When I arrived in Kyoto, it was an incredible welcome! The people, the food, the culture, Japan has everything to offer! The conference was an amazing platform to meet other scientists but also to present my findings to a community that understands my field of research- the vertebral endplates. I was so pleased to get positive feedback on my images and findings regarding the blood flow to the disc and how it is linked to back pain. I had the chance to discuss and learn from orthopaedic surgeons as well as chiropractors. We exchanged notes not only on sample preparation for the micro-computed tomography but also our grievances regarding sample availability and the complexity of the endplates and the unclear nomenclature. I have also made hugely useful contacts with professors and PhD students which will be helpful to me at this stage of my PhD, during writing up and even selecting an examiner for my viva.

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