

## JAPANESE A

### Overall grade boundaries

|                    |     |      |       |       |       |
|--------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Grade:</b>      | E   | D    | C     | B     | A     |
| <b>Mark range:</b> | 0-7 | 8-15 | 16-22 | 23-28 | 29-36 |

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The suitability of the work submitted has been much improved this year. Normally, most of the EEs submitted for categories 1 and 2 are good. Category 3 EEs continue to encounter difficulty. Even when a topic appears to be well-chosen, the candidates seem to limit their research to a reading of some reference books, producing just a summary of these books without showing their own reasoned argument, analysis or evaluation.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### Criterion A: research question

Some research questions are too broad so the candidates from the outset lack precision in their thinking and reasoned argument. A good essay has a clear and precise research question which is both systematic for the subject and category it is registered in, and sufficiently focused.

#### Criterion B: introduction

Almost all EEs presented an introduction. Only few candidates used it effectively, however, and many omitted one or more of the required elements. Candidates often introduce the plot and/or the biographical detail of the author, without explaining the significance of the topic and why it is worthy of investigation.

#### Criterion C: investigation

Many candidates fail in generating an imaginative range of appropriate sources. Most candidates use only the most obvious Internet sites. Using mainly Internet sites as a principal resource does not permit candidates to generate original ideas and/or comments in an academic context. The best essays succeed in consulting an imaginative range of appropriate resources.

### Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

In general, most candidates have good knowledge of their research area, and are able to demonstrate understanding in an academic context.

### Criterion E: reasoned argument

Many essays present ideas, though some are not always clear and coherent. There are many interesting ideas, but some do not progress into evidencing sufficient reasoned argument. The stronger essays use citations in a way that supports the arguments made.

### Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills

Category 1 and 2 essays normally show effective and good application of appropriate analytical and evaluative skills. Many category 3 essays evidence a struggle with this, however, and do not always demonstrate analysis. There is a tendency to merely repeat the statements of others.

### Criterion G: use of language appropriate to the subject:

Normally the use of language is good.

### Criterion H: conclusion

Conclusions are satisfactory. A small number of essays lack some of the required elements in order to score full marks here.

### Criterion I: formal presentation

Formal presentation was generally good.

### Criterion J: abstract

There is a big difference in the quality of abstracts submitted by candidates. About half of candidates showed a clear understanding of the requirements of an Abstract, thus enabling them to achieve the highest mark for this criterion. A number of candidates do not understand the nature of the Abstract, and do not include the required elements as detailed clearly in the EE guide. Most candidates that struggle with the Abstract simply repeat the Introduction or Conclusion. The Abstract is a distinct element with its own requirements. Easy marks are lost if candidates and supervisors overlook the Abstract.

### Criterion K: holistic judgement

There are some outstanding essays that are original, imaginative and interesting to read, thus deserving of high marks. However many essays are lacking originality, and candidates simply present well-established or ordinary themes. Despite being pre-university level, students should still be encouraged to write on a topic with passion and imagination, and supervisors should help them achieve a good basis for this.

## Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Teachers must read the criteria carefully and share them with candidates, so that they have correct and clear information regarding the demands of the EE, and how it is assessed. If this

is not done, candidates risk losing points unnecessarily. A clear and appropriate topic and resulting research question is very important. Supervisors should discuss the topic with the candidate to ensure that they have sufficient focus, maximizing their potential to do well. Supervisors with little experience in supervising an EE should discuss with other experienced language teachers, and try to participate in an EE or Japanese A workshop. The relevant sections of the EE guide are now available in Japanese on the OCC.

## Further Comments

Supervisors should be encouraged to ensure that they write a comment on the coversheet. The examiners make use of these comments when assessing criterion K. They should be used as the opportunity to highlight the strengths exhibited by the candidate during the research process that are not necessarily visible in the body of the EE. Supervisors should use the wording of criterion K as a basis for their comments when gauging what to include. The category of the EE should be added to the coversheet.