



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
In Japanese (1JA0)

Paper 4H: Writing in Japanese

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## General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

# GCSE Japanese Higher tier

## Paper 4 Mark scheme

### General guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

#### Step 1 Decide on a band

- You should first of all consider the answer as a whole and then decide which descriptors most closely match the answer and place it in that band. The descriptors for each band indicate the different features that will be seen in the student's answer for that band.
- When assigning a band you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not focus disproportionately on small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different bands of the mark scheme you should use a 'best fit' approach for defining the band and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the band, for example if the response is predominantly band 5–8 with a small amount of band 9–12 material, it would be placed in band 5–8 but be awarded a mark near the top of the band because of the band 9–12 content.

#### Step 2 Decide on a mark

- Once you have decided on a band you will then need to decide on a mark within the band.
- You will decide on the mark to award based on the quality of the answer; you will award a mark towards the top or bottom of that band depending on how students have evidenced each of the descriptor bullet points.
- You will modify the mark based on how securely the trait descriptors are met at that band.
- You will need to go back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the band and the mark are appropriate.

## Assessment criteria for the Higher tier

### Question 1 – Higher tier (20 marks)

For this question, students' work is marked by Pearson using assessment criteria given in two mark grids:

- communication and content
- linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

This question contains four bullet points that form part of the task. Failure to cover all four bullet points will impact on the marks that can be awarded against the requirements of the two mark grids for this question (see below). There is no requirement for even coverage of the bullet points in any band. However, in order to access marks in the top band students must refer to all bullet points and meet the other assessment criteria in the top band.

This question requires students to write in a familiar style/register (see *Additional guidance*).

The student is expected to produce 160–180 characters for this task. The number of characters is approximate and students will not be penalised for writing more or fewer characters than recommended in the character count. All work produced by the student must be marked. Any work in romaji will not be credited.

### Question 1: communication and content mark grid – Higher tier

| Mark | Descriptor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0    | No rewardable material                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1–3  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicates brief information relevant to the task with little development</li><li>• Limited adaptation of language to narrate, inform and interest; straightforward personal opinions are given with limited justification.</li><li>• Expresses straightforward thoughts and ideas; uses common vocabulary and expression with repetition, limited kanji</li><li>• Variable use of appropriate register and style</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 4–6  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicates information relevant to the task, with development of the occasional key point and idea</li><li>• Some effective adaptation of language to narrate and inform; attempts are made to interest and give convincing personal opinions that are occasionally successful</li><li>• Expresses mainly straightforward thoughts and ideas with the occasional individual thought/idea; some different examples of common vocabulary and expression, including some different examples of common kanji</li><li>• Appropriate use of register and style is evident but with inconsistencies</li></ul> |

| Mark  | Descriptor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7–9   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates information relevant to the task, with development of some key points and ideas</li> <li>Mostly effective adaptation of language to narrate and inform, some effective language to interest and give convincing personal opinions</li> <li>Some examples of creative language use to express individual thoughts and ideas; a variety of mainly common vocabulary and expression, including a variety of mainly common kanji</li> <li>Appropriate use of register and style is evident but with occasional inconsistency</li> </ul> |
| 10–12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates information relevant to the task with expansion of key points and ideas</li> <li>Effective adaptation of language to narrate, inform, interest and give convincing personal opinions</li> <li>Frequent examples of creative language use to express individual thoughts and ideas; a variety of vocabulary and expression, including a variety of kanji</li> <li>Appropriate use of register and style throughout, with minimal inconsistency</li> </ul>                                                                            |

### Additional guidance

**Creative language use:** examples of creative language use are:

- using language to create an effect
- using language, including common, high-frequency and simple language, to respond to uncommon/unexpected contexts and purposes
- using language to express thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions
- using language to inform and narrate ideas, thoughts and points of view to maintain interest
- applying a variety of vocabulary and structures to maintain interest
- using language effectively to achieve more complex purposes, for example to interest, to convince.

**Individual** thoughts, ideas and opinions: this is linked to creative use of language whereby students use language to express original thoughts, ideas and points of view that go beyond the minimum/standard/predictable response.

**Register and style definition: familiar register and style** – this includes language that students would use with friends and people of a similar age, such as endearments and informal greetings and forms of address where appropriate.

