



# **The Official HEC Guide**

## **for 2026**

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# What is HEC?

The Hokkaido English Challenge (HEC) is an English competition for students in Hokkaido. HEC was established by participants of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme in 1994 as a means of motivating students to improve their oral communication skills. It was intended that by interacting with ALTs, the students' confidence and language proficiency would improve. HEC gives ALTs the chance to become instrumental in their students' progress and gives both students and ALTs a goal to work towards as a team.

The challenge has two divisions: first year junior school (JHS) and first year senior high school (SHS). Registration is open to **ANY first year junior and senior high students in Hokkaido**.

In 2026, the top winners will be invited to the HEC English summer camp. The top three winners will also receive a specific value in English-related prizes. The grand prize winner will receive 15,000, the second will receive 10,000 yen, and the third will receive 5,000 yen.

The challenge consists of a 30-minute test based on the national syllabus, which is administered and recorded by the contestant's Assistant Language Teacher (ALT). The video is sent to judges for evaluation and the results will be announced in late May. The test's emphasis is on communicative ability. Entrants are awarded points for 1) showing creativity with their acquired English, 2) their ability to express thoughts clearly and 3) how well they cope with unfamiliar vocabulary and grammar.

Test prizes rely heavily upon entry fees, donations and fundraisers. The support garnered from the Hokkaido Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching (HAJET) and Hokkaido ALTs enable HEC to hold this speaking competition.

## Why Get Involved?

HEC Camp is often praised as the most rewarding experience for an English teaching assistant and many ALTs choose to be involved year after year. This involvement has resulted in great success for HEC since its conception. Involvement at any stage of the programme builds an ALT's professional experience and improves confidence in their English teaching abilities. ALTs often report an increase in their students' interest and enthusiasm for English upon participating in HEC, as well as a marked difference in students' language skills. Students who enter become more comfortable speaking English and feel a sense of pride in having risen to the challenge.

## Are My Students Qualified?

Of course! Every year HEC receives test videos from students who vary widely in their English ability. In preparation, some have practiced long and hard, while others have only met with their ALT once or twice to prepare. ALTs new to HEC are often unsure whether their students have sufficient communicative abilities to enter but that shouldn't stop you from offering your student such an opportunity.

Typically, the upper tier of senior high school winners can communicate in English relatively easily. The lower tier is usually able to understand intermediate spoken English but may be slower in responding and/or find it more difficult to respond naturally. Either way, both levels are sufficient for entering the HEC test, and both have a chance of attending the HEC summer camp.

HEC recommends that ALTs allow interested students to enter the competition even if there are concerns about the student's level. Our aim is to encourage and motivate students to speak English and to help nurture their oral communication skills. Furthermore, for many students, simply spending some time individually or in a small group with their ALT is an amazing opportunity. At the very least, your student(s) will still get a rather inexpensive, fun eikaiwa-like lesson(s) from you.

## Prizes

<b>Junior High School Division</b>	<b>Senior High School Division</b>
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First Year		First Year	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Place</b>	English related prizes of the student's choice (up to <b>¥15,000</b> )	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Place</b>	English related prizes of the student's choice (up to <b>¥15,000</b> )
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Place</b>	English related prizes of the student's choice (up to <b>¥10,000</b> )	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Place</b>	English related prizes of the student's choice (up to <b>¥10,000</b> )
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Place</b>	English related prizes of the student's choice (up to <b>¥5,000</b> )	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Place</b>	English related prizes of the student's choice (up to <b>¥5,000</b> )
<p style="text-align: center;">All participants receive a certificate of recognition. All prize winners will receive a separate certificate in recognition of their achievements.</p>			

## Selected English Prizes

In previous years, students have been awarded cameras, electronic dictionaries, music, movies, books, magazines or gift certificates. The prizes are decided by consulting the winning students. Prizes are decided within the appropriate budgetary limits. Prize winners will be asked to select their desired prizes from an online vendor such as Amazon Japan or Rakuten Japan. ALTs will be asked to assist prize winners in selecting appropriate prizes.

