# Japanese (continuers) Subject Assessment Advice

## Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the previous year’s assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

# School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

The folio must contain 3–5 tasks and must include one of each of the following:

* Interaction
* Text Analysis
* Text Production

*Interaction*

The Interaction between the teacher and student is to be between 5 - 7mins in length. The choice of topic is determined by the teacher.

The more successful responses commonly:

* allowed students to express and give opinions
* allowed students to discuss topics in depth
* were maintained in polite form
* included a range of complex grammatical structures
* were fluent and spontaneous
* responded accurately using the correct tense and with correct use of particles
* used a variety of communication strategies to maintain conversation.

The less successful responses commonly:

* included closed questions that did not allow for depth in the response
* followed a specific set of questions rather than following the natural flow of the conversation or the interest of the student, which did not encourage spontaneous discussion
* included long periods to process questions and formulate answers
* used only words or phrases to respond rather than complete sentences
* used English to ask for clarification or when students did not know the word in Japanese.

*Text Analysis*

Students are to analyse a text in Japanese. This could be a written or spoken text. Questions relating to interpretations as well as language analysis must be included.

The more successful responses commonly:

* included language analysis questions so that students were able to discuss text types, purpose of the text and use language examples to support their findings and discuss the style of language used in the text
* included questions that enabled students to answer in depth and use the text to support their answers
* came from tasks that provided an opportunity for students to demonstrate learning of interpretation, evaluation, and reflection.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not include language analysis questions for the students to answer
* did not ask students to explain their reasons using evidence from the text or to give examples form the text to support their findings
* used past examinations that included Interpretation questions only
* were marked on a number scheme, rather than assessed using the performance standards.

*Text Production*

The text production is a written text in Japanese. The text type, topic and length of the text production are chosen by the teacher.

The more successful responses commonly:

* allowed students to explore the topic in depth
* allowed students to be creative
* included an extensive range of complex grammatical structures
* demonstrated accuracy in the use of grammatical structures.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth in ideas
* included only basic grammatical structures
* included many grammatical errors, including tense, spelling and particle errors
* did not include kanji characters prescribed in the SACE kanji list.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

The In-depth Study must include:

* Oral presentation in Japanese
* Written response in Japanese
* English reflection

Each task must differ in context, purpose and audience. Common topics included anime, sumo, Japanese food, tourist attractions, and geisha.

*Oral Presentation in Japanese*

*The Oral Presentation is 3 – 5 minutes long.*

The more successful responses commonly:

* discussed in depth the chosen topic, using current statistics and information related to the topic
* discussed current issues associated with the topic
* demonstrated a deep understanding of the researched topic
* were well structured in their presentation of the topic
* included an extensive range of complex grammatical structures
* were presented fluently, with very good pronunciation and intonation.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided basic and well known information on the chosen topic
* presented with pronunciation and intonation errors and this impeded meaning.

Written Response in Japanese

The Written Response in Japanese has a maximum character count of 600 characters.

The more successful responses commonly:

* included in-depth information on their chosen topic in the written response
* included an extensive range of complex grammatical structures
* used a range of cohesive devices to link ideas
* wrote with excellent control of language
* wrote in diary form and expressed feelings about their experiences after the event.

The less successful responses commonly:

* included little information relevant to the chosen topic
* did not write with accuracy
* did not include a variety of grammatical structures
* did not include a variety of cohesive structures to link ideas.

English Reflection

The English Reflection is a maximum of 600 words in written form or an oral presentation of 5–7 minutes.

The more successful responses commonly:

* reflected critically on how cultures, values, and beliefs were represented in texts
* made connections between their own values and practices and with what they had explored through texts.

The less successful responses commonly:

* based their reflection on the content of what they had learnt through the chosen topic
* described their own values, without making connections with those represented in texts.

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 3: Examination

**Oral Examination**

198 students attended the Japanese Continuers Oral Examination in 2017 (9% increase from 2016). For the Conversation part, 24% of the students achieved an A grade, in which 7% received the highest A+, while 13% received D+ or lower. The Discussion part was less successfully handled, with 23% of the students receiving an A grade (8% achieving A+) while 30 % receiving a D or an E grade (19% and 11% respectively).

**Part 1: Conversation**

*The more successful students commonly:*

* listened to the examiners carefully and comprehended questions thoroughly
* gave relevant responses in their own words
* did not reply using memorised answers
* comfortably went beyond the minimum answers and responded with the appropriate amount of detail and relevant information
* presented well-considered opinions and ideas with reasons
* expressed complex ideas accurately and effectively
* Handled less-familiar questions well, not evading them by saying ‘I don't know’
* demonstrated good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar
* spoke in complete sentences
* sought help/clarification effectively when needed
* spoke clearly at an appropriate pace and volume
* maintained the natural flow of conversation e.g. by using fillers, confirming the question, seeking clarification, and thanking to the examiner when received help
* understood and used the formal register appropriately (e.g. お名前vs. 名前, ご家族 vs. 家族, お兄さん vs. 兄, すみません、もういちどおねがいします vs. もういちど？).