**Adaptation of language to narrate, inform, interest and give convincing opinions:** adapts language to achieve different purposes in the language; students may adapt language more effectively for one purpose than another, for example they may use language effectively to narrate but less effectively to interest or give a convincing opinion.

### Question 1: linguistic knowledge and accuracy mark grid – Higher tier

| Mark | Descriptor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0    | No rewardable material                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 1–2  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses straightforward grammatical structures, some repetition</li><li>• Produces brief, simple sentences, limited linking of sentences</li><li>• Variable accuracy with language and structures, variable success when referring to past, present and future events, regular ambiguity; often errors prevent meaning being conveyed</li></ul>                                                                                              |
| 3–4  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses mostly straightforward grammatical structures, occasional repetition</li><li>• Produces occasionally extended sentences linked with common, straightforward conjunctions</li><li>• Some accurate language and structures, including some successful references to past, present and future events, some ambiguity; often errors occur that hinder clarity of communication and occasionally prevent meaning being conveyed</li></ul> |
| 5–6  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Different examples of straightforward grammatical structures are evident</li><li>• Produces some extended sentences that are linked with common, straightforward conjunctions</li><li>• Frequently accurate language and structures, including mostly successful references to past, present and future events, occasional ambiguity; sometimes errors occur that hinder clarity of communication</li></ul>                               |
| 7–8  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some variation of grammatical structures, occasional complex structure</li><li>• Produces frequently extended sentences, well linked together</li><li>• Generally accurate language and structures, including successful references to past, present and future events; occasionally errors occur that hinder clarity of communication</li></ul>                                                                                          |

#### Additional guidance

**Complex** grammatical structures are considered to be:

- all grammar and structures included in the grammar list that are specific to Higher tier GCSE
- varied and complex word order
- using extended sentences that include a range of structures, for example conjunctions, pronouns, reported speech and/or a range of lexis, for example to express abstract ideas/convey justified arguments
- conceptually more challenging language.

**Straightforward** grammatical structures are considered to be:

- repetitive, simple word order
- short, simple sentences that use a repetitive range of common, high-frequency structures
- simple ideas, opinions and thoughts that are expressed but which are not justified.

**Errors:** students are not expected to produce perfect, error-free writing in order to access the top band as errors are also made by native speakers. The mark grid describes the frequency of errors and the impact that errors have on coherence.

Errors that **do not hinder clarity**:

- errors that do not affect meaning, for example using the particle 'wa は' instead of 'ga が'.
- infrequent errors that do not distract the reader from the content and which result in coherent writing
- errors in formation of kana and kanji, for example a ろ that looks more like the number 3 than り.

Errors that **hinder clarity**:

- errors that make writing difficult to understand immediately (even if the meaning is eventually understood)/errors that force readers to re-read in order to understand what is meant, for example inappropriate tense formation, such as 'Ashita ikimashita あした 行きました。'
- frequent errors hinder clarity as they will distract the reader from the content of the writing
- kanji or kana that are misformed to the extent that they force readers to re-read, for example an お with a missing dot written instead of an あ.

Errors that **prevent meaning being conveyed**:

- errors that mean the reader cannot understand the message
- errors that convey the wrong message
- errors that make it unclear who is carrying out the action
- incorrect kanji use, for example きのういきま下 or 工園 written instead of 公園
- mother-tongue interference.

**NB:** these are examples only and do not constitute a finite list.

## Question 2 – Higher tier (28 marks)

For this question, students' work is marked by Pearson using assessment criteria contained in two mark grids:

- communication and content
- linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

This question contains four bullet points that form part of the task. Failure to cover all four bullet points will impact on the marks that can be awarded against the requirements of the two mark grids for this question (see below). There is no requirement for even coverage of the bullet points in any band. However, in order to access marks in the top band students must refer to all bullet points and meet the other assessment criteria in the top band.

This question requires students to write in a formal register/style (see *Additional guidance*).

The student is expected to produce 260–300 characters for this task. The number of characters is approximate and students will not be penalised for writing more or fewer characters than recommended in the character count. All work produced by the student must be marked. Any work in romaji will not be credited.

