

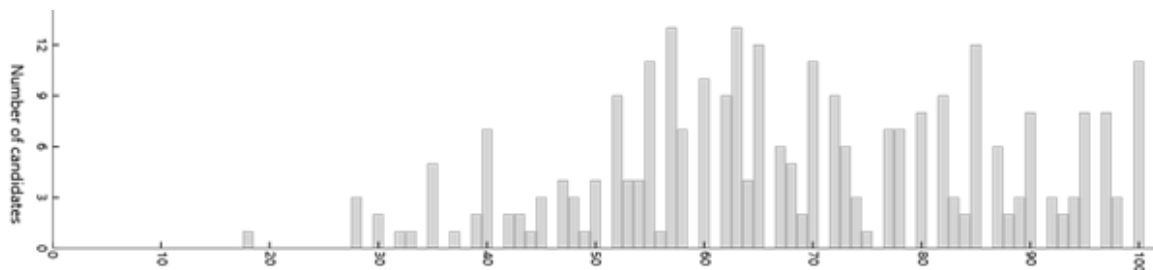


Summary report of the 2020 ATAR course examination: Japanese: Second Language

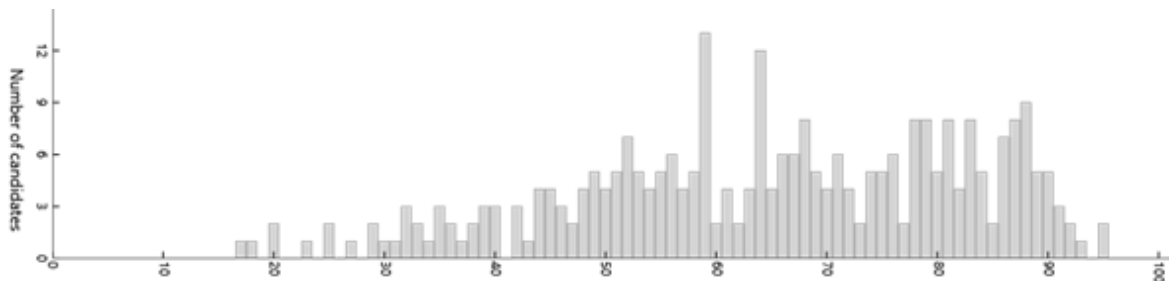
Year	Number who sat all examination components	Number of absentees from all examination components
2020	287	3
2019	277	2
2018	315	3
2017	250	1

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 examinable sections called Discussion prompted by stimulus (35%) and Conversation (65%). The written examination consists of three sections, Response: Listening (30%), Response: Viewing and reading (40%) and Written communication (30%).

A total of 288 candidates attempted the practical component with a mean of 68.64%. The written examination was attempted by 292 candidates with a mean of 64.75%.

Practical examination

Attempted by 288 candidates Mean 68.46% Max 100.00% Min 18.25%

Section means were:

Part B: Discussion prompted by stimulus	Mean 68.70%		
Attempted by 288 candidates	Mean 24.04(/35)	Max 35.00	Min 5.25
Part C: Conversation	Mean 68.33%		
Attempted by 288 candidates	Mean 44.42(/65)	Max 65.00	Min 13.00

Written examination

Attempted by 292 candidates Mean 64.75% Max 95.41% Min 16.83%

Section means were:

Section One: Response: Listening Mean 61.32%

Attempted by 292 candidates Mean 18.39(/30) Max 29.39 Min 3.06

Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading

Mean 69.12%

Attempted by 292 candidates Mean 27.65(/40) Max 39.38 Min 4.31

Section Three: Written communication Part A: Stimulus response

Mean 63.87%

Attempted by 292 candidates Mean 7.66(/12) Max 12.00 Min 1.60

Section Three: Written communication Part B: Extended response

Mean 61.36%

Attempted by 290 candidates Mean 11.05(/18) Max 17.28 Min 0.00

General comments

Candidates were familiar with the examination procedures and, in general, demonstrated a sound understanding of the Japanese language required in the course. The majority of the candidates made a commendable effort to meet the requirements, providing succinct or extended responses. Some responses failed to address the question directly or missed one piece of vital information.

Practical examination

Overall, candidates demonstrated their familiarity with the course content and were prepared well for the examination. Comprehension was excellent. Most candidates engaged confidently in discussion/conversation. The majority of the candidates attempted to produce extended responses. Some failed to provide a direct answer to the question or produced a response that was partially irrelevant, relying on memorised texts. Producing answers outside of their well-rehearsed responses was the most challenging task for many candidates.

Generally, candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the grammar structures.

Tense and particles were managed poorly by some candidates. Other weaknesses included:

- Overuse and/or incorrect use of...し...し
- Overuse and/or incorrect use of...てしまう
- Incorrect use of みたい
- Incorrect use of のに, where it should be けど
- Incorrect use of てほしい, where it should be たい
- Confusing ために and ように

Advice for candidates

- Be mindful that the practical examination format is 'discussion/conversation', not 'speech'. Practise accordingly.
- In Part B, state what topic you are going to talk about first. This will ensure that the topic of your choice is understood by markers. You can use a phrase such as:
きょうは<e.g.アルバイト>について□ します/□ そうと□ います。
私のトピックは<e.g.アルバイト>です。
- Make sure your stimulus is related to the course content and provide a succinct introduction on the stimulus.
- Listen to a question carefully before rushing in with your prepared response. Pay attention to tense or other fine details.

