

# 2022 VCE Japanese First Language oral external assessment report

## General comments

The examination had two sections: a presentation of approximately three minutes and a discussion of approximately seven minutes.

Students were assessed on:

- their capacity to present the information appropriately and effectively
- the information, opinions and ideas they presented
- their capacity to maintain and advance an exchange appropriately and effectively
- the relevance, breadth and depth of information, ideas and opinions they presented.

All students chose an appropriate subtopic for the examination from the prescribed theme of 'Tradition and change in Japanese-speaking communities'. Students generally elaborated on their ideas and supported their opinions with relevant information. However, some students had not prepared sufficiently for the examination, as evidenced by a lack of depth of the topics discussed and an insufficiently broad vocabulary. It is important that students prepare for both sections adequately by exploring different aspects of their chosen subtopic.

## Specific information

### Section 1 – Presentation

Students presented for three minutes on an issue related to the subtopic that they had selected for their extended study of language and culture, drawn from one of the prescribed topics found under the theme 'Tradition and change in Japanese-speaking communities'. The prescribed topics were 'Literature and the arts', 'Stories from the past' and 'Youth issues'.

Students who made higher-scoring presentations:

- communicated information, ideas and opinions very effectively
- were highly engaged with the assessors and effectively used appropriate style and register
- used sophisticated vocabulary and grammatical structures accurately and appropriately
- had excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo
- presented an extensive range of highly relevant information, ideas and opinions related to the subtopic
- effectively elaborated and reflected on information, ideas and opinions presented on the issue
- presented a very clear stance on an issue related to the chosen subtopic
- effectively used evidence from the texts studied to support their stance.

Overall, students performed moderately well in their presentations. The major difficulty many students faced was an inability to complete their presentations within the allotted time. As a result, the content of their

presentation was not deep enough, although it was observed that many students tried to maintain engagement with the assessors.

## Criterion 1

Students who scored highly had thoroughly prepared for the examination and were able to communicate effectively, with excellent pronunciation and a natural, unforced tempo. They interacted well with the assessor during the presentation, maintaining appropriate eye contact and not referring excessively to their cue cards. They used a level of Japanese language appropriate for an oral examination such as *です・ます* style or honorific/humble expressions, rather than words which may be considered too casual in the examination. Students who scored less well tended to avoid looking at the assessors during their presentation, instead looking constantly at their cue cards. This was often exacerbated by a lack of preparation and resulted in many students being unable to finish their presentation within the allocated three minutes.

## Criterion 2

Students who scored highly had researched their subtopic well. They were able to discuss the content with fluency and confidence, and to elaborate succinctly and logically on their ideas and opinions, drawing on supportive evidence from their research. Conversely, students who scored less well were generally not confident of their understanding of the presentation material and were unable to elaborate on their responses as they did not research enough. They tended to be hesitant, repetitive and unnecessarily verbose, without being able to anticipate the direction of the discussion or to elaborate on discussion points as they arose.

## Section 2 – Discussion

Following the presentation, each student discussed aspects of their selected issue with the assessors and clarified the points they presented.

Students who engaged in higher-scoring discussions:

- communicated information, ideas and opinions very effectively
- were highly engaged with the assessors and effectively used appropriate style and register
- used sophisticated vocabulary and grammatical structures accurately and appropriately
- had excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo
- provided an extensive range of highly relevant and original information, ideas and opinions on the issue selected
- clarified, elaborated on or defended ideas and opinions related to the issue selected very effectively
- effectively responded to general questions on the broad subtopic beyond the issue selected, including unfamiliar issues related to the subtopic
- made excellent use of evidence from the text studied to support their discussion.

In general, students were able to adequately respond to questions raised by the examiners in the discussion section. What distinguished higher- and lower-scoring students was the language and content of the responses. The responses from higher-scoring students tended to be more content rich and expressed in a language mode matching and appropriate to the nature of the questions that had been posed.

## Criterion 3

Students who scored highly were able to access a broad and sophisticated range of Japanese vocabulary and displayed effective communication skills in terms of register, tempo and intonation. They were therefore able to engage more actively with the assessors. -Students who scored less well demonstrated a more limited Japanese vocabulary in their discussion and often lacked an appropriate register, using terms such

as やっぱ (a word rather too casual in an examination context) and なので (a connecting word that should be used in the middle of a sentence, not at the beginning, as some students had done). It is important that the grammar, words and expressions used in an oral examination are appropriate for the intended context. This is a basic requirement in a formal external assessment, and students should be able to display the required level of skill. As can often be the case, some of the communication difficulties, such as stumbling to answer unexpected questions from the assessor, were the consequence of inadequate understanding of the material being discussed and a lack of preparation for the subtopic

## Criterion 4

Students who scored highly were confident as they had an excellent range of information, ideas and opinions on their subtopic. They were therefore able to elaborate on their ideas and opinions when necessary, and respond sensibly to unanticipated questions from the assessors. They were also able to cite text references in their answers where appropriate. On the other hand, students who scored less well were not confident as they had not prepared well and had a superficial understanding of the subtopic. They tended to have difficulty presenting information in a coherent manner and could not respond adequately to questions raised by the assessors. Often they were not able to include text references, when these would have been highly relevant in assisting them to structure and strengthen their discussion.

## More information

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