### Question 2: communication and content mark grid – Higher tier

| Mark | Descriptor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0    | No rewardable material                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1–4  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicates occasionally detailed information relevant to the task with occasionally effective development of key points and ideas</li><li>• Some effective adaptation of language to narrate, inform, interest/convince</li><li>• Occasional examples of creative use of language to express individual thoughts, ideas and points of view, occasional justification; variety of mainly common vocabulary and expression, including a variety of mainly common kanji</li><li>• Appropriate use of register and style with the occasional inconsistency</li></ul> |
| 5–8  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicates some detailed information relevant to the task, frequently effective development of key points and ideas</li><li>• Frequently effective adaptation of language to narrate, inform, interest/convince</li><li>• Examples of creative use of language to express some individual thoughts, ideas and points of view, some justified; some variation of vocabulary and expression, including some variation in use of kanji</li><li>• Appropriate use of register and style with few inconsistencies</li></ul>                                           |
| 9–12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicates detailed information relevant to the task, with mostly effective development of key points and ideas</li><li>• Mostly effective adaptation of language, to narrate, inform, interest/convince</li><li>• Creative use of language to express a range of individual thoughts, ideas and points of view, most of which are justified; variety of vocabulary and expression, including a variety of kanji</li><li>• Predominantly appropriate use of register and style</li></ul>                                                                         |

| Mark  | Descriptor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13–16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates detailed information relevant to the task, with consistently effective development of key points and ideas</li> <li>Consistently effective adaptation of language to narrate, inform, interest/convince</li> <li>Creative use of language to express and fully justify a wide range of individual thoughts, ideas and points of view; wide variety of vocabulary and expression, including a wide variety of kanji</li> <li>Consistent use of appropriate register and style throughout</li> </ul> |

### **Additional guidance**

***Creative use of language:*** examples of creative language use are:

- using language to create an effect
- using language, including common, high-frequency and simple language, to respond to uncommon/unexpected contexts and purposes
- using language to express thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions
- using language to inform and narrate ideas, thoughts and points of view to maintain interest
- applying a variety of vocabulary and structures to maintain interest
- using language effectively to achieve more complex purposes, for example to interest, to convince.

***Individual*** thoughts, ideas and opinions: this is linked to creative use of language whereby students use language to express original thoughts, ideas and points of view that go beyond the minimum/standard/predictable response.

***Adaptation of language to narrate, inform, interest/convince:*** adapts language to achieve different purposes in the language; students may adapt language more effectively for one purpose than another, for example they may use language effectively to narrate but less effectively to interest/convince.

***Register and style definition: Formal register and style*** –this includes language that students would use with adults, for example teachers, employers, customers, officials, in a formal context. It includes avoidance of slang, over-familiar language, exaggeration, endearments, writing in a conversational style, inappropriate abbreviations used in social media chat. It also includes using polite social conventions such as writing “please” when making requests.

## Question 2: linguistic knowledge and accuracy mark grid – Higher tier

| Mark  | Descriptor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0     | No rewardable material                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1–3   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses a variety of mainly straightforward grammatical structures, occasional examples of repetitive complex language</li><li>• Occasional sequences of fluent writing, occasionally extended, well-linked sentences</li><li>• Straightforward grammatical structures are largely accurate with occasional accurate use of complex language, some successful references to past, present and future events but some ambiguity; errors occur that sometimes hinder clarity of communication</li></ul> |
| 4–6   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some variation of grammatical structures, including some repetitive instances of complex language</li><li>• Prolonged sequences of fluent writing, some extended, well-linked sentences</li><li>• Generally accurate language and structures, frequently successful references to past, present and future events, occasional ambiguity; errors occur that occasionally hinder clarity of communication</li></ul>                                                                                  |
| 7–9   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses a variety of grammatical structures including some different examples of complex language</li><li>• Predominantly fluent response; frequent extended sentences, mostly well linked</li><li>• Mostly accurate language and structures, mostly successful references to past, present and future events; errors occur but they rarely hinder clarity of communication</li></ul>                                                                                                                 |
| 10–12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses a wide variety of grammatical structures, including complex language</li><li>• Fluent response throughout with extended, well-linked sentences</li><li>• Consistently accurate language and structures, consistently successful references to past, present and future events; any errors do not hinder the clarity of the communication</li></ul>                                                                                                                                            |

### Additional guidance

**Complex** grammatical structures are considered to be:

- all grammar and structures included in the grammar list that are specific to Higher tier GCSE
- varied and complex word order
- using extended sentences that include a range of structures, for example conjunctions, pronouns, reported speech and/or a range of lexis, for example to express abstract ideas/convey justified arguments
- conceptually more challenging language.