- Make sure 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.
- Speak confidently, and not fade as your sentence ends.

Advice for teachers

- Provide guidance in choosing an appropriate stimulus item, related to the course content.
- It is important for students to indicate clearly their topic of choice when introducing their stimulus. This will help markers to ask appropriate questions in the discussions 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.
- Encourage your students to directly respond to the question first, before expanding on their response or producing rephrased responses.
- Students need to be reminded that discussion/conversation is different from speech/monologue, and providing excessive information does not necessarily lead to successful communication.
- Students should be advised on different ways to handle unexpected questions in Japanese, without relying on English.

Written examination

Generally, candidates performed well. Time management has significantly improved, and this year almost all candidates attempted all the questions, including the extended written responses. Some responses in English lacked precision or were not appropriately worded. Giving a word-for-word translation was sometimes not successful as the translation needed to reflect the context. Tense, in particular past tense, was a problem for many candidates. Some grammar structures such as the relative clauses or the potential form were often not translated in the responses.

Advice for candidates

- More work on tense. Learn to use the present and the past tense correctly. Be mindful of the tense in questions, and respond accordingly.
- Remember to consider the context of the text when translating.
- Aim to provide concise responses. Avoid lengthy answers and make sure your responses in English makes sense.
- Pay close attention to the questions, especially when a question has several parts.
- Avoid overusing '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.
- Make sure your responses reflect the key grammar structures in the texts when required.
- In the writing section, be consistent with the convention you use.
- Make sure to indicate the topic you have chosen for the extended writing as instructed.

Advice for teachers

- Provide students with opportunities to practise tense in listening, reading and writing.
- Encourage students to review their translations/responses so that they flow naturally and are logical in English.
- Remind students that it is important 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. Some candidates missed one vital word in their response and were unable to be awarded full marks.

- Spend time on writing practice. Teach how to organise ideas and emphasise the importance of addressing all the stimulus points directly.
- Remind students to use the required 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)

Candidates were familiar with the procedures. Most candidates brought an appropriate item and delivered a well-prepared introduction within the required time. There continued to be an issue with some candidates who did not make the topic of their stimulus clear. Unexpected questions posed a challenge for some candidates and were handled poorly.

Part C: Conversation (20 Marks)

Candidates were well-prepared for this section and attempted to maintain a meaningful conversation. Most candidates made a good effort to provide extended answers incorporating relevant grammar structures and vocabulary. Some candidates delivered prepared responses excessively or without first providing a direct answer to the question.

Written examination

Section One: Response: Listening (49 Marks)

Candidates dealt this section well as in the previous year. Text 3 was specially handled well. Questions 14 and 17 were challenging for many candidates. Some responses failed to consider the context and provided inadequate translations. Commonly, candidates were unable to achieve full marks due to missing one vital piece of information. For example, in Question 5 some candidates wrote their answers in the incorrect place.

Section Two: Response: Viewing and reading (65 Marks)

Candidates performed better in this section than in the reading and writing sections this year. Most candidates attempted all questions. Candidates needed to word their responses appropriately so as to convey the meaning in English accurately. Tense, in particular past tense, and relative clauses were often not articulated in their responses correctly. There was general difficulty incorporating ‘て form + くれる・もらう’ into an English response that made meaning. Candidates overused ‘they’ to refer to the subject which impeded clarity of their answers. Kanji proved problematic to some candidates. For example:

- The Kanji 東京 and 京都 were often confused.
- The Kanji 茶道 was most challenging.
- Confusion between 新しい and 楽しい.

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

Legibility has improved compared to previous years. The majority of candidates were able to meet the content criteria, partly assisted by the stimulus sentences. Some candidates failed to use appropriate reply email convention.

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

The majority of candidates did not indicate their choice with a tick for Questions 38 and 39 this year. All candidates wrote in the appropriate register. ‘Giving advice’ proved challenging for some candidates as they could not apply appropriate grammar structures. Many candidates had difficulty in using past tense and instead wrote in present or present continuous tense. Several candidates concluded their responses with ‘I’m waiting for your response’ which was unnecessary as the required text type was an ‘article’.

Other common issues included:

- Incorrect use of ～てほしい when it should be ～たい.
- Attempting to convert いる or ある into the potential form.
- Confusing 'potential verb + ために' and 'potential verb ように'.
- Incorrect use of ～し～し, where it should be ～たり～たり, or vice versa.
- Incorrect use of のに, where it should be けど.
- Confusing between しか～ない and だけ.
- Incorrect use of ～てあげる・くれる・もらう.
- 'アルバイトを働く' should be 'アルバイトをする'.
- 'じりつになる' should be 'じりつする／じりつできる'.
- 'リラックスになれる' should be 'リラックスをする'.
- Incorrect conjugations of adjectives, volitional and potential expressions.
- With regard to Kanji, confusion between 入る and 人; Using incorrect Kanji for もの (物) in わかもの; problem with writing 年.