# The Test

The test is based on the grammar and vocabulary in the corresponding grades' English studies provided by the Ministry of Education's syllabus. Held in March, the test lasts about 30 minutes and is recorded on video camera. The ALT administers the test in the presence of one witness: a Japanese teacher of English (JTE), another Japanese teacher, or another ALT. Once the recording is complete, the video is sent to a team of judges whose scores determine which students go through to the final round. Head judges then select the overall winners and rank the top scoring students. The results are announced at the end of May. Preparation for the test is at the discretion of the ALT and student. It can range from months of one-on-one tutoring to group conversation practice during lunch.

Many students, ALTs, and JTEs have requested to see past entries as a guide for their own preparations. Students are asked for permission to have their entries made available to future participants. If permission is given, the recordings will only be provided to participating ALTs upon request and will not be posted on the internet or made available for public viewing. Video entries may also be returned to the student or school if requested. However, if no explicit permission or instructions are received before the announcement of the official results in May, all entries will automatically be destroyed.

## Test Specifications

<i>Junior High School Test focus</i>	<i>Senior High School Test focus</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Introductory questions</li> <li>→ Picture questions</li> <li>→ Reading comprehension</li> <li>→ Listening comprehension</li> <li>→ Comic description</li> <li>→ 20 Questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Introductory questions</li> <li>→ Picture questions</li> <li>→ Describing 'How do you...' do/make/use something</li> <li>→ Listening comprehension</li> <li>→ Comic description</li> <li>→ 20 Questions</li> </ul>

*Note: Detailed information about the test administration, judging, and content will be provided in the forthcoming HEC Test Pack. When available, it can be downloaded from the HEC website [hec.hajet.org](http://hec.hajet.org).*

## Rules of Eligibility

Please be sure you have understood the following rules of eligibility before entering students:

- Student(s) must attend a junior or senior high school in the prefecture of Hokkaido.
- Student(s) must be in their first year of either junior or senior high school at time of registration.
- Student(s) must have never spent more than three consecutive weeks in an English speaking country. This not only includes a country where English is the primary language, but also countries or regions where English is often used in public as a practical means of communication.
- Student(s) must not attend/have attended core subject classes in an English immersion setting.
- Student(s) must not reside in a household where English is/was a primary means of communication.
- The test must be conducted by a Hokkaido ALT. However, the ALT does not have to be one who normally visits the school of the student.
- As opposed to previous years any number of students from a given school are able to apply. However, we suggest that you keep it to a manageable number. (Previously only 10 students from a given school were allowed to take the test)
- A maximum of 5 students from any one junior high or senior high school will be awarded a prize (including a camp placement).
- There is no limit to the **total** number of students an ALT can enter. There is no limit to the number of students who can be entered from a single city or town.

*\*If you have any questions regarding the eligibility of a student, please contact the HEC Director, Deena Spivak, at [hajet.hec.director@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.director@gmail.com). Students will acknowledge they meet all requirements of eligibility at the time they take the test. **If HEC gains knowledge that a student has wrongfully informed HEC in any way prior to that student taking the test, HEC reserves the right to cancel said student's score without refund and revoke any prize he or she may have won.\****

## Entry Fees

The cost of entering HEC is **¥2000 per student**. The cost is subject to change between now and the opening of registration (December 1st, 2025) at the discretion of the HEC Director.

Entrance fees may be covered by either the parents or by the school. It is more common for parents to cover the cost, but sometimes schools or boards of education may be willing to cover the cost.

The 'HEC Letter Pack' will provide letters explaining HEC in Japanese. Please inform your board of education, schools, and JTEs **before** distributing posters and letters to students. There will be letters that can be given to parents to request entrance fees as well as letters suited for schools. The letter pack can be found here: <https://hec.hajet.org/information/>. All proceeds from entrance fees go directly to help fund the HEC prizes. **Entrance fees are non-refundable.**

*\*Note: The fee is the same for every participant regardless of the number of entries. Furthermore, there is no price difference for students of HAJET members versus non-members.\**

