



The Essential Guide 2010

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Introduction

What is HEC?

HEC, or the Hokkaido English Challenge, is an English speech competition for Junior and Senior High students. The challenge has two divisions, junior and senior, respectively. Only first year Junior High and first year Senior High students may enter. The challenge consists of a twenty-minute test, which is administered by the contestant's ALT. The submission is created by way of video. The video is sent to judges for evaluation and results are announced before summer vacation. The test's emphasis is on communicative ability. Entrants are awarded points for showing creativity with their acquired English, their ability to express thoughts clearly and how they cope with unfamiliar vocabulary and grammar. The test is based on the national syllabus.

HEC was established by participants of the JET program in 1994 as a means of motivating students to improve their oral skills. They hoped that by interacting with Assistant Language Teacher (ALT), the students confidence and language proficiency would improve. HEC gives ALTs the chance to become instrumental in their students' progress and gives both student and ALT a great goal to work towards as a team.

If the contestant's video entry is successful, the student will then be notified that he or she may attend Hokkaido English Camp. Other possible prizes include a homestay in the English speaking country of the student's choice and other English related prizes.

HEC relies on donations and money gathered from fundraisers. It is only with the fantastic support from Hokkaido Association of the Japan and Teaching Exchange (HAJET) and Hokkaido's ALTs that we are able to hold this competition every year.

HEC is supported by the Hokkaido Board of Education and is sponsored by HAJET.

Why you and your students should get involved

ALTs regularly laud HEC as their most rewarding experience as an English teaching assistant and many choose to involve themselves year after year. It has enjoyed great success since its inauguration and has been replicated by other prefectures across Japan. Involvement at any stage of the contest will build ALTs' professional experience and give them confidence in their English teaching abilities.

Furthermore, many ALTs report an increase in their students' interest and enthusiasm for English as well as a marked difference in students' language skills as a result of their participation in HEC. Every student who enters can become more comfortable speaking English and feel a sense of pride in having risen to a challenge. The process of preparing for the contest is pivotal in instilling a greater desire to continue with English education. Those who are able to attend summer camp or participate in a home-stay have the chance to meet new people and enjoy new experiences while progressing with their English. It is a rare opportunity for Japanese students to use the English language as a means to express themselves and make friends.

Are my students good enough?

Of course! Every year HEC receives test videos from students who vary widely in their English speaking ability. Some have practiced long and hard in preparation, others need only meet with their ALT once or twice. ALTs new to HEC are often unsure whether their students have sufficient English to enter.

Typically, the top half of Senior High school winners' can communicate in English relatively easily. The bottom half of winners are usually able to understand intermediate spoken English but may be slower in responding or will find it more difficult to respond naturally. Both are sufficient for entering the HEC speech competition.

Likewise, the top Junior High winners are usually able to express themselves using the grammar and vocabulary they have learnt. They will be able to construct sentences with some creativity and to ask and respond to simple questions and instructions. The lower placed winners will understand questions and instructions but may have more difficulty responding or finding the right words. Still, both possess English skills adequate enough to enter the HEC speech competition.

HEC recommends that ALTs allow interested students to enter, the HEC speech competition even if there are concerns about their level. Students who demonstrate an ease and enthusiasm about communicating, but may not have the ability to express themselves, still have a good chance of receiving a place at camp. Our aim is to encourage and motivate students to speak English and to help nurture their oral skills. If you think your student could benefit from entering the competition, regardless of their final placing, we suggest you enter them.

“HEC offers an incredible opportunity for students to gain an enjoyment of English. I was lucky to have five students in my city enter, but their levels varied greatly. I was mostly shocked by the keenness of one student to enter. She had never performed well in English, and her ability was almost non-existent. But she wanted to enter and stayed late after school to study for the exam. She tried incredibly hard, and although her level of listening was better than when we started, she failed to perform well on the test. In fact, she sat silently for the duration of the test and only answered one question. But when it was over, she was smiling at me. I found out later that she simply wanted to spend time with me and wanted to do her best to find a way to communicate with me. Regardless of how the test went, every time I go to her school, she is the first person to run up to me, and she stands next to me chatting as long as she can. Seeing her ganbatte her way through this test is one of my proudest moments as an ALT.”

PRIZES¹

JUNIOR HIGH DIVISION

1st Place	Home-stay ²	Place at HEC Summer Camp
2nd Place	English related prize (worth ¥20,000)	Place at HEC Summer Camp
3rd - 30th Place ³		Place at HEC Summer Camp

SENIOR HIGH DIVISION

1st Place	English related prizes (worth ¥30,000)	Place at HEC Summer Camp
2nd Place	English related prize (worth ¥20,000)	Place at HEC Summer Camp
3rd - 20th Place ³		Place at HEC Summer Camp

All participants receive a certificate recognizing their efforts. All prize winners will receive a separate certificate in recognition of their achievements

1_ See 'Prizes Explained' for more information. All prizes are subject to change.

2_ Please see 'Prizes Explained: Homestay' for information regarding changes in this prize.

3_ Based on last years entrants. Placement is subject to change based on number of entries. See 'Prizes Explained: HEC Summer Camp' for more information.

The Prizes Explained

Home-stays

This year HEC will offer one home-stay to the winner of Junior high division. Participants will be judged normally by division standards in their region. The tapes of the top students in each region will then proceed to the next round, being judged by the head judge of their division.⁴

Each student has his or her own ideas and expectations about where they want their home-stay. HEC tries to find a home-stay program to fit the wants and needs of each student. On their permission forms, all students are asked to select a country they would like to complete their home-stay in, should they win the grand prize. This is an effort to help HEC cut costs by allowing us to identify the winning student's country of choice and reserve a home-stay and plane ticket as early as possible. It is important to remember that HEC will do its best to honor the student's request, but reserves the right to change the home-stay location if it exceeds budget constraints.

The grand prize winner will receive a home-stay in a country in which English is the first language. During their time abroad, he/she will be looked after by a host family and attend an English language school. Winners for the 2008-09 year traveled to Hawaii and New Zealand. The length of the home-stay (between one and two weeks) depends on the availability of the student and HEC's financial situation at the time of organizing the home-stay.

The home-stay is organized through Succo Ryugaku, which has been organizing comprehensive internship and study abroad programs for students and young adults since 2003. Their Japanese language website is www.succo.org. Succo and HEC welcome questions about the home-stay procedure, and do our best to ensure the students and the parents are at ease.

HEC will cover the costs of the airfare and the home-stay only (about ¥365,000). The parents/guardian of the grand prize winner must pay for the costs of travel to the airport (in Japan, i.e. Chitose), the language school and travel insurance. Prices vary greatly according to the host country and the time of year of travel. The expense of language school and travel insurance ranges from ¥50,000 to ¥80,000, a cost that is generally acceptable considering the expense HEC undertakes.

If the grand prize winner is unable to accept the home-stay for any reason, the home-stay will then be offered to the second place winner in their division.

HEC Summer Camp

Note: ALTs who enter students within the Hokkaido English Challenge do not have to attend camp.

In order to adjust to the varying number of entrants into HEC from both divisions, the places offered to HEC Summer Camp will be set at an appropriate ratio. Based upon the past few year's participation, we are currently set at offering thirty (30) positions to the top scoring Junior High students and twenty (20) positions to the top scoring Senior High students. If the number of entrants increases dramatically in favor of the one division these numbers will be adjusted accordingly.⁵

Students who place within the top tier of their division will be offered a place at HEC Summer Camp. The camp has been held in the past at Hokkaido Kodomonokuni (北海道子どもの国) campsite in Sunagawa. The camp is five days long, and all expenses are paid.⁶ In the case that a winning student is unable to attend summer camp, their place is offered to one of the next highest-scoring student.⁷

The camp is an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. The schedule is carefully designed to help students improve their communication skills and sociability in English. As camp progresses, students typically become more comfortable around ALTs and leave camp full of confidence and keen to continue their English studies.

4_ Judging process will be outlined in greater detail in the 2010 Test Pack.

5_ Subject to change based on number of entrants.

6_ Students may be asked to cover costs of onsen visits.

7_ As determined by the Regional Judge

Below is an example of HEC camp's itinerary⁸

Day 1

Midday – 2.30pm	Students arrive in Sunagawa Registration
3.00pm – 5.00pm	Opening ceremony Icebreaker games
5.30pm – 8:00pm	Dinner/ clean up/ free time
8:00pm	Campfire and songs
9.30pm – 10.30pm	Wind down and bed

Day 2

7.00am	Breakfast
8.30am	Demonstration play by ALT volunteers
9.30am	Sunagawa Fushigi-no-mori fieldtrip
3.00pm	Play writing
4.30pm	Letter Writing
7.00pm	Dinner
8.00pm	Free time
9.30 – 10:00pm	Bed

Day 3

7.30am	Breakfast/Mail
9:00am	Play Writing
11.30am	Lunch
1.00pm	Crazy Olympics
4.00pm	Onsen/ Letter Writing
6.30pm	Dinner
8:00pm	Dance
9.30 – 10.30pm	Chill out/ Bed

Day 4

7.30am	Breakfast/ Mail
9.00am	Crafts/Sports/Hike
12.00pm	Lunch
1.00pm	Playwriting/Practice
3.00pm	Onsen/Letter Writing
6:00pm	Barbecue
7.30pm	Play Performances & Campfire

Day 5

7.00am	Breakfast/ Mail
8.00am	Pack Up
9.00am	Mail/ Memory Books/ Camp photos
10.00am	Closing Ceremony
12.00pm	Pick up/ Station Drop off

Junior Leader Program

Senior High school students from the previous year's camp have the opportunity to return in the capacity of Junior Leader. Junior Leaders assist camp activities and are included in staff meetings.

The camp takes place at the end of July and is staffed by foreign volunteers, predominantly Hokkaido JET ALTs, and a small number of Japanese staff. Many Boards of Education now offer ALTs the option of taking time off to volunteer for Summer Camp without using paid vacation (nenkyuu). For more information on how to volunteer for Summer Camp, please see 'How To Get Involved' section. The current HEC Coordinator for the 2009/10 year is John Nguyen. He can be contacted at heccamp@gmail.com .

"Let me tell you about my experience in English Camp. I joined Hokkaido English Challenge camp in Sunagawa this summer. At this camp, about 50 Japanese junior and senior high school students and about 30 Assistant Language Teachers stay in tents for 5 days. We did many kinds of exciting activities, such as dancing, hiking, sports, drama and so on, all of them Western style activities. We enjoyed the international tastes of meals like tacos, oatmeal, hotdogs, spaghetti and a lot of other snacks. We also enjoyed talking a lot in English and singing songs. I like singing Beatles' and Hillary's songs. Many teachers also liked Beatles' songs, so we sang them and danced together. We held "Crazy Olympics". We played many kinds of funny games, such as a fast-eater contest, various relay and so on. I took part in a speech contest game. In this game I had to say "Chubby bunny!" three times with my mouth full of many marshmallows. We also made a short drama in groups and played it together with face painting and funny costumes. I enjoyed every activity very much. Often I couldn't understand teacher's English, but I never gave up. I asked them questions because I wanted to know their ideas, and I tried to share my ideas with them in English using gestures. At this camp, foreign teachers wanted us to answer clearly and at the very least, we tried to answer "yes" or "no". I couldn't understand many words, but I could communicate with foreign teachers with a few English words, many gestures and big smiles. We didn't have to be good at speaking English. I think the most important thing for communication is the mindset of "I want you to know my ideas" and "I want to know your ideas". With this way of thinking we can share a good time together. I'm going to keep this mindset of trying to communicate and I want to make many friends from other countries. Thank you." – Rika, second year junior high

Prizes for 2nd Place

In previous years students have been awarded cameras, electronic dictionaries or gift certificates. The prizes for 2010 are currently being decided.

The Test

The test is based on the grammar and vocabulary on the year's syllabus, as determined by the Ministry of Education. Held in March, the test lasts around twenty minutes and is done in front of a video camera. The ALT administers the test in the presence of a JTE or another Japanese teacher. Once the recording is complete, the video is sent to Regional Judges, who determine which students go through to the final round. Head Judges then select the overall winners and rank the top scoring students. Results are normally announced at the end of May or early June. Preparation for the test is at the discretion of the ALT and student, and can range from months of one-on-one tutoring, to group conversation practice during lunch break.

Test Specifications

Junior High School Test

Five sections

- 1 Introductory questions; picture questions
- 2 Reading comprehension
- 3 20 Questions
- 4 Listening