

# 2019 VCE Japanese Second Language written examination report

## General comments

Students were generally well prepared for the 2019 VCE Japanese Second Language written examination. Most students demonstrated a good understanding of the Japanese language across the listening, reading and writing sections of the examination.

In Sections 1 and 2, students who achieved a high score demonstrated their ability to understand the written and aural texts. They provided correct and relevant information in their answers to each question. Their responses were expressed in clear and well-structured Japanese. They used VCE-prescribed *Kanji* and accurate script and grammar patterns. Students who did not score well failed to provide sufficient detail or included irrelevant information in their responses. Their answers lacked structure and clarity. In addition, there were many *Katakana* and *Kanji* errors.

Many students were able to produce a good piece of writing in Section 3. They used complex language structures and vocabulary successfully and applied the basic grammatical rules accurately. They understood the requirement of their chosen task and were aware of the relevant text type and different kinds of writing.

A considerable number of students did not know how to use *genkoyoshi*. They should pay attention to this problem as it is important for essay writing in the Japanese examination.

Students are advised to use the 15-minute reading time efficiently. They are reminded that dictionaries may be used during reading time.

Students should try to write their answers as neatly as possible in both English and Japanese.

## Specific information

**Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.**

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

For Part B in both Sections 1 and 2, the answers could have been written in plain form or in *desu/masu* form.

## Section 1 – Listening and responding

### Part A – Answer in English

#### Text 1

Overall, most students answered the questions well. However, a considerable number of students had trouble identifying *きれいに*, (beautifully, clearly), *見える* (be able to see) and *買った* (if you bought), and some struggled with *かんこう* (sightseeing) and *ぐらい* (approximately) in *一時 間半ぐらい*. Other common errors included:

- *きれいに* is an adverb, not an adjective
- *見える* is the potential form of *見る*.
- *買った* is not in the past tense but is the conditional form of *買う*

#### Question 1a.

in December

#### Question 1b.

Any three of:

- Hakone is close to Tokyo.
- You can see Mt Fuji clearly.
- There are hot springs.
- You can do interesting activities.

#### Question 1c.

- by buying a sightseeing passport
- by staying at cheap hotels

#### Question 1d.

- He is going by train from Tokyo.
- It takes approximately one hour and a half.

#### Text 2

#### Question 2a.

- Read manga.
- Talked with people who like Manga at the café.
- Learned how to draw Manga.
- Watched a video on Manga history.

It was incorrect to answer 'Read Manga until 12' without including 'pm'. (*昼、12時まで まんがを 読みました。 – I read Manga till 12 pm*).

#### Question 2b.

Time: 10.00 (a.m.) to 6.30 p.m.

Days: Monday to Sunday, except for Wednesday

Some students did not recognise *6時半* (6.30) and the days of the week.

#### Question 2c.

Because it gets crowded in the afternoon.

## Part B – Answer in Japanese

The answers in this section should have been written in full sentences in Japanese. While a large number of students understood the texts, there were many *Katakana* errors in their responses, including: インストラクター (instructor), プログラム (program), グループ (group), クラス (class), ミーティング (meeting), チケット (tickets) and チェック (check). The majority of students were not able to identify けんこうな食事についても教えてくれる (teach us about a healthy diet).

Students are advised to use their dictionaries to check spelling, and to use VCE-prescribed *Kanji* in their responses.

### Text 3

#### Question 3a.

先月からです。(From last month.)

#### Question 3b.

Any two of:

- インストラクターが作ってくれたプログラムでうんどうする。(She exercises according to the program prepared by the instructor.)
- グループのクラスのみんなどうんどうする。(She exercises with everyone at the group class.)
- 週末にからてのクラスに行く。(She goes to the Karate class on the weekend.)

#### Question 3c.

- けんこうな食事について教えてくれる。(They teach us about a healthy diet.)
- 新しい友だちができる。(You can make new friends.)

### Text 4

#### Question 4a.

六月三日 (6月3日) からはじまります。(It starts from 3rd June.)

#### Question 4b.

9時にミーティングがあるからです。(Because there is a meeting at 9.00 o'clock.)

#### Question 4c.

- (入口で) えいがのチケットをチェックすること。(Check the movie tickets [at the entrance].)
- (おきゃくさんを) えいがかんの中にあんないすること。(Guide the guests inside the cinema.)
- えいががおわったら、えいがかんの中をきれいにすること。(After the movie finishes, tidy up/clean the cinema.)

## Section 2 – Reading and responding

### Part A – Answer in English

In this section, students had to demonstrate clearly their understanding of the texts. A fair number of students accurately understood sections of the texts to answer the questions. Students are encouraged to focus on accuracy when giving answers in English. It is also important that they do not include information that is not in the text. In order to answer the questions, responses needed to include the following key words: *かいてき* (comfortable), *こんでいる* (crowded), *かんこうきゃく* (tourists), *外国人* (foreigners), *しせつ* (facilities), *外国語* (foreign languages), *正しい* (correct) and *通訳* (interpreter).

#### Text 5

##### Question 5a.

Either of:

- To promote comfortable/pleasant travel/ride on the train.
- To advise rules for comfortable/pleasant travel/ride on the train.

##### Question 5b.

- Set the telephone on the manner/silent mode.
- Do not speak loudly/in a loud voice.
- Do not listen to music and watch video.
- When the train is crowded, do not use the telephone at all.

A large number of students did not read the question carefully and included information that was not relevant to the question such as make-up and eating/drinking.

#### Text 6

Students found it difficult to include all the necessary and relevant information in order to achieve full marks for Questions 6c. and 6d.