## HEC Scholarship & Fee Waiver

HEC offers a fee waiver for select students who would not be able to participate otherwise. Previously, there were concerns that some talented and deserving students have not been able to participate in HEC because the entry fee was too high. For this reason, a special fee waiver is available to such students. To qualify for the waiver, a student should be identified by both the ALT and JTE as a particularly enthusiastic student. The student must also require such financial assistance. The JTE or homeroom teacher may have a good idea as to which students come from a family that may not be able to afford the full entry fee. Please keep in mind that HEC depends on entry fees to operate, so this fee waiver should not be announced publicly to an entire class. This waiver may be offered to only one student per school. The waiver must be approved ahead of time by the HEC Director and approval is not guaranteed.



# Registration

## Registration Period: December 1st, 2025 to February 13th, 2026

Registration should be completed as far in advance as possible using the HEC test registration link available on the HEC website. It can often take time to present the idea of HEC to your school, parents and students. In addition, students may take a while to return permission forms. Preparations for HEC can be started at any point, however, the sooner you start the more prepared your students will be. That being said, there is no real pressure to register or to begin preparing before you and/or your students are ready. *More information about deadlines can be found later in the Advice and Guidelines section.*

## Submission Address

The Registration process comes in two parts. First, please present a Paper Registration Form to your students. These forms can be found on [www.hec.hajet.org/information](http://www.hec.hajet.org/information).

After your student(s) complete the Paper Registration Form, the ALT must input the information into the Online Registration Form: [HEC 2025 Student Registration 生徒申し込み \(Responses\)](#). A scanned copy of the Paper Registration form must also be submitted as part of the Online Registration process. Please email a clear scan/photo of this ENTIRE Paper Form to [hajet.hec.test@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.test@gmail.com). **Online forms submitted without a copy of the signed form will be deemed as incomplete and no confirmation of registration will be sent.**

If for some reason you are unable to complete online registration, contact the HEC Test Committee Co-Chairs, Emma Buchel & Kya Richardson, at [hajet.hec.test@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.test@gmail.com). Please finish completion of the Paper Registration Form, and then scan and email **only** the Paper Registration Form to [hajet.hec.test@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.test@gmail.com). It must be received by **Friday, February 13th, 2026**. Registration forms will be made available by December 1st, 2025. Your students cannot be entered into HEC until both the entry fee and permission forms have been received. In some cases, late entries may be accepted if approved by the HEC Director.

## Payment Information

Please pay entry fees by electronic money transfer. There are two types of possible transfers. One is done at a post office (送金/*soukin*) and the other is done at any bank (振込/*furikomi*). Both types of transfers can be completed at an ATM. While many ATMs do have the option of displaying English, it is often incomplete or incorrect when dealing with transactions beyond simple deposits and withdrawals. For this reason, it is recommended that you complete the transfer using the Japanese labels. If you provide the bank account information below, Japan Post staff should be able to assist you.

*Post Office Money Transfers (送金/*soukin*)* Post Office money transfers can be completed at the ATM or possibly at the counter by filling out an appropriate form. Some post offices may not offer English forms or may not have any forms and require that the process be completed at the ATM.

Please use the following directions to send money using a form at the post office:

- Ask for a furikomi form.
- Write in the HEC account number: 19040-12690631.
  - 記号 19040
  - 番号 12690631
- Write in the HEC account name: ホッカイドウイングリッシュチャレンジ
- Write your name.
- Write how much you are paying.
- Write your phone number.

### *HEC Account Details for Transfers from a Post Office ATM*

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 19040-12690631

ACCOUNT NAME: ホッカイドウイングリッシュチャレンジ

### *Regular Bank Transfers (振込/*furikomi*)*

At most banks you will have the option of sending money directly from your account or using cash. Please deposit the entry fees into your account first and then make the transfer directly from your account. This way the source of the transfer can be verified easily. The procedure for transferring money varies from bank to bank. Any bank staff member should be able to assist you at the ATM using the account information provided below.

