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**Examiners' Report**  
**Principal Examiner Feedback**

**Summer 2024**

**Pearson Edexcel GCSE**  
**In Japanese (1JA0)**  
**Paper 4F: Writing**

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## Introduction

The format of this exam, now including two options for Q2 as a permanent feature, is now familiar to all. However, there are still some things that it would perhaps be useful to remind candidates/teachers of:

- Practicing writing out frequently occurring words regularly is essential to reinforce spelling. Amongst the words commonly misspelt this year: りょこう (Q3a)、オンライン (Q3b)、スポーツ (Q4a)、サッカー(Q4b)、とうきょう (Q4d/e). As can be seen, it is not only katakana words that cause spelling problems.
- Trying to make as clear as possible the difference in katakana between ソ・ノ・ン, シ・ツ can prevent examiners' being confused on a first reading.
- Knowing key time adverbs (and how to spell them) is often helpful in Q3. Using a future time adverb with a past tense verb leads to 'ambiguity' (Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy = LKA). A common error is to write 先年 instead of きょ年。
- Being aware of the conventions of using 原稿用紙, at least as far as 'write from right to left, and write down' is concerned, is important. There are still a few candidates who write from left to right (but down) , and examiners also reported finding instances of students using the 原稿用紙 to write across from left to right.
- Needing to choose only one of the options for Q2 and 3 is a feature of this exam. Some candidates, particularly at the higher end of the ability range, often write a response to both options and also write far more than is necessary.
- Using rōmaji in this exam will not gain any credit, so if candidates forget an individual kana in a katakana word (at least in Q1 and 2), they should 'have a go', perhaps using the equivalent hiragana, rather than leaving a gap.

### Q1 (12 marks, no option)

To ensure that they have a chance of achieving 5-6 marks for Communication and Content (CC), candidates should ensure that they both describe the photo and give their opinion (in this case, of school lunches). Most candidates were able to say something about the picture – it is lunchtime, there are students, there are 2 adults – and to describe lunch as おいしい. (Perhaps not surprisingly, no one identified the man in the forefront of the photo!)

### Q2 (16 marks, choice of two topics)

In this task a simple sentence for each bullet point (BP) is enough, although many wrote more than this. If possible, an indication of the start of a new BP is helpful for examiners.

#### Option (a) - Books for the library

Some keen students said they went to the library every day, perhaps an easier option than having to write a day of the week. For BP3, many said that there were no books for Japanese students, whilst まんが was a common choice of book to read.

### Option (b) – Job training

The BPS in option (b) were very similar in level of challenge to (a), with BP2, perhaps, being slightly more demanding. Common skills that were offered as proof of suitability were either being able to speak Japanese, or being able to cook. A few candidates took BP4 as an excuse to write the names of various Japanese foods that they knew, but often then failed to address all the other BPs.

### Q3 (20 marks, choice of two topics)

As with Q2, it was sufficient to address each BP simply, although in the case of Q3, it would be better to try and write two sentences. Where the BP actually includes two questions (3a, BP3 'Who you like to travel with and why'), candidates can use a separate sentence for each part; there is no obligation to produce an overly complex sentence. It is also important that candidates recognise the need for variation in tense: past and future (this year, BP2 and BP4 respectively). Successful reference to different time frames is quite an important factor in awarding a mark for LKA.

### Option (a) – Places to go

Candidates at this level found it easier to name a city or country to answer BP1, rather than think of a relatively difficult adjective ('lively', 'historical', 'quiet'). Many wrote about visiting Japan for BP2 and the 新幹線 was a popular choice for BP4. Any form of transport was accepted, even if it seemed unlikely that this would be a new experience; however, it was not possible to achieve full marks for CC if the form of transport given in BP4 had already featured in BP2.

### Option (b) – Going shopping

In answer to BP1, most candidates were able to say *みせがたくさんあります*, often giving details about the types of shops there were. For BP2, examiners were looking for some indication, no matter how vague, of the recent purchase being 'unusual'. Although this may have looked quite challenging, many candidates came up with ideas such as buying an item in a particular colour that usually they do not wear, or purchasing a food item that they do not like. For BP4, the most popular choice for expensive item was a new car.

### Q4 Translation (12 marks)

On the whole, this translation task was dealt with well by candidates. Word order was generally sound, the sentence links ('but' 4c, 'so' 4e) also included. As mentioned in the introduction, it was incorrect spelling of some of the key words that led to loss of marks.