microsoft Office Specialist World Championship](#), a global competition backed by Microsoft that showcases the best MOS students worldwide. More importantly, this initiative has provided students with essential tools and become a stepping stone for success in future career and academic pursuits. The benefits include:

- **Increased employability:** Mr. Yuki Tajima, an alumnus of the program and current Information Technology Course teacher, credits the MOS certification for helping students excel in their studies and future careers. Mr. Tajima notes that the certification offers valuable skills in both university settings and professional environments, where proficiency in Microsoft Office applications is highly regarded by employers.
- **Tangible results:** Students graduate with a solid foundation of skills, enabling them to perform efficiently in the workplace and succeed in higher education. Many students graduate with 10-20 certifications listed on their resumes, which leads to positive evaluations from prospective employers who view this as a sign of dedication and effort.
- **College credit:** Vocational schools offer admission benefits or partial tuition waivers to students with MOS certification, making it highly valuable

for high schools to incorporate it into their curriculums. Additionally, nearby universities increasingly provide MOS preparation courses outside of regular classes. As a result, students from Yanagawa High School enter university already holding MOS certification, allowing them to allocate the time and money they would have spent on certification to other pursuits.



"I chose the Microsoft course because it allowed me to graduate with multiple qualifications and having a MOS certification helped me earn college credit," said Mr. Tajima, an alumnus of Yanagawa High School's Microsoft course.

"Before graduating, I applied for jobs with general companies, and the MOS certifications were recognized by all the employers, which showcased how important earning these certifications are in the workplace."

By incorporating MOS certification as a foundational learning tool, Yanagawa High School prepares its students for the demands of the modern workforce, equipping them with the digital tools and skills needed to thrive in a technology-driven world.

To learn more about MOS certification, please visit: www.certiport.com/MOS.