Bank: ゆうちょ銀行 (Post Office Bank)

Account Number (口座番号): 1269063

Branch Number (店番): 908

Branch Name (店名): 九〇八(キュウゼロハチ)

Account Type: 普通預金

### *Direct exchange*

You may also give the money directly to the HEC Director (Deena Spivak), the HEC Test Committee Co-Chairs (Emma Buchel & Kya Richardson), or the HEC Treasurer if you are able to arrange a pickup.

## **Registration Confirmation**

Shortly following your payment, you will receive a confirmation email at the email address you indicated on the registration form. This email will ask you to confirm all your student's information. At this point, you will be able to correct any incorrect information or errors before any certificates or tests are printed and mailed. Also included in this email will be the total amount of entry fees that were received. This email will be the only automatic receipt of the entry fees. However, if you, your school, or your student requires an official receipt to be issued, please contact the HEC Director. Likewise, if you would like immediate confirmation that entry fees or registration forms have been received, please contact the HEC Director at [hajet.hec.director@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.director@gmail.com).

# How Do I Get Involved?

The best way to be involved is to encourage your students to compete and offer them assistance in preparing for the test. If you are unable to enter students, however, there are other ways to become part of HEC's team. Below is a list of some of the volunteer positions within HEC. If you are unable to commit to HEC but would still like to show your support, there are plenty of opportunities to donate at fundraisers held throughout the year.

HEC is a non-profit programme and is run completely on donations and entry fees. Everything we receive goes into paying for the prizes and subsequently, next year's HEC Camp. As a result, HEC encourages ALTs who wish to support HEC to enter students, and if possible, hold fundraising events to help keep the programme strong.

## HEC Volunteer Positions

**HEC Director** - Deena Spivak [hajet.hec.director@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.director@gmail.com). The HEC Director is the head of HEC. Main responsibilities lie in overseeing all organizational aspects of HEC, recruiting the HEC staff, contacting Sapporo Study Abroad Center to arrange the home-stay (during years in which a homestay prize is available), managing the budget, raising funds, releasing information, and being the main point of contact for HEC.

**Co-Director** - Ashley St Charles [hajet.hec.codirector@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.codirector@gmail.com). Works with the HEC Director, Camp Coordinator, and Test Committee Chair to recruit volunteers throughout the year by providing information about HEC volunteer positions. Recruits, establishes, and coordinates the camp staff.

**Camp Coordinators** - Aubrey Cole & Reina Liska [hajet.hec.camp@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.camp@gmail.com). The Camp Coordinator is responsible for planning HEC Camp. They will work with the HEC Coordinator and Camp Co-Coordinator(s) to recruit the camp staff, decide where and when camp will be, make a budget for camp, and take care of legal issues regarding camp.

**Treasurer** - Brett Kaufman [hajet.hec.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.treasurer@gmail.com). Responsible for collections and reimbursements and general bookkeeping for HEC's finances. They are also in charge of the cashbox at events.

**Test Committee Co-Chairs** - Emma Buchel & Kya Richardson [hajet.hec.test@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.test@gmail.com).

Establishes timetables and deadlines for the test portion of HEC, recruits judges and writers, collects test registration from HEC participants, collects scores from judges, and establishes a rubric that judges will use to adjudicate the test.

**Events Coordinators** - Bonnie Wu & Yuna Antal [hajet.hec.events@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.events@gmail.com). Works

with the HEC Team to create fundraising ideas and events. They ensure that these fundraisers operate smoothly.

**Social Media Manager** - Nina Williams [hajet.hec.social@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.social@gmail.com). Maintains the HEC

website, YouTube and Facebook pages by keeping the information current as well as uploading the necessary documents onto the website for general access.

**Media Manager** - Responsible for taking pictures/videos at HEC Camp and other HEC events, and creating the media package to be mailed out to students after camp.

**Graphic Designer** - Alayna Yan. Provides digital art for HEC to use throughout the year.

**Publications Editor** - Responsible for editing, updating and organizing all documents, promotional materials made available for public use or viewing by HEC.

**Translator** - Max Poage. Duties include translating documents and promotional material, as well as communicating with contracting organizations and various businesses on behalf of HEC.

