

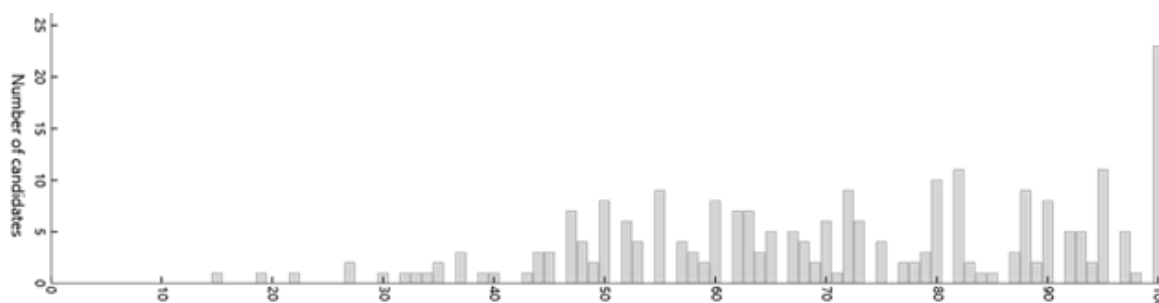


Summary report of the 2023 ATAR course examination report: Japanese: Second Language

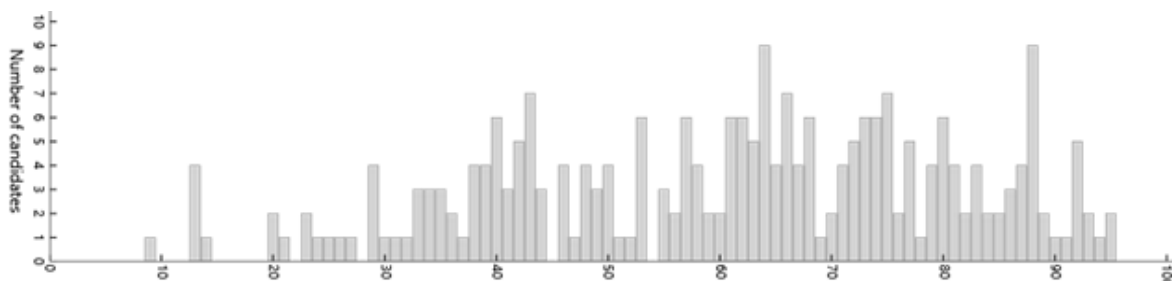
Year	Number who sat all examination components	Number of absentees from all examination components
2023	244	1
2022	243	3
2021	264	3
2020	287	3

The number of candidates sitting and the number attempting each section of the examination can differ as a result of non-attempts across sections of the examination.

Examination score distribution–Practical



Examination score distribution–Written



Summary

Candidates completed a practical and written examination. The practical examination consisted of two sections, Discussion prompted by stimulus (35%) and Conversation (65%). The written examination consisted of three sections, Response: Listening (30%), Response: Viewing and reading (40%) and Written communication (30%).

A total of 245 candidates attempted the practical component with a mean of 71.09%. The written examination was attempted by 249 candidates with a mean of 60.41%.

Practical examination

Attempted by 245 candidates Mean 71.09% Max 100.00% Min 15.00%

Section means were:

Part B: Discussion prompted by stimulus	Mean 71.33%		
Attempted by 245 candidates	Mean 24.96(/35)	Max 35.00	Min 5.25
Part C: Conversation	Mean 70.96%		
Attempted by 245 candidates	Mean 46.12(/65)	Max 65.00	Min 9.75

Written examination

Attempted by 249 candidates Mean 60.41% Max 95.16% Min 8.67%

Section means were:

