A hardcover for a stab binding can be made from two covered boards. The cover material, either decorative papers or bookcloth, creates the hinge so the book can be opened.

Use 2 pieces of greyboard the same size as your bookblock, and 2 sheets of bookcloth or decorative paper 60mm taller and wider. For the inside cover use 2 sheets of colour paper 5mm smaller than the bookblock. All the materials should be cut so the grain runs parallel to the spine.

Once the covers are prepared continue to make your book as per the Japanese Stab Binding guide.

01. On one of the pieces of greyboard draw a line parallel to the spine that is twice the distance from the spine edge to the sewing stations.

02. Draw another line 3-4mm further along and cut out and discard the strip to allow for the hinge gap. The two remaining pieces will be for your front cover.

03. Lay the cover material face down. Use a ruler and pencil to draw a horizontal line approx. 25mm from the bottom edge. Use set square, or the grid of a cutting mat as a guide, draw a vertical line roughly 30mm in from the left edge. The two lines should create a right angle.

04. Lay the 2 pieces of board down maintaining the 3-4mm hinge gap. Align spine-edge and tail to the lines from the previous step. Lightly outline, and then remove the board.

05. Apply glue evenly to the outlined area and carefully lay the board down in place rubbing down firmly with a bone folder. Ensure the board is adhered to the bookcloth all around the edges.

06. Trim the bookcloth to leave 25mm of turn-in on all sides. Cut the corners of the bookcloth at 45° leaving a 3mm gap from the corner of the boards.
07. Glue the turn-in at the head and tail then wrap them around the board ensuring you achieve good tight creases where it folds over the boards.

08. Pinch the bookcloth around the board at the corners with a bone folder.

09. Glue the turn-ins at the spine and fore-edge in the same manner as in step 7 and rub down all the turn-ins with a bone folder over a piece of waste paper to make sure there are no air bubbles or gaps.

10. Flip the board over and with the tip of a bone folder, go over the hinge gap forming the bookcloth around the board.

11. On a piece of scrap paper, glue out the paper for the inside of the cover.

12. Carefully align and fix it in place. Put the cover between wax paper and leave to dry under a weight. This will help to keep the board flat.

Repeat the above steps for the rear covered board.