*The less successful students commonly:*

* demonstrated insufficient knowledge of Stage 2 level vocabulary and grammar
* did not fully understand the questions and gave irrelevant answers
* had not had enough practice to engage in more natural/genuine conversation in Japanese
* relied on the question list from the SACE Board website and rehearsed answers
* recited long prepared answers
* did not have strategies to deal with unexpected questions
* could only answer simple questions
* gave short responses with little or no information/content
* spoke hesitantly with many unnatural pauses
* made frequent grammatical errors that impeded meaning (e.g. tense and particles
* did not understand when the same questions were asked in different ways e.g. どのくらい/ 何回/何時間,　何で/どうやって, なぜ/どうして, ほうかご/じゅぎょうが終わってから, 学校で何を勉強して/学校のかもく).

**Part 2: Discussion**

*The more successful students commonly:*

* had chosen a suitable (i.e. manageable and sufficiently challenging) topic for their In-depth study
* had chosen a topic of genuine interest
* demonstrated good understanding of the chosen topic
* provided solid evidence of research e.g. clear interpretation of books/websites used, not just the titles
* made use of appropriate and authoritative sources for research
* presented careful and insightful reflection on Japanese and own cultures, values and practices
* effectively presented reflection on their own learning
* thoroughly comprehended examiners’ questions and gave relevant answers in their own words
* took part in genuine discussion, speaking in their own words rather than presenting a memorised ‘speech’ about what they had learnt
* displayed a good understanding of subject-specific vocabulary
* used a wide range of expressions, both simple and complex, accurately and effectively
* engaged the audience (examiners) well using effective body language, eye contact, and voice intonation.

*The less successful students commonly:*

* did not fully understand the examination procedures and requirements e.g. outline form, one-minute (not assessed) talk option
* had chosen a topic that was too challenging for their language level
* had chosen a topic that was too broad or too simple, making any depth of treatment difficult
* were unable to talk in any detail about their main points on the outline form
* were unable to display sufficient knowledge of their topic
* did not provide good evidence of research e.g. could not explain about used books/websites
* gave incorrect or irrelevant responses to questions
* did not understand basic question words for an IDS discussion e.g. どうやって, どうして , 学びました , しらべました , 分かりました , 変わりました , 多い , 少ない , 文化 , かんけい, いみ etc.
* did not understand or know how to respond to less-expected questions
* relied heavily on memorised answers which were often too long and irrelevant
* provided very limited answers to reflection questions e.g. おもしろかった、むずかしかった.

**Written Examination**

200 students took the Japanese Continuers Written Examination. Students’ scores were spread over a wide range, with all questions discriminating students’ levels well. Overall results show the students’ sound knowledge and understanding of basic Japanese language in the SACE Continuers level.

Questions 3 (Listening) and 6 (Reading and Responding A) were generally handled well by most students, with the mean scores close to 70%. Questions that proved to be the most challenging to many students were Question 2 (Listening) and Question 7 (Reading and Responding A) with the mean scores falling below 50%.

**Section 1: Listening and Responding**

In general, there was a good understanding of the texts and the questions posed. Most students were adequately able to identify basic information, but often lacked an ability to pick up and include finer and deeper detail of the texts.

Question 1

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* correctly identified what John wants his host mother to do
* fully identified what impressed John’s host grandmother and why.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* did not include all necessary details
* contained incorrect/inaccurate information (e.g. grandmother was impressed because John could eat so much).

Question 2

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* fully identified why Kenji is stressed
* correctly identified what Kenji asks Sakura to do.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* contained incorrect information (e.g. Kenji playing netball, playing a game, having a test at 4pm, asking Sakura to help him study for the test)
* did not give all necessary details.

Question 3

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* correctly completed the reservation form in Japanese.
* fully identified the special request that Ms Honda makes.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* contained incorrect information (e.g. date, number of people, はたち as the birthday person’s name)
* did not include all necessary details.

Question 4

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* correctly identified what Junko would like to do for their wedding anniversary
* identified and provided comprehensive justification of whether or not Masaru agrees with Junko’s suggestion.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* incorrectly identified what Junko would like to do for their wedding anniversary (e.g. go to Hong Kong, go to a French restaurant)
* identified only some relevant information
* gave broad and vague information (one’s impression) rather than specific details from the text
* contained Japanese words from the text without giving English translation.

