

2022 VCE Japanese Second Language oral external assessment report

General comments

Students were assessed on their knowledge and skills in using spoken language. The examination had two sections: a conversation of approximately seven minutes and a discussion of approximately eight minutes.

In both sections, students were assessed in:

- content and communication (relevance, depth and range of information, ideas and opinions; capacity to elaborate and reflect on information, ideas and opinions; capacity to interact with assessors; and effective communication)
- language (appropriateness of vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures; and clarity of expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo).

In general, students were well prepared for both sections of the examination and provided interesting responses to the questions they were asked. They were able to draw on a wide range of Japanese vocabulary and grammar when responding to questions from the assessors.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

This section was a general conversation between the student and the two assessors about the student's personal world and their interactions with the Japanese language and culture as learners. Students were able to support their personal reflections by referring to any of the relevant subtopics studied in class from the two prescribed themes, 'The individual' and 'The Japanese-speaking communities'.

Students who engaged in higher-scoring conversations:

- demonstrated an excellent level of understanding by responding readily and communicating confidently, and carrying the conversation forward with spontaneity
- provided an excellent range of information, ideas and opinions clearly and logically with highly relevant responses
- clarified, elaborated on and defended information, ideas and opinions very effectively
- used sophisticated vocabulary and structures accurately and appropriately; used language naturally
- demonstrated excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Students provided a range of interesting information about their personal world. It was pleasing to find out about the students' various personal connections to the language and culture of Japan. These included writing a resume in Japanese to apply for part-time work at a local Japanese restaurant, cooking Japanese food with family members and talking about future travel plans to Japan. Generally students used a range of VCE grammatical structures in their responses. Some errors were noted in the use of the following

grammatical structures: ～たり、買えることができます instead of 買うことができます (potential form – can buy), omitting そうです when using によると (according to). Students should listen carefully for the tense used in the question and respond accordingly. For example, they should use 二年前に行きました (went two years ago) instead of 二年前に行きます (go two years ago).

Content and communication

Most students were well prepared and able to converse effectively with the assessors, providing an excellent range of information and ideas. Students who scored highly provided detailed responses and replied to the questions with two or three pieces of information rather than a one-sentence response. As well as providing general information, students who scored highly were able to share their opinions by using と思います (to think) and their reasons by using から (because) or ので (because).

Generally students were able to pronounce frequently used katakana words accurately; however, some errors were noted in the pronunciation of オーストラリア (Australia), クラシック (classical) and チーム (team).

Students with a wide knowledge of vocabulary were able to respond readily to various questions, whereas students with a limited vocabulary found it challenging to understand key question words. Generally students understood basic question words such as 何 (what)、どこ (where)、いつ (when) and どんな (what kind of / type of); however, some students did not understand more challenging question words or questions that required deeper thinking, such as 週に何回 (how many times a week)、何冊 (how many books)、おどろいたこと (things that were surprising)、びっくりしたこと (things that were surprising) and いやなこと (unpleasant things) when talking about part-time work. Some students also misunderstood the question アルバイトのお金を何に使いたいですか (What do you want to use your part-time job money for?), which asked students what they wanted to buy with the money from their part-time job. Some students misinterpreted it as asking what the hourly rate was at their part-time job.

Most students were able to self-correct when required. They asked for clarification and used Japanese fillers and repair strategies effectively and were therefore able to carry the conversation forward.

Language

Students were able to use a variety of grammatical structures from the VCE Japanese Second Language study design. Some errors were noted in basic adjective agreements, especially when using くて to join い adjectives, and the て form, for example 聞いて instead of 聞いて (to listen).

Students generally demonstrated very good pronunciation. An area to focus on is the pronunciation of the long and short vowel sounds in Japanese. For example, 学校 (school)、旅行 (travel)、いっしょ (together) and オーストラリア (Australia). Some misunderstanding of vocabulary was noted in the following words: がっき (instrument)、はいゆう (actor) and きょく (song).

Section 2 – Discussion

During the discussion, students were expected to respond to questions on their chosen subtopic and their supporting visual material, which had to be related to either of the prescribed themes, 'The Japanese-speaking communities' or 'The world around us'. The focus of the discussion was on exploring aspects of the subtopic, including information, opinions and ideas. Students were expected to respond to questions on their subtopic and supporting visual material.

Students who engaged in higher-scoring discussions:

- provided an excellent range and depth of information, ideas and opinions with an original perspective on the subtopic

- elaborated on complex information and defended ideas and opinions clearly and logically with highly relevant responses
- used the visual material skilfully to support the discussion on the subtopic
- communicated information, ideas and opinions very confidently and carried the discussion forward with spontaneity.

Students chose to focus on a range of interesting topics for the discussion. It was evident that the majority of students had selected a topic they were passionate about or had a strong interest in. Popular topics included 給食 (school lunches)、コンビニ (convenience stores)、お正月 (New Year)、おひとり様文化 (solo culture)、ジブリ (Studio Ghibli)、まんが (manga)、部活 (club activities)、駅弁 (train station packed lunches)、自動販売機 (vending machines) and 高齢化社会 (ageing population).

Students are reminded that they should prepare enough information to sustain the eight-minute discussion with the assessors. Students who did not prepare well and did not conduct enough research on their subtopic were unable to elaborate on their responses. Furthermore, the image students choose should be clear enough for the assessors to see.

Content and communication

Students who scored highly were able to talk about their chosen topic from multiple perspectives. They were able to define key words and terminology related to their topic, such as explaining what 給食 (school lunches) are.

These students provided a range of relevant information and ideas on their chosen topic. They were able to support and defend their opinions, provide thoughtful solutions to the problems they had identified, and make comparisons with Australia.

Students who scored well were able to bring their image into the discussion in a creative way, rather than just describe the image. They selected an image that lent itself to provoking further exploration of ideas; assessors were therefore able to ask a variety of interesting questions.

Students were generally able to self-correct when required and used あいづち (interjections) to maintain the flow of the discussion between the assessors. Some students who were less prepared required assistance from the assessors to carry the discussion forward. In general students were able to pronounce the technical vocabulary related to their chosen topic.

Language

Students used a variety of vocabulary related to their chosen topic as well as a range of appropriate VCE grammatical structures. Those who scored highly were able to speak with rehearsed spontaneity. They were able to engage in an organic conversation with the assessors rather than delivering monologue type responses.

More information

Refer to the [VCE Japanese Second Language study design](#) and [examination criteria and specifications](#) for full details on this study and how it is assessed.