

Manufacture of Food and Beverages Skills Proficiency Test

Information on test held in Japan

(Applicable from April 2020)

**The Organization for Technical Skill Assessment of Foreign
Workers in Food Industry**

OTAFF

THE ORGANIZATION FOR TECHNICAL SKILL
ASSESSMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN FOOD INDUSTRY

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1. Specified skilled workers and the purpose of the test

With the revision of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, a new residence status, "Specified Skilled Worker", was created on April 1, 2019.

"Specific Skilled Worker" is a system for the acceptance of foreign workers who have a certain level of expertise and skill in specified industry fields, such as the food and beverages manufacturing industry, where it has proven difficult to recruit workers, despite efforts to improve productivity and recruit staff within Japan, in order to address worsening staff shortages.

In order to qualify for the Specified Skilled Worker 1 residency status for the food and beverages manufacturing industry, a candidate must satisfy the Skill Level and Japanese Language Proficiency requirements.

The Japanese Language Proficiency Level is judged by the Japanese language proficiency assessment tests operated by the Japan Foundation, or the Japanese Language Proficiency Test operated by the Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services.

The Skill Level in the food and beverages manufacturing industry category is determined by the Manufacture of Food and Beverages Skills Proficiency Test administered by OTAFF. (OTAFF may abbreviate the name of the test as and when necessary.)

To apply for the Specified Skilled Worker residency status, please contact the Ministry of Justice or the Immigration Services Agency.

OTAFF cannot respond to any queries other than those regarding the skills proficiency tests for Specified Skilled Workers for the food and beverages manufacturing industry and the food service industry.

2. Eligibility

Persons eligible to take the test in Japan for Specified Skilled Workers in the food and beverages manufacturing industry are those who satisfy the conditions a) and b), below, on the day of the test.

- a) Persons who have the appropriate residence status (Note 1) and are 17 years of age or older on the day of the test.
- b) Persons having a passport (Note 2) issued by a foreign government or competent authority of a territory, as prescribed in public notice by the Minister of Justice, for the purposes of cooperating in the smooth execution of any forced deportation order.

Note 1: With the exception of those who are in Japan illegally (illegal residents), persons legally residing in Japan are eligible. This also includes persons who are in legally in Japan for a short stay, such as for tourism, even if they do not have a residence card.

Note 2: Currently, passports other than those issued by Islamic Republic of Iran are acceptable.

Notes

- Passing the test does not guarantee that the residence status of Specified Skilled Worker will be granted.
Even if candidates who have passed the test submit an application for a Certificate of Eligibility or an application to change their residence status, it is not always the case that a Certificate of Eligibility can be issued, or a change in residence status approved.
- Further, even if you do receive a Certificate of Eligibility, your visa application will be reviewed separately by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and there is no guarantee that you will be granted a visa.
- In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Japanese government has established restrictions, such as refusing entry to persons from certain countries and regions. Therefore, please make sure that you will be able to enter Japan in order to take the test.

Ministry of Justice: Regarding refusal of landing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 disease (novel coronavirus)

http://www.moj.go.jp/hisho/kouhou/hisho06_00099.html

3. Test subjects and test format, etc.

Total of 80 minutes for both theoretical and practical tests Paper test format (using mark sheets)

(1) Theoretical test (questions in Japanese)

This test measures the candidate's knowledge of general hygiene management and occupational health and safety, using HACCP, etc.

Item	Main content	Number of questions (Qs)	Allocation of points (Pts)	Full marks (Pts)
Basic knowledge of food safety and quality control	- Necessity of food safety - Knowledge relating to food poisoning	25	3	75
Basics of general hygiene management	- Fundamental rules of hygiene management and food safety before, during and after any operation - 5S activities - Prevention of contamination by foreign matter			
Basics of manufacturing process control	- Ingredient management - Manufacturing process control and precautions - Product control - Control of allergens			
Using HACCP for hygiene management	- HACCP - Hazard analysis - Seven principles of HACCP - Basics of HACCP hygiene management			
Knowledge relating to occupational safety	- Hazard prevention in the workplace - Strict enforcement of work procedures and 5S - Action in the event of unexpected situations	5	5	25
Total		30		100

(2) Practical test (questions in Japanese Judgement test - planning test, etc.)

This test gauges whether the candidate possesses the required skills for the work.

The skills are gauged in the judgement test, which looks at whether the candidate is able to take the correct action in a given situation, using diagrams and illustrations, and the planning test, which looks at whether they are able to formulate plans for the required tasks, given prescribed calculation formulae.