Question 5

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* displayed comprehensive understanding of what to do in an earthquake based on the information in the text
* displayed comprehensive understanding of what to prepare for an earthquake based on the information in the text.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* included inaccurate/incorrect information (e.g. つくえas square, not using gas, be wary of a gas leak, first aid kits)
* lacked necessary details and depth (e.g. did not mention all relevant items to pack in a backpack, did not include talking with host family).

**Section 2: Reading and Responding (Part A)**

Overall, students demonstrated general understanding of the texts, but many did not show comprehensive understanding of details in the texts and/or provide explicit answers.

*Question 6*

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* identified and provided comprehensive justification for Yuka’s plans
* displayed comprehensive understanding of how Yuka’s father feels about her plan
* displayed comprehensive understanding of how Yuka’s mother feels about her plans.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* provided inaccurate or partial detail of Yuka’s plans
* provided limited justification for Yuka’s plans
* displayed inaccurate or partial understanding of how differently Yuka’s father and mother feel about her plans.

Question 7

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* displayed comprehensive understaffing of why Ken wasn’t interested in playing the shakuhachi during his childhood, including Ken’s resistance to playing the instrument out of obligation to his family heritage
* provided explicit explanation of the phrase ‘心が動いた’ in the context of this text
* identified the type of the text and provided justification with evidence from the text.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* displayed limited understanding of why Ken wasn’t interested in playing the shakuhachi during his childhood
* failed to identify relevant information in the text (e.g. Ken was in America, seeing the shakuhachi being played with rock music on a video)
* misidentified the text type (e.g. letter, diary entry).

**Section 2: Reading and Responding (Part B)**

Most students (98%) attempted this question. 41% achieved a score of 10/15 or higher (67%). The mean score was 8.7.

Question 8

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* displayed accurate understanding of the question (e.g. context, audience and purpose)
* displayed accurate and in-depth understanding of the stimulus text
* identified and responded to relevant points in the stimulus text
* created the desired interest by elaborating ideas beyond the obvious
* included a wide range of effective expressions (e.g. relative clause, nominalisation) with high degrees of accuracy
* displayed effective use of cohesive devices (e.g. conjunctions)
* observed the text type (review) and the word limit.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* demonstrated limited understanding of the question
* displayed only superficial understanding of the stimulus text (e.g. neglecting the context of situation)
* failed to identify the main responding points in the stimulus text
* conveyed only basic information mostly copied from the stimulus text
* contained irrelevant content and went over the word limit
* contained frequent grammatical and spelling errors.

**Section 3: Writing in Japanese**

99.5% students attempted the task. Question 9 was the most popular chosen by 62% of the students, followed by Question 11 (33%) and Question 10 (5%). For Questions 9 and 11, scores were distributed widely, while for Question 10 scores were more polarised between the highest and the lowest. The mean scores for each question were 18.5 (Question 9), 13.8 (Question 10) and 16.9 (Question 11) out of the possible 30.

Question 9

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* clearly described a connection between language learning at school and opportunities beyond the classroom, using examples from one’s own life
* created the desired impact (encouragement to continue to study Japanese) and interest to engage the intended audience of the speech
* included a range of logical and persuasive expressions (e.g. まずはじめに、さいごに、~よ、~ね、~でしょう、と思いませんか)
* contained limited grammatical errors
* observed the text type conventions (speech) and the word limit.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* wrote only about one’s language learning experience without mentioning its connection with opportunities beyond the classroom
* lacked detail and depth, and were not persuasive enough (e.g. you should continue to study Japanese because it’s fun)
* contained many grammatical and spelling errors that impeded meaning
* were often too short or incomplete.

Question 10

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* effectively informed readers of the importance of following the customs of people who live there when you visit a foreign land
* clearly described real life scenarios relating to the meaning of the proverb
* used humour to engage readers
* accurately used a wide range of appropriate expressions to convey meaning and achieve cohesion
* observed the text type conventions (article) and the word limit.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* displayed partial understanding of the question and/or the proverb
* wrote about overseas travel experiences without providing any information and/or ideas relating to the proverb
* consisted of simple vocabulary and short sentences with errors
* did not observe the conventions of the required text type.

Question 11

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* vividly reflected on and described the gift and the context (when/why/how/from whom) in which it was given
* explained why the gift is memorable
* clearly and effectively described the significant impact the gift has had on you
* expressed personal feelings eloquently to help emphasise the impact of the gift
* contained limited grammatical errors.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* lacked detail and depth in describing the gift and the context (when/why/how/from whom) in which it was given
* failed to include the impact the gift has had
* included a limited range of expressions, using the same expression repetitively (e.g. 大好き, すごい, たいせつ)
* contained many grammatical errors that significantly impeded meaning (in particular the past tense and plain form).