**Website Admin**- Brandon Phillip [hec.hajet.web@gmail.com](mailto:hec.hajet.web@gmail.com). Maintains the HEC website, YouTube and Facebook pages by keeping the information current as well as uploading the necessary documents onto the website for general access.

**Judges.** Positions available: 5 -10: Judges work in pairs to evaluate their assigned group of video entries and determine which students will go through to the final round. Judges may enter students, but they will not be able to judge the level their students compete in.

**Head Judges.** Positions available: 4. Two (2) for each division, junior and senior high school. Head judges select the overall winners and rank the top-placed entrants. They may enter students, but not in the division they are judging.

**Test Writers.** Positions available: 4. Two (2) for each division, junior and senior high school. Writers are responsible for finding source material (i.e. pictures, cartoon strips, text passages) and writing test questions according to the established format. Test writers may enter their own students but not into the division of the test script they are writing.

**HEC Regional Representatives.** HEC is looking for motivated individuals that would like to help support HEC in their region. This would include contacting ALTs and encouraging them to enter students. If inclined to do so, HEC would appreciate the aid of these representatives with fundraising.

## Summer Camp Volunteer Positions

HEC is recruiting volunteers for our Summer 2025 Camp! Opportunities available are listed below. Get involved and enjoy helping Hokkaido students hone their English abilities!

### Kitchen Staff

The head chef is responsible for designing a menu within the provided budget, buying food, and preparing meals at camp. The rest of the staff assist in the cooking and transporting of these meals.

### Group Leaders

Students are divided into groups. Each group is assigned two leaders. The leaders are responsible for informing their groups of the day's events, looking after their welfare and reporting any problems within the groups to the camp coordinator.

### Activity Leaders

Other positions help with activities such as the Amazing Race, Arts and Crafts, Bonfire Sing-a-long, letter writing and the Junior Leader program. These volunteers are responsible for organizing their respective activities, explaining proceedings to campers and volunteers, as well as ensuring that the activity runs smoothly. Staff volunteers work together to ensure the health and safety of students and encourage them to use English for the duration of the camp. Activity leaders help coordinate activities to ensure students are at ease and enjoying their time at camp. No previous experience is necessary for any of the above jobs, however some experience or certification is preferred in the case of Camp Nurse. The more volunteers at HEC Camp, the more opportunity students will have to practice their English. Japanese people with strong English communication skills are also encouraged to apply as volunteers.

### How to get involved?

If you are interested in getting involved, and would like to volunteer your time and services for **any of the above vacant HEC positions**, please email our HEC Director, Deena Spivak, at [hajet.hec.director@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.director@gmail.com) with details of your name, current location, and in what capacity you would like to be involved and why.

For **HEC Camp inquiries**, please email our Camp Coordinator, Aubrey Cole & Reina Liska at [hajet.hec.camp@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.camp@gmail.com).

Many ALTs would like to volunteer but find that they are unable to commit to the full three days during summer vacation. Priority will be given to volunteers who can commit to the entirety of camp. Your help is greatly appreciated.

# Advice & Guidelines

This section includes detailed information on this year's deadlines, recommended timeline, training your student, submitting entry forms and fees.

## Deadlines

### Registration & Payment

No later than **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 2026**. This involves completing the online registration form (available at <https://hec.hajet.org>) and paying the entry fee via bank transfer on or before the above date. The online registration form and downloadable versions are available on the HEC website [hec.hajet.org](https://hec.hajet.org). Registration forms will be available by December 2nd, 2024. Please send in forms and fees as soon as possible. Do not leave this until the last moment.

### Test Deadline

Submission no later than **TUESDAY, MARCH 31st, 2026**. Testing can begin on March 2nd, 2026. Complete the test with your student and upload the video file to the Test Submission google classroom. **Instructions on how to upload submissions will be included with each test packet.** Please give yourself plenty of time in case something goes wrong. All video entries must be uploaded to the HEC Test Submission google link by March 31st, 2026. Any entries that are submitted after this date will be disqualified. **No money will be refunded.** Please ensure that your files are properly named with students' names placed in the details section of the file. Contact the HEC Test Committee Co-Chairs at [hajet.hec.test@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.test@gmail.com) if you have further questions.

### Results

Announced no later than **FRIDAY, MAY 29th, 2025**. The HEC results will be sent out by email to ALTs by this date. Letters will be sent with certificates in English and Japanese to explain the results of the competition to teachers, ALTs, and students. Appropriate prizes will be offered at this time. Emails to ALTs about non-successful students will also be sent.

## List of Tasks

Here is a list of the most important tasks for participating in HEC:

- ☐ Distribute information to the appropriate people (i.e. parents, teachers, and principals).
- ☐ Talk with interested students. Decide which students will enter.
- ☐ Arrange for the equipment that you will be using. **LEARN TO USE IT.**
- ☐ Ensure that you are able to use the technical equipment.
- ☐ Arrange practice schedule.



- ❑ Practice.
- ❑ Hand in permission forms and entry fees (deadline: Friday, February 13th, 2026).
- ❑ Administer test.
- ❑ Upload test to test submission google drive (deadline: Tuesday, March 31st, 2026).

Take time to look at old tests and familiarize yourself with the marking scheme. Past tests are available for download on the HEC website and can be requested at <https://hec.hajet.org/the-test/> or by emailing the HEC Test Committee Co-Chairs at [hajet.hec.test@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.test@gmail.com). The previous tests demonstrate what types of questions and restrictions you can expect on the test. Speak with ALTs who have previously participated in test preparation to learn about various ways of preparing your students.

## Permission from Schools

You may find that some schools are reluctant to allow their students to enter and view HEC as a distraction from more important commitments. If the initial reaction of the school is to turn the opportunity down, you can try the following:

- Suggest that they be allowed to treat the matter case by case and adopt the rule that if the student's parents are happy for their child to enter, then the student should be allowed rather than looking at it as a matter for the whole school.
- Explain to them politely that the competition will aid the students' English ability as the test is structured similarly to Eiken.
- Stress that practice times will take into account student obligations, previous commitments such as club activities, and does not require JTE supervision.

There is information available in Japanese on the HEC website that can be useful in explaining HEC to your school.

## Recommended Timeline

Below is a recommended timeline of the various stages of the competition, including a recommended task timeline for ALTs to follow in order to get the most out of the contest:

### Mid-December to January

- ❑ Talk with JTEs about the competition. Print out HEC posters and flyers, hang them up/distribute them to students. Announce details of the contest in class.
- ❑ Look out for students who might be interested. Discuss with your JTE who might be suitable. Remember that JTEs do not need to do extra work for HEC. They or another teacher simply need to witness the test being done in the spring. Please

ensure that the school is aware of what you are doing.

- ☐ Distribute letters to your supervisor, vice principals, JTEs and parents.
- ☐ Decide who will enter and make sure they and their parents understand the test requirements, the judging process, deadlines and prizes.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the payment process and prepare permission forms. Start giving students permission forms to fill out and collecting entry fees.
- ☐ Begin practicing.
- ☐ Decide whether you will continue practicing throughout the holiday or resume after the school term starts.

### **Late January to mid-February**

- ☐ Arrange a date and time with your students and JTE to administer the test. Be aware that students (and possibly ALTs and JTEs) have spring vacation in March. Make sure the school you are testing at has a camera and storage media to record the test.
- ☐ Record a mock test to gauge your students' progress (not to be submitted). Allow the student to watch themselves on video to familiarize them with the process.
- ☐ Download the current HEC Test Pack. Familiarize yourself and your students with the testing procedures.
- ☐ Send in your entry fees and permission forms to HEC by **Friday, February 13th, 2026**.

### **Late February to late March**

- ☐ Receive a copy of the test in the mail by Monday, March 2nd, 2026.
- ☐ Administer the test.
- ☐ Upload the test to the test submission google drive by **Tuesday, March 31st, 2026**. If you have issues with your submission, email the HEC Test Committee Co-Chairs at [hajet.hec.test@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.test@gmail.com).

### **End of March to May**

- ☐ Judging takes place.
- ☐ Results announced by Friday, May 29th, 2026.

### **June**

- ☐ Certificates are distributed.

### **July**

- ☐ HEC Prizes are distributed.

# Administering the Test

## The Test Manuscript

You will receive the test manuscript in a sealed envelope in the post by **March 2nd, 2026**.

The sealed test manuscript envelope will be mailed in an outer primary envelope that can be opened. On the day of the test, you must show the video camera the sealed inner secondary envelope to prove that it has not been tampered with. **If, for whatever reason, the secondary envelope is opened before the exam, HEC will not reissue the exam and students will be disqualified. No money will be refunded.**

In addition to the secondary envelope, the primary envelope will also contain a cover letter, participation certificates for each of your students, and declaration forms to be signed by a witness on camera immediately before the test.

### The Video Recorder

- Familiarize yourself with the video recorder and practice using it beforehand.
- Ensure that you and your student are visible with a close enough zoom to read facial expressions.
- Check sound levels. It would be unfortunate if your student's chances were affected due to poor sound quality.
- **PLEASE CHECK THE FINAL RECORDING** before it is uploaded to the test submission google drive. Depending on the situation, you may not be able to resubmit your entry if there is a problem with the original.

## The Test Pack

The HEC Test Pack will be available online close to registration opening. It will include:

- **Judging Guidelines:** How your students will be judged.
- **Test Structure:** A generic sample test will be included which will show all the instructions and time limits as they will appear on the final test.
- **Testing Procedures:** Details on how the test is to be administered and submitted.
- **Equipment Needed:** What you will need during the test.
- **Recording Guidelines:** How to make your recording; how to make multiple recordings.

## Encouraging Your Students

You are likely to find that it is difficult to find a convenient time to meet with your student(s). It may be wise to discuss with the teacher what sort of pressures the student(s) have from the school and from home regarding studies and extracurricular activities they are involved in.

Please be sure to speak to your student about the practice schedule and ask them what they want to get out of the contest. It may be the case that their level is lower than you first thought or that the student takes a long time to show signs of improvement. However, you should never make a student feel uncomfortable or inadequate about their progress. Ensure that you continually motivate your student(s). At the same time, excessively pushing a student to do more preparation than they may want can have a negative impact on the student's motivation and eagerness to learn English.

In addition to or in lieu of individual HEC preparation, you may want to incorporate HEC preparatory activities into classes as a whole. Depending on the flexibility afforded to you in your classes, you may be able to use activities that require students to describe pictures or to respond to the types of questions that will be found on the HEC test. This will help to convince teachers and your school that HEC is relevant in a classroom setting.

## Contact Information and Additional Documents

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about HEC please do not hesitate to contact the HEC Director, Deena Spivak at [hajet.hec.director@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.director@gmail.com), or HEC Co-Director, Ashley St Charles, at [hajet.hec.codirector@gmail.com](mailto:hajet.hec.codirector@gmail.com).

Additional information and documents can be found on the HEC website which also has some information available in Japanese: <https://hec.hajet.org/ja/story-2/>.

# HEC CHECKLIST

- ☐ Get HEC Information, visit [hec.hajet.org](http://hec.hajet.org)
- ☐ Print out posters, letters etc.
- ☐ Tell your school (JTE, Vice-principal, Principal, parents and students)
- ☐ Recruit
- ☐ Give out consent forms
- ☐ Register for HEC, begins **DECEMBER 1st, 2025** (collect registration forms, submit online and make payment by **FEBRUARY 13th, 2026**)
- ☐ Practice, Practice, Practice!
- ☐ Decide on test date with student(s)
- ☐ Review Test Preparation Guide
- ☐ Practice
- ☐ Get storage media and become familiar with video recorder
- ☐ Did we mention practice?!
- ☐ Receive HEC Test Pack (**MARCH 2nd, 2026**)
- ☐ Administer the HEC test
- ☐ Congratulate student(s)!
- ☐ Upload test file to Test Submission Google Drive (**by MARCH 29th, 2026**)
- ☐ Get Test Results (**MAY 29th, 2026**)
- ☐ Congratulate yourself!