Section One: Response: Listening	Mean 55.31%		
Attempted by 249 candidates	Mean 16.59(/30)	Max 29.35	Min 2.61
Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading	Mean 65.63%		
Attempted by 249 candidates	Mean 26.25(/40)	Max 38.79	Min 4.24
Section Three: Written communication			
Part A: Stimulus response	Mean 56.79%		
Attempted by 241 candidates	Mean 6.81(/12)	Max 12.00	Min 0.00
Section Three: Written communication			
Part B: Extended response	Mean 59.75%		
Attempted by 243 candidates	Mean 10.76(/18)	Max 18.00	Min 0.00

General comments

Practical examination

Candidates performed very well, engaging actively and confidently in the discussion and conversation. Comprehension of the topic-focused questions was excellent and responses were mostly relevant. Most candidates made an effort to provide extended responses and attempted to incorporate a wide range of the required grammatical structures. Reliance on prepared responses was not successful when candidates were unable to modify them according to the questions asked. Some candidates had a problem with simple follow-up questions such as どうやって (how), どのぐらい (how long), いくらぐらい (about how much) or いつごろ (when). Speech was of a very good quality. A common problem in grammar accuracy was the use of verbs in the past tense. Some adjectives and particles were used inappropriately.

Other weakness included:

- Overuse of し～し, when it should have been ～たり～たり
- Confusion with the use of だ, for example with と思う/言う
- Using ～によると without ～そう at the end
- Incorrect use of:
 - のに, when けど/けれど should have been used
 - ほしい, when it should have been ～たい
 - みたい, using when talking about themselves
 - しまう, not using て form of verb correctly
 - しか, failing to use the negative tense ending
 - ために, when it should have been <potential form+> ように.

Advice for candidates

- Choose your stimulus carefully. Make sure it is highly relevant to the topic of your choice. Be mindful of print quality when using a photo.
- In Part B, state your topic at the beginning of your speech. Use a phrase such as: 今日は<Topic>について話します (Today, I'm going to talk about <topic>).
- Your introduction on the stimulus item should not cover more than one topic.
- Understand the transition from Part B to Part C. You will be asked ほかにも何かいいたい事がありますか (Do you have anything else you would like to add?) at the end of Part B, and 今年、日本語のクラスで何を勉強しましたか (What/what topics did you study in Japanese this year?) at the beginning of Part C.

- Listen carefully to the questions before rushing in with your rehearsed responses. Modify your prepared responses according to the questions asked. Be mindful that conversation/discussion, not a lengthy monologue, is the aim of this examination.
- Work on verb tense. Use past tense consistently when referring to the past event or experience.
- Develop skills to handle unexpected questions. These include some 'follow-up' questions such as 'how long', 'when' or 'how many'.

Advice for teachers

- Ensure students are familiar with the examination procedures including transition from Part B to Part C. Prepare students for the questions ほかにも何かいい事がありますか and 今年、日本語のクラスで何を勉強しましたか.
- Provide clear guidance in choosing a stimulus item.
- Advise students to state their topic first when introducing their stimulus item and focus on one topic in their speech.
- Remind students that they may need to modify their prepared responses. It is important to address the questions directly.
- Provide strategies and practices for students to handle unexpected questions.
- Provide ample opportunities for students to practise verb past tense including how to end a sentence.

Written examination

The candidates' performance was of a satisfactory level and most were able to produce quality work, demonstrating their understanding of the required Japanese language skills. In the listening and viewing/reading sections, some responses failed to address the question directly. Candidates could not achieve full marks if they missed one piece of essential information or provided an inadequate interpretation of one phrase. Understanding numbers correctly proved challenging for many candidates. Some words with kanji script were not interpreted correctly in the viewing and reading section. In the Written communication section, some stimulus/question points were managed very well (e.g. 'the highlights and challenges', Part B) but other points were handled poorly (e.g. 'how much do you intend to spend for souvenirs?', Part A). Failing to use the past tense verb was a major issue. In Part B, many candidates neglected to indicate which question they were responding to. Due to possible time constraints, some candidates did not complete the Written communication section.

