

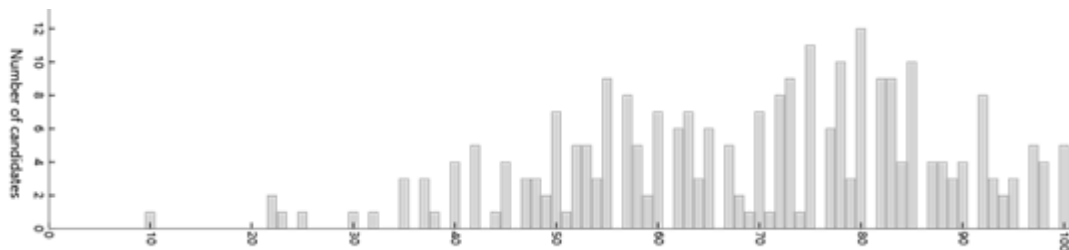


## Summary report of the 2021 ATAR course examination report: Japanese: Second Language

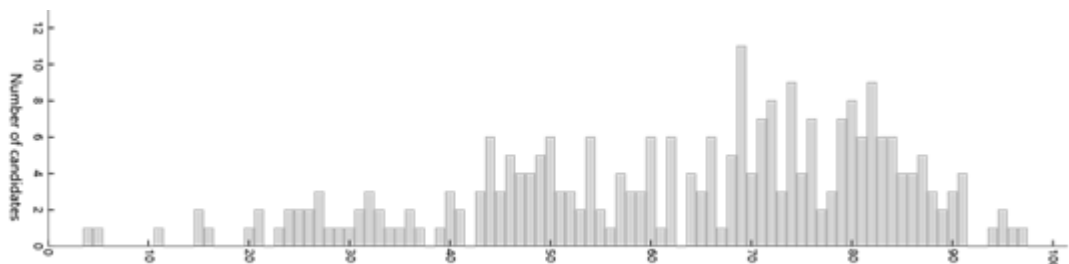
Year	Number who sat all examination components	Number of absentees from all examination components
2021	264	3
2020	287	3
2019	277	2
2018	315	3

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 264 candidates attempted the practical component with a mean of 69.20%. The written examination was attempted by 266 candidates with a mean of 62.77%.

### **Practical examination**

Attempted by 264 candidates                      Mean 69.20%                      Max 100.00%                      Min 10.00%

Section means were:

Part B: Discussion prompted by stimulus                      Mean 69.19%  
Attempted by 264 candidates                      Mean 24.21(/35)                      Max 35.00                      Min 3.50

Part C: Conversation                      Mean 69.20%  
Attempted by 264 candidates                      Mean 44.98(/65)                      Max 65.00                      Min 6.50

## Written examination

Attempted by 266 candidates                      Mean 62.77%              Max 96.78%              Min 3.91%

Section means were:

Section One: Response: Listening	Mean 65.58%		
Attempted by 266 candidates	Mean 19.67(/30)	Max 30.00	Min 2.61
Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading	Mean 62.21%		
Attempted by 266 candidates	Mean 24.89(/40)	Max 38.24	Min 0.00
Section Three: Written communication Part A: Stimulus response	Mean 59.09%		
Attempted by 254 candidates	Mean 7.09(/12)	Max 12.00	Min 0.00
Section Three: Written communication Part B: Extended response	Mean 61.81%		
Attempted by 261 candidates	Mean 11.13(/18)	Max 18.00	Min 0.00

## General comments

Most candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the Japanese language and the topics covered in the course. Their language skills were at a good standard and most candidates produced quality work. Some responses failed to address the question directly, missed vital information, or lacked accuracy in grammar.

## Practical examination

Candidates made a highly commendable effort to perform well in the practical examination, engaging actively with the discussion/conversation. Comprehension was excellent, and overall speech was clear and of good quality. Pronunciation of loan words from English was a common issue. Some basic questions such as *どのぐらい* (how long), *どうやって* (how) or *いくらぐらい* (about how much) were poorly managed by some candidates. Most candidates attempted to produce extended responses, with appropriate grammar structures in the syllabus. A challenge was to articulate or modify their rehearsed responses promptly, according to the questions being asked. Relying on their practiced texts sometimes made their responses partially irrelevant.

Common weaknesses in grammar accuracy included:

- Incorrect use of:
  - tense, especially past tense
  - particles
  - adjectives, especially *い*-type adjectives.
- Inappropriate use of:
  - ...によると...そう
  - ...てしまう
  - ...てこまる
  - ...みたい
  - ...よていです.
- using ...し...し, where it should have been ...たり...たり
- using ...のに, where it should have been *けど* or *けれど*
- using ...てほしい, where it should have been ...たいです, or vice versa
- not differentiating between <plain form> *ために* and <potential form> *ために*.

*Advice for candidates*

- Try to be confident throughout the examination. Focus on voice projection, and not fading sentence endings.

- Choose your stimulus item carefully. It should be clearly relevant to your topic and should easily prompt questions from the marker. A nondescript item may not be the best choice. You must cover your name or school name on the item (for example, your driving licence).
- In Part B, it is highly advisable that you state your topic first when introducing your stimulus item. This is to ensure that the topic of your choice is understood by markers. You can use a phrase such as:  
きょうは <your topic e.g.アルバイト> について話します。
- Provide a succinct introduction on the stimulus. Make sure you refer to the item within the context/topic you chose.
- Listen to a question carefully and directly respond to the question first before rushing in with your response. Producing extended responses is encouraged but keep in mind that you may need to modify your memorised responses. A lengthy monologue/speech is not the aim of this discussion/conversation examination.
- Pay special attention to verb tense. Make sure that you use past tense consistently when referring to the events that happened in the past.
- 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.