Item	Main content	Number of questions (Qs)			Allocation of points (Pts)	Full marks (Pts)
		Judgement test	Planning test	Total		
Basic knowledge of food safety and quality control	- Necessity of food safety - Knowledge relating to food poisoning	4	2	6	5	30
Basics of general hygiene management	- Fundamental rules of hygiene management and food safety before, during and after any operation - 5S activities - Prevention of contamination by foreign matter					
Basics of manufacturing process control	- Ingredient management - Manufacturing process control and precautions - Product control - Control of allergens					
Using HACCP for hygiene management	- HACCP - Hazard analysis - Seven principles of HACCP Basics of general hygiene management					
Knowledge relating to occupational safety	- Hazard prevention in the workplace - Strict enforcement of work procedures and 5S - Action in the event of unexpected situations	4	0	4	5	20
Total		8	2	10		50

4. Pass mark

The pass mark is 65%.

5. Textbooks

The textbooks that can be used for test preparation are available at the website of Japan Food Industry Association (<https://www.shokusan.or.jp/news/3199/>)

6. Test application procedures

Step 1. Read the test information

Go through the conditions for eligibility and the test subjects, etc.

Step 2. Register your own My Page

How to register My Page

Rules on using photographs

Read through "How to register My Page" and enter your personal information and upload your portrait photograph to your own My Page.

Your My Page registration will be screened, and this can take up to five business days.

Complete your My Page registration before you apply for the test.

Your portrait photograph will be used for identification and for the pass certificate.

Carefully read "Rules on using photographs" before registering.

Step 3. Submit test application

Test application guidance

Carefully read "Test application guidance" before submitting your application.

Log into your My Page and select the date and test venue, and check the eligibility one more time before you submit your application.

If the number of candidates is lower than capacity, a second round of recruitment will be carried out.

Step 4. Pay the test fee if you are selected to participate

If the number of candidates exceeds capacity, selection will be made by draw.

Once the results of the draw are known, notification will be sent to your registered email address.

You can check the results of the draw under "Exam history" on My Page.

If you are selected to participate, you may pay the test fee.

There are three methods of payment: credit card, convenience store settlement, or Pay-easy (direct debit).

Payment at a convenience store or by Pay-easy is only available in Japan.

Test fees, once paid, cannot be returned. (Note)

Carefully check the test date and venue before you make payment.

Note: This does not apply in cases where the test has been canceled due to natural disaster.

For details, please read "7. Test fee" in the test information.

Step 5. Download the admission ticket

You can check the download start date on the OTAFF website, under "Test schedule details."

Also, notification of the download start date will be sent to your registered email address.

The admission ticket can be downloaded from My Page, under "Test history."

Step 6. Take the test

Before taking the test, be sure to read "9. Points to note on the day of the test" on page 10.

On the day of the test, be sure to bring with you your admission ticket, your passport or residence card, HB pencils and an eraser.

For details, please read "8. What to bring on the day of the test" on page 10 of the test information.

Also, please remember to wear a mask.

At the test venue, you may take the test after your identity has been confirmed at Reception.

Step 7. Receive your test results

The registration numbers of successful candidates can be checked on the OTAFF website.

Also, once the test results are posted, notification will be sent to your registered email address.

You can check your test results under "Test history" on your own My Page.

Step 8. Receive the pass certificate

Pass certificates will be uploaded to "Test history" on the My Page of successful candidates.

You will be able to download the pass certificate so that you can print it out when necessary.

OTAFF cannot download and print out the pass certificate.

7. Test fee

JPY 8,000 (tax included) (for FY2020)

Test fees, once paid, cannot be returned except under the following circumstances.

- The test has been unable to be held due to reasons attributable to OTAFF.
- OTAFF has judged that the test cannot be held due to natural disaster, etc.
(excluding cases where an alternative test has been organized)

Check the OTAFF website to find out whether the test is due to go ahead or not.

8. What to bring on the day of the test

Be sure to bring the following ①, ②, ③ and ④.

① and ② will be used to identify you at Reception on the day of the test.

If you cannot be identified, you will not be able to take the test.

- ① Admission ticket
- ② Passport or residence card
- ③ HB pencils *Mechanical pencils are not allowed.
- ④ Eraser

Note: If you do not have your passport or residence card because your residence card is being renewed, please be sure to print a color photocopy of the front and back sides of your residence card, bearing the seals(company/ organization and person in charge) of your proxy (Japanese language school, immigration lawyer, etc.).

9. Points to note on the day of the test

(1) Before arriving at the test venue

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, be sure to wear a mask.

Please keep your mask on during the test.

Please note that candidates who are not wearing masks will not be able to take the test.

Also, on the day of the test, your temperature will be taken.

If you have a high temperature or feel unwell, your test may be suspended and you may be asked to leave.

Your understanding is appreciated.

