

(Written communication) candidates were required to complete one compulsory question and to then choose one of two questions.

Section means were:

Section One: Response: Listening	Mean 48.93%		
Attempted by 317 candidates	Mean 14.68(/30)	Max 28.54	Min 2.20
Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading	Mean 58.51%		
Attempted by 317 candidates	Mean 23.40(/40)	Max 38.75	Min 0.62
Section Three: Written communication Part A: Stimulus response	Mean 59.94%		
Attempted by 313 candidates	Mean 7.19(/12)	Max 12.00	Min 1.60
Section Three: Written communication Part B: Extended response	Mean 61.80%		
Attempted by 315 candidates	Mean 11.12(/18)	Max 17.28	Min 0.72

General comments

Most candidates attempted the questions and provided the required information. A challenge for some candidates was addressing the finer details in a question, and not assuming the meaning of the question based on a familiar key word. Some extended responses contained unnecessary information which impeded meaning, in both the practical and written examinations. Using the correct tense continued to be a problem for many candidates.

In the practical examination, most candidates were well-prepared and showed a willingness to engage in discussion/conversation actively. The majority of candidates used an appropriate range of grammatical structures. Comprehension was notably strong this year, whereas accuracy was relatively weak. Many candidates' extended responses were done well. However, some failed to provide a direct answer to the question before extending their responses. Some candidates provided irrelevant responses due to hearing a familiar key word in the question, and not actually comprehending what was being asked of them.

In the written examination, some responses lacked the vital information required in the question (Sections One and Two), and others provided unnecessary information impeding the meaning (Section Two). Notably in Section One, some responses in English were not appropriately worded to convey accurate meaning. Candidates performed well in Section Three; however, some attempted to use too many key grammar structures in one sentence, making it unnatural or incomprehensible.

Legibility and the use of abbreviated language continued to be a major problem this year. This seems to worsen every year. Writing too faintly, not properly crossing out words when an answer has been changed, or joining sentences with arrows were some examples of the problems that made it challenging for the markers to comprehend the meaning of candidates' responses.

Practical examination

Advice for candidates

- State what topic you are going to talk about at the beginning of Part B. You can use a phrase such as 'きょうは<topic>について話します' or '私のトピックは<topic>です' to open your discussion prompted by the stimulus. This will ensure that the topic of your choice is understood by markers.
- In Part B, keep your introduction within the duration specified so that you have enough time for the discussion that follows.
- Ensure that you directly respond to the question first, and then you can expand your response if appropriate.

- Develop strategies for unexpected questions. Learn how to demonstrate what you understand from the question or how to clarify a word you do not understand, without relying on English.

Advice for teachers

- Candidates should be advised to open their stimulus introduction with a statement indicating their topic of choice. This will help markers to ask appropriate questions in the discussions that follow.
- Advise students to keep their stimulus introduction within one minute so that they have appropriate time for discussion.
- Encourage students to directly respond to the question first, before expanding on their response.
- Students should be advised on different ways to handle unexpected questions in Japanese.
- Students need to be reminded of the following grammar structures, as these continue to be used incorrectly:
 - ~たり~たり instead of ~し~し (the most common error in recent years)
 - ~たいです instead of ~てほしいです
 - ~けれど、~けど instead of ~のに
 - ~か instead of ~かどうか

Written examination

Advice for candidates

- Make sure your writing is legible.
- Ensure your response in English flows naturally, is logical and makes sense.
- Pay close attention to the instructions given in questions to grasp fully what is required in your responses. Review your responses carefully, as they may be missing some vital information.
- Develop skills to understand a link between sentences.
- Be mindful of tense, and respond appropriately.

Advice for teachers

- Encourage students to pay greater attention to the instructions given in questions.
- Emphasise to students that they need to provide sufficient information in their responses, but that lengthy responses can often lead to impeded meaning.
- Emphasise to students that their responses need to flow naturally and are logical in English.
- Provide students with more practice on tense.
- Students should be encouraged to practise understanding a link between sentences when reading Japanese texts.

Comments on specific sections and questions

The statistics provided in this section of the report are all expressed in terms of the total marks allocated to each section of the examination.

Practical examination

Part B: Discussion prompted by stimulus (35 Marks)

Most candidates were well-prepared for this section. Candidates delivered a relevant introduction of their stimulus item and managed the discussion relatively well. However, some candidates needed to make the topic of their stimulus clearer. Handling unexpected questions was a challenge for some candidates.

Part C: Conversation (65 Marks)

The majority of candidates were well-prepared to provide extended answers with appropriate grammar structures. However, some candidates did not provide a direct answer to the question or rephrased their responses.

Written examination

Section One: Response: Listening (30 Marks)

Candidate performance in this section was relatively poor. Some candidates did not read the questions carefully to ensure that they knew exactly what was being asked of them. In many cases, responses missed one vital word. Some responses often did not flow naturally, which resulted in markers trying to decipher what the candidate was trying to express. Inaccurate or inappropriate use of a pronoun such as 'he', 'they' or 'them' was prevalent.

Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading (40 Marks)

In this section, understanding the link between sentences was a difficult task for some candidates. Correct use of tense continued to be a problem in many responses. This sometimes affected the meaning. Comparison was poorly managed and the stem of the verb + やすい was not interpreted appropriately in the context of the sentence. Some responses contained unnecessary information, which sometimes impeded meaning. Inaccurate or inappropriate use of a pronoun was prevalent.

Section Three: Written communication Part A: Stimulus response (15 Marks)

Many candidates performed well in this section. However, some candidates did not indicate the option they selected for their reply or did not adhere to the 250–300 *ji* requirement.

Section Three: Written communication Part B: Extended response (25 Marks)

Candidates had a strong preference for and performed better in Question 41 than Question 40. Some candidates' responses lacked paragraphs and connector/joiner vocabulary items, resulting in the flow being disjointed. Some did not adhere to the 350–400 *ji* requirement of the questions. Most candidates made an effort to include an appropriate range of grammar. However, in some cases, they attempted to include too many key grammar structures in one sentence, resulting in an unnatural sentence with poor flow or incorrect combinations, making their response incomprehensible.

Some examples of the linguistic issues were:

- いる versus ある
- grammar structure rules of the な-type and the い-type adjectives
- usage of のに when it should be けど
- ように versus ために such as:
incorrect: 大学に行けるために
correct: 大学に行ける(potential form)ように
- usage of ...し...し versus...たり...たり
- もう vs まだ
- 物(things) versus 事 (events)
- ~てあげる vs ~てくれる vs ~てもらう
- use of ~てにくい and ~てやすい
- spelling issues with katakana such as アルバイト, フォーマル or オーストラリア
- incorrect: アルバイトを働く
correct: アルバイトをする
- incorrect: 高校からそつぎようする
correct: 高校をそつぎようする.