#### *Advice for teachers*

- Ensure that candidates choose an appropriate stimulus item related to the topic of their choice and the course content. Remind them to cover or remove personal/school name on the stimulus item.
- Advise your students to open their stimulus introduction with a statement clearly indicating what topic they are going to discuss. This will help markers to ask appropriate questions in the discussion/conversation that follow in Part B and Part C.
- Advise your students to keep their stimulus introduction within one minute so that they have appropriate time for discussion.
- Make sure your students are familiar with transition from Part B to Part C.
- Tenses of verbs continues to be a major problem. Provide more practise on verb tense, especially past tense.
- Encourage your students to listen to questions carefully and directly respond to the question first, before expanding on their response or producing rephrased responses.
- Remind students that while extended responses are encouraged, a lengthy monologue type response is not the aim of this examination. Providing excessive information does not necessarily lead to successful discussion/conversation.
- Advise students on different ways to manage unexpected questions.
- Remind students not to pass their personalised timetables to the markers.

#### **Written examination**

Overall, candidates were well prepared for the written examination and performed strongly. Candidates sometimes did not achieve a mark for missing one piece of required information or providing an incorrect interpretation of one phrase. In some cases, considering the context, rather than a word-for-word translation, was necessary to achieve successful responses. Tense was a major area of concern. Many candidates used present tense when referring to events that happened in the past or writing about their experiences. Frequent use of 'they' to refer to the subject impeded clarity of some candidates' answers in the reading section.

#### *Advice for candidates*

- Practise writing in past tense.
- Check spelling of English in your responses.

- Pay close attention to the question and understand what information is required in your responses before writing your answers. This includes the key grammar structures or phrase in the Japanese texts.
- Remember to consider the context of the text when translating. Read over your responses and ensure that they make sense in English.
- Avoid lengthy responses in the listening and reading sections.
- Avoid over-use of 'they' in your English responses. You can use the name stated in the question or 'the author' as the use of 'they' can lead to misunderstanding by the markers.
- In the writing section, be mindful of the convention.
- Read the written stimulus carefully and make sure you refer to all pieces of information in your response.
- Make sure to indicate the topic you have chosen for the extended writing as instructed.

#### *Advice for teachers*

- Emphasise the importance of using correct tense. Provide students with opportunities to practise past tense.
- Encourage students to consider the context of the Japanese texts and review their translations so that their responses flow naturally and are logical in English.
- Demonstrate how to give succinct responses in the listening and reading sections. Lengthy answers are often not required and may impede meaning.
- Encourage students to pay greater attention to the instructions given in the questions. Candidates may miss one vital piece of information in their response and consequently fail to achieve full marks.
- Provide guidance on writing practices. Remind students to address all the stimulus points directly and follow the required conventions such as the register (polite or plain form) consistently throughout their work.

### ***Comments on specific sections and questions***

#### **Practical examination**

##### **Part B: Discussion prompted by stimulus (20 Marks)**

The majority of candidates demonstrated familiarity with the procedures. Apart from a few exceptions, candidates brought an appropriate stimulus item. Some candidates failed to identify the topic of their stimulus clearly, and others covered several learning contexts. Most questions were anticipated and prepared. Unexpected questions posed a considerable challenge to many candidates, affecting the flow of the discussion.

##### **Part C: Conversation (20 Marks)**

Candidates demonstrated a solid understating of the topics covered in the course. Most questions were anticipated and well prepared by candidates. The majority of candidates made a good effort to maintain a conversation with extended responses. Unexpected questions were managed poorly, and many candidates provided simple/short responses. Articulating their responses beyond rote-learning was a challenge for many. Some candidates were trying to force grammar structures excessively into their responses, leading to an unnatural conversation.

#### **Written examination**

##### **Section One: Response: Listening (46 Marks)**

Candidates demonstrated strong performance and responded to most of the questions. They performed better in this section than in the reading and writing sections. Candidates commonly lost a mark for not including one key phrase or failing to translate one important grammar structure.

## Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading (68 Marks)

Overall, candidates responded to the questions appropriately. Some candidates skipped the large mark questions due to the amount of information required. Candidates needed to identify the speaker/subject (for example, the 'father' or the 'son'), and not overuse 'they'. Some responses were unclear and failed to convey the meaning. Legibility proved to be a challenge for the markers.

*Kanji*: the following *kanji* was poorly comprehended:

- 読書 misinterpreted as 'calligraphy' (書道) or 'reading and writing'
- 京都 misinterpreted as Tokyo (東京)
- 教室 often omitted
- 長い often omitted or misinterpreted as 夏.

Grammar: the following grammar proved challenging:

- て-form+みる not interpreted well. Confusion with ~みたい.
- ~ても not comprehended well
- potential forms were not explicitly demonstrated in the responses
- a number of punctuation errors
- spelling of English: weak vs week / weather vs whether
- key vocabulary items such as すぐそば and けが.

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

Legibility was good overall in this section. Candidates made a concerted effort to demonstrate a range of appropriate grammar structures. The majority of candidates were able to meet the requirements, including the stipulated length. Use of *kanji* was satisfactory and most productive *kanji* were included in the candidates' writings.

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

As in the previous years, candidates did not indicate their choice with a tick for Questions 33 or 34. Most candidates chose Question 33 over 34 as the preferred option.