(2) Reception

- ① Before entering the venue, please read "8. What to bring on the day of the test" on page 10 and make sure you have items ① and ②.
- ② Your identity will be checked at Reception. For the purpose of facial identification, you will be asked to remove your mask.
Note: Please remove any headgear, sunglasses or earpieces.
- ③ If there is any problem with the portrait photo you uploaded to your My Page, you will be asked to take it again. If you are asked to take the portrait photo again, please follow the instructions of the reception staff.
- ④ After completing reception, you may enter the examination hall.

Reception closes once the test starts.

If you arrive late, you will not be able to take the test.

Note: Public transport may be delayed due to weather conditions.

Please be sure to give yourself enough time to arrive at the venue on time.

(3) Points to note inside the examination hall

- ① Please take the seat with the number shown on your admission ticket.
- ② If entering or leaving the examination hall before the test starts, you must carry your admission ticket with you.
- ③ Take your place in the examination hall at least 20 minutes before the test is due to start. You may not speak to the other candidates.

You may not enter the examination hall once the test has started.

- Place your admission ticket to the side of your seat number.
- Place your HB pencils and eraser on the desk.
Mechanical pencils are not allowed.
All other items must be placed inside your bag.
- Mobile telephones and all other telecommunications devices and electronic devices

must be turned OFF until you leave the examination hall.

Be sure to check in advance how to turn OFF your electronic devices.

Once your devices have been powered OFF, place them inside your bag, close the bag and place it underneath your seat.

- There will be a clock in the examination hall.
- Please be sure to turn OFF any alarms on your watch.

Place your watch inside your bag, close the bag and place it underneath your seat.

You cannot have your watch on your desk, or wear it on your person.

Mobile phones, etc., cannot be used as watches.

If your alarm goes off during the test, this may be treated in the same way as an act of misconduct.

- You may not use electronic calculators.
- While in the examination hall, you must follow the instructions of the invigilator.

Failure to follow the instructions of the invigilator may be treated in the same way as an act of misconduct.

(4) Points to note before the test begins

- On your desk, you should only have your admission ticket, HB pencils, eraser, mark sheet and "How to fill in the mark sheet and other notes about the test."

Place all other items inside your bag, close the bag and place it underneath your seat.

- Follow the example in "How to fill in the mark sheet," and enter your own name and candidate number in the mark sheet.

- Be sure to fill in your candidate number correctly.

- You may not wear hats or sunglasses inside the examination hall.

Further, you may not wear earpieces.

Place these items inside your bag, close the bag and place it underneath your seat.

- You must wear your mask at all times.

However, please remove the mask if asked to do so by the invigilator, for the purposes of identification, for example.

- The only writing implements that you are allowed to use are HB pencils and erasers.

Mechanical pencils cannot be used.

Use your eraser to erase any mistaken entries before making corrections.

Take care not to soil or fold the mark sheet.

Soiled or folded mark sheets may not be able to be scanned.

No marks can be awarded for answers that cannot be properly scanned.

- Please be sure that you have visited the restroom before the test begins and are seated in your place.
- The test papers will be placed on your desk just before the test begins.

Do not touch the test papers until the invigilator indicates that the test has begun.

(5) Points to note after the test begins

- You may not leave the examination hall for at least 30 minutes after the test has begun. If you leave the examination hall to go to the restroom, your test will end at that point, and you will not be allowed to enter the examination hall again.
- Once the invigilator indicates that 30 minutes have passed, you may leave the examination hall.
- Please refrain from any chatting in corridors, etc., adjacent to the examination hall.
- You may not leave the examination hall during the last five minutes before the test ends.
- Questions regarding the content of the test questions cannot be answered.
- If you need to leave your seat during the test due to feeling unwell, or some other unavoidable circumstance, raise your hand to alert the invigilator and follow their instructions.
- In the event of any act of misconduct, you will be asked to leave the examination hall immediately.

(6) Points to note when leaving the examination hall

- It is forbidden to take away the test paper, make memos, or take away any media that contain photographs, video, etc., of the test paper.

These or any other suspicious actions by candidates may be treated in the same way as misconduct.

- If you need to leave the examination hall while the test is in progress, hand your mark sheet, test paper and "How to fill in the mark sheet and other notes about the test" to the invigilator and wait for their permission to leave the hall.
- Once you leave the examination hall, you will not be allowed to re-enter.

Further, upon leaving the examination hall after the test is finished, please leave the test venue promptly.

- During the remaining five minutes before the test ends, please wait until the invigilator has finished gathering the mark sheets, test papers and "How to fill in the mark sheet and other notes about the test."

Please remain seated until the invigilator indicates that you may leave the hall.