##### Question 6a.

- The number of foreign tourists coming to Japan has increased.
- If the foreign tourists knew Japanese manners, they would enjoy sightseeing more.

Most students answered the first point correctly. However, some students did not understand the difference between *よく* (well) and *もっと* (more enjoyable) and did not respond to the second point correctly.

##### Question 6b.

At the entrance of hotels and/or inns.

##### Question 6c.

In addition to information/guidance on the facilities, explanations on manners need to be included in the pamphlets. For example (any two of):

- how to use slippers
- how to use chopsticks
- how to take/use the bath.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Guidance on how to use the facilities and an explanation of manners. For example, how to use slippers and chopsticks and how to enter a bath.*

**Question 6d.**

Explanations of the correct manners in a variety of foreign languages and pictures are to be included. For example:

- special manners to be observed/followed at shrines and temple
- how to dispose of rubbish/ rubbish disposal.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Various foreign languages and pictures and an explanation on correct manners. For example, explanations pertaining to the special manners of Japanese shrines and temples and how to dispose of rubbish.*

**Question 6e.**

Translating/interpreting service on smart phones.

**Question 6f.**

- It is free.
- It can be used 24 hours/whenever/at any time/always.
- Includes video chat translations.

## **Part B – Answer in Japanese**

### **Text 7**

Many students answered Questions 7a. and 7b. correctly.

**Question 7a.**

学校のげんかんにあるげたばこの中です。(They are kept in the shoe shelves at the entrance of schools.)

**Question 7b.**

学校の外に行くときは外のくつをはかなければ行けないので、めんどうだと思っているそうです。(The writer's friends think that *uwabaki* are a nuisance and troublesome because they have to change to the outdoor shoes when they go outside school.)

**Question 7c.**

むかしから日本で、げんかんでくつをぬぐしゅうかんがあります。自分の生活する場所をきれいにしておくためです。学校でうわばきをはくことは、このでんとうてきな日本のしゅうかんが学べるからです。(Since a long time ago, in Japan, it has been a custom to remove shoes at the entrance to the house. This is to keep the place where you live clean. When students wear *uwabaki* at school, they learn this Japanese traditional custom.)

This was the most challenging question for students and many copied the information directly from the text. However, there were also some well-crafted answers which explained why the writer said that wearing *uwabaki* at school is important. Responses were written in the students' own words, showing their skills at paraphrasing.

The following is an example of a high scoring response.

なぜならば、学校でうわばきをはくことのおかげで、生とが昔からの日本人のかんがえ方が学べると思っているからです。たとえば、日本で家に入る前にかんかんでくつをぬぐでんとうてきなしゅうかんがあります。うわばきのおかげで、このように自分の生活する場所をきれいにたもつことのたいせつさが分かるようになるかもしれません。同時に、うわばきは学校の中をきれいにたもつためにもいいと思っています。それでたいせつだと思っています。

## Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

The text types and kinds of writing that students could select were a speech (informative), a story (imaginative), a report (evaluative), a letter (personal) and an article (persuasive). Question 8 was the most popular topic. Very few students chose Question 9.

Students who scored well produced well-organised pieces of writing in this section. They demonstrated good understanding of the format of the text type and the requirements of each style of writing. They carefully planned and structured their responses to ensure it flowed. They also proofread their essay to minimise errors. Some students did not read the question carefully and did not include the necessary information.

### Question 8

This was the most popular question. The topic required students to give a speech at school assembly about how Australian Year 12 students balance their school life with hobbies and time spent with friends.

Students offered interesting ideas such as putting together a schedule or maintaining a diary to ensure a balance between studying, hobbies and spending time with friends. They also talked about how they study with their friends in small groups and how they spend time playing sports and doing part-time work.

### Question 9

This topic required students to write an imaginative story about what happened after an anime character came out of the television and gave them a box that they were told to open. A handful of students attempted this topic but found it difficult to develop a convincing storyline.

### Question 10

This was the second-most popular task. Students needed to write an evaluative report titled 'Good points and problems of studying languages online'.

Students evaluated the topic satisfactorily and organised their ideas effectively, sequencing them with a proper introduction and conclusion. They provided an interesting range of advantages and disadvantages of learning languages online, including:

#### Good points

- the ability to work at your own pace anytime and anywhere using a computer or smart phone
- free online lessons save you the money of buying textbooks.

#### Problems

- becoming distracted and not concentrating when there isn't a teacher present
- learning a character-based language such as Japanese requires students to master the scripts, and writing practice is difficult to do online
- students are not able to communicate face-to-face with someone.

### **Question 11**

This topic required students to write a thank-you letter to a Japanese teacher reflecting on their work experience as a Japanese language assistant at the primary school. Some students wrote a letter as if they were writing to their friends. A formal letter should contain polite language. Those who produced a good personal letter wrote about the way their thinking changed after their work experience. They described the challenging nature of working with difficult children in class and how they changed their attitude toward children as a consequence of their experience. Some wrote that they now wanted to be a Japanese teacher as they had enjoyed their experience so much.

### **Question 12**

A considerable number of students chose this topic. It required students to write a persuasive article for the school's newsletter about protecting the environment at school or at home. Students wrote about things that can be done at home to protect the environment such as reducing water consumption by buying a water tank and using its water to wash the car and water the plants. Students also wrote about what can be done at school to help the environment such as reducing plastic use, encouraging students to bring their own water bottles and reducing the amount of paper used.

Some students did not read the question carefully and wrote about protecting the environment in general. They also did not use the persuasive language required for this kind of writing.