Advice for candidates

- Structure your time well in Section Two Response: Viewing and reading and Section Three Written communication. Suggested working time is 60 minutes for each section.
- Read all questions carefully and understand what information is required. Consider the context of the text when translating.
- Check your spelling of English in your responses in the Listening and Viewing and reading sections.
- In the Viewing and reading section, be mindful of the verb tense when responding. Avoid over-use of 'they/their' in your response as this can lead to misunderstanding by the markers. Use the name stated in the text or 'the author/speaker'.
- In the Writing section, plan your writing to address all the key points in the stimulus/questions.
- Be attentive to the context of the stimulus text. Practise writing in past tense.
- Understand common grammatical errors such as the difference between ために and ように and practice correct ways.
- Indicate the topic you have chosen for the Extended response, as instructed (with a tick).

Advice for teachers

- Ensure students are familiar with common grammatical errors and offer adequate explanations and practices.
- Provide students with ample opportunities to practise past tense both for the reading and writing sections.
- Remind students of the importance of considering the context of the Japanese texts and reviewing their responses accordingly so that they flow naturally and are logical.
- Demonstrate how to structure time in Section Two and Section Three. Giving succinct responses in Section Two is essential.
- Encourage students to pay close attention to the instructions given in the questions so that they do not miss an important piece of information.
- Provide guidance on writing practices. Encourage students to address the required points clearly and organise their writing coherently. Remind your students that they need to indicate the topic they have chosen for Section Three, Part B: Extended response.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Practical examination

Part B: Discussion prompted by stimulus (20 Marks)

Most candidates were familiar with the requirements and demonstrated good Japanese oral skills. However, some candidates did not identify their topic clearly at the beginning of their speech or did not refer to their stimulus item appropriately in their speech or the discussion that followed. Some stimulus items were inadequate (e.g. not relevant to the topic or the photograph was too dark to identify).

Part C: Conversation (20 Marks)

The majority of candidates were very well-prepared and engaged in the conversation, producing extended responses. There were occasions when it was necessary to modify their prepared responses according to the questions asked, and this was a challenge for many candidates. Excellent efforts were made to incorporate unit appropriate grammar structures. However, in some cases they were overused, leading to an unnatural conversation.

Written examination

Section One: Response: Listening (46 Marks)

The majority of candidates attempted to answer all questions. Candidates had difficulty interpreting numbers correctly. These items included: '12 o'clock', 'twice' or 'Year 10'. Candidates would have benefited by considering the context of the texts and re-reading their responses. For example, in Question 1, some wrote '(travelled) in October for three months'. Candidates did not achieve the full marks available by not producing a key vocabulary item or grammar structure. There were misspellings in English.

Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading (66 Marks)

Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the unit grammar structures. Some experienced challenges with interpreting large numbers. Others were mixing the pronouns 'he/she' within their responses or overusing 'they', making it difficult for the markers to understand the subject the candidates were referring to. A number of candidates failed to respond to Question 21 and Question 34.

The following kanji script proved challenging:

- 広島 (Hiroshima) was interpreted as 'wide island'
- 京都 (Kyoto) and 東京 (Tokyo)
- 東南 (Southeast Asia) proved difficult to comprehend
- 夜中 (the middle of the night) was not well-comprehended by many candidates

- 楽 (ease/comfortable) and 楽しい (fun)
- 薬 (medicine) was not well-comprehended or was confused with 楽 (ease/comfortable)
- 動く (to move) and 働く (to work).

The following vocabulary items proved challenging for the candidates:

- たてもの (building)
- かう (to raise/keep an animal)
- じぶんで (oneself) and 一人で (by myself).

Section Three: Written communication Part A: Stimulus response (12 Marks)

Some candidates were not able to formulate a response to the whole stimulus. Due to possible time constraints or time management issues, a number of candidates did not complete the question.

Section Three: Written communication Part B: Extended response (18 Marks)

Many candidates neglected to indicate which question they were responding to. The majority of candidates elected to answer Question 37 'school life and future plans' rather than Question 36 'education and career path'. Candidates were able to meet the criteria for the convention of text. Some candidates did not complete all of the chosen question.