(7) Acts of misconduct

- In the event of any act of misconduct, including the following, you may be asked to stop taking the test and leave the examination hall. In such a case, you will receive no marks.
 - Opening the test paper and beginning to answer before the test has started.
 - Speaking during the test without permission.
 - Actions such as giving answers to other candidates, giving signals, receiving answers from other candidates, looking at another candidate's answers, etc., during the test.
 - Filling in answers on another candidate's mark sheet.
 - Swapping test papers or mark sheets with another candidate.
 - Looking at crib notes or reference texts during the test.
 - Actions such as using mobile phones or smartphones.
 - Taking test papers or mark sheets out of the examination hall.
 - Actions that disturb other candidates, and failure to heed the cautions of the invigilator.
 - Failing to stop answering the test questions even after the invigilator has told the candidates to stop.
 - Failing to hand over the mark sheet to the invigilator when requested.
 - Leaving the examination hall before the invigilator has given permission.
- Any candidate who takes or tries to take the test by dishonest means will be prohibited from taking the test.

In some cases, the candidate's pass result may be canceled and the candidate prohibited from taking the test again for another five years.
- OTAFF cannot assume any responsibility or liability for any disadvantage or inconvenience that a candidate may suffer as a consequence of any dishonest activities.

(8) Other points to note

- It is not permitted to take photographs or make any video or audio recordings at the test venue.
- Smoking is only permitted in the designated areas.
- Candidates must not enter any part of the test venue that is off limits.
- Please refrain from touching any equipment or fittings, etc., in the test venue.
- There are no waiting rooms for adults or children accompanying candidates.
Only candidates are permitted to enter the test venue.
- On the day of the test, candidates cannot be called to the telephone, nor can messages be taken.

10. Announcement of successful candidates and pass certificates

(1) Announcement of successful candidates

Within three weeks of the test, the registration numbers of successful candidates will be announced on the OTAFF website.

Exam results for all candidates will be uploaded onto their My Page.

Also, notification will be sent to candidates' registered email addresses.

OTAFF cannot respond to any queries regarding the test.

(2) Pass certificate download

From the tests of FY2020 onward, pass certificates will be uploaded to the My Page of successful candidates, after the test results have been announced.

Pass certificates can be downloaded from My Page, under "Test history."

Please print out the certificate by yourself whenever you need it.

OTAFF cannot download and print out the pass certificate.

(3) Validity of pass certificate

The pass certificate is valid for a period of ten years from the date of issue.

(Points to note)

- The pass certificate will need to be presented when changing your status of residence in Japan, or applying for a Certificate of Eligibility for Status of Residence.

- Pass certificates for FY2019 were mailed to the registered addresses of successful candidates in Japan.
However, pass certificates have occasionally been returned to OTAFF, not having been able to be delivered due to incorrect addressing, or candidates having moved away, etc.
- If a pass certificate for the test in FY2019 has been lost, it can be re-issued once only. Note that a pass certificate only be re-issued within its validity period.
- If you wish to have a pass certificate resent or re-issued, contact OTAFF by email or telephone.
- To have a pass certificate re-issued, application should be made by the certificate holder themselves.
- To have a pass certificate resent takes between three weeks and one month, and to have one re-issued takes around one month.
- Any costs involved in resending or reissuing a pass certificate must be borne by the candidate.
- Resent or re-issued pass certificates can only be sent to addresses in Japan.

For enquiries:

Email: tokutei@otaff.or.jp

Telephone: 03-6261-4949 (weekdays only: 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.)

Website: <https://otaff.or.jp/>

(4) Cancellation of pass

Should it be discovered after a pass certificate has been awarded that any of the items of misconduct ① to ③ have been carried out regarding the test, the pass of the candidate who has carried out the acts of misconduct will be canceled.

- ① Requesting and receiving information of a confidential nature relating to test questions from a person or persons connected to the test.
- ② Information registered in the candidate's My Page is intentionally fraudulent.
- ③ Other misconduct relating to the test.

In addition, the Immigration Bureau will be notified via the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

Also, a notification of the cancellation of the pass will be sent to the candidate involved, and any data relating to the pass certificate will be deleted from their My Page.

(In the case of pass certificates for the FY2019 test, the return of the actual certificate will be requested.)

Further, said candidate will be prohibited from taking the exam again for a period of five years.

11. Handling of personal information

Any personal information learned in the course of implementing the test will be handled appropriately, in accordance with the provisions of the Act on the Protection of Personal Information (Act No. 57 of 2003).

The personal information registered in My Page is used by OTAFF only for the purposes of implementing the test, and is not disclosed to any third party.

However, information may be provided to the government when requested by the government in accordance with relevant laws and ordinances.

Some of the information registered in My Page, such as the names of the prefectures where candidates live, or their responses to questionnaire surveys, may be collated in a format that cannot be used to identify specific individuals, and the aggregate results published.