**Straightforward** grammatical structures are considered to be:

- repetitive, simple word order
- short, simple sentences that use a repetitive range of common, high-frequency structures
- simple ideas, opinions and thoughts that are expressed but which are not justified.

**Errors:** students are not expected to produce perfect, error-free writing in order to access the top band as errors are also made by native speakers. The mark grid describes the frequency of errors and the impact that errors have on coherence.

Errors that **do not hinder clarity:**

- errors that do not affect meaning, for example using the particle 'wa は' instead of 'ga が'.
- infrequent errors that do not distract the reader from the content and which result in coherent writing
- errors in formation of kana and kanji, for example a ろ that looks more like the number 3 than ろ.

Errors that **hinder clarity:**

- errors that make writing difficult to understand immediately (even if the meaning is eventually understood)/errors that force readers to re-read in order to understand what is meant, for example inappropriate tense formation, such as 'Ashita ikimashita あした 行きました。'
- frequent errors hinder clarity as they will distract the reader from the content of the writing
- kanji or kana that are misformed to the extent that they force readers to re-read, for example an お with a missing dot written instead of an あ.

Errors that **prevent meaning being conveyed:**

- errors that mean the reader cannot understand the message
- errors that convey the wrong message
- errors that make it unclear who is carrying out the action
- incorrect kanji use, for example きのういきま下 or 工園 written instead of 公園
- mother-tongue interference.

**NB:** these are examples only and do not constitute a finite list.

### Question 3 – Higher tier (12 marks)

#### Translation mark grid and example response

The translation mark grid assesses both communication and content and linguistic knowledge and accuracy. When awarding marks, the student's response across the whole paragraph should be considered. Any work in romaji will not be credited.

| Mark  | Descriptor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0     | No rewardable material                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1–3   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Meaning of some individual words or phrases is conveyed; frequent omissions/incorrectly communicated words and phrases/ mother-tongue interference</li><li>Some straightforward structures are accurate but regular errors prevent meaning of individual phrases/sentences being conveyed</li></ul> |
| 4–6   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The meaning of the passage is partially communicated, some words and phrases are omitted/incorrectly communicated</li><li>Language and structures are accurate in some phrases and sentences but some errors prevent meaning being conveyed</li></ul>                                               |
| 7–9   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The meaning of the passage is mostly communicated, occasional words are omitted/incorrectly communicated</li><li>Mostly accurate language and structures; errors occur that occasionally hinder clarity and in rare instances prevent meaning being conveyed</li></ul>                              |
| 10–12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The meaning of the passage is fully communicated</li><li>Consistently accurate language and structures, any errors do not hinder clarity</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                  |

| Question number | Example response                                                                                                             |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3               | 私はよく外国に行きます。<br>電車（で）の旅行・旅は楽しくて（楽しいですし）、かんきょうに いいと思います。<br>きょねん日本の学生（たち）と・に 会って、日本語を話す・しゃべることができました。<br>今年もまた（その学生に）会うつもりです。 |

#### Additional guidance

Errors that **do not hinder clarity**:

- errors that do not affect meaning, for example using the particle 'wa は' instead of 'ga が'.
- infrequent errors that do not distract the reader from the content and which result in coherent writing
- errors in formation of kana and kanji, for example a ろ that looks more like the number 3 than ろ.

Errors that **hinder clarity**:

- errors that make writing difficult to understand immediately (even if the meaning is eventually understood)/errors that force readers to re-read in order to

understand what is meant, for example inappropriate tense formation, such as 'Ashita ikimashita あした 行きました。'

- frequent errors hinder clarity as they will distract the reader from the content of the writing
- kanji or kana that are misformed to the extent that they force readers to re-read, for example an お with a missing dot written instead of an あ.

Errors that **prevent meaning being conveyed**:

- errors that mean the reader cannot understand the message
- errors that convey the wrong message
- errors that make it unclear who is carrying out the action
- incorrect kanji use, for example きのういきま下 or 工園 written instead of 公園
- mother-tongue interference.

**NB:** these are examples only and do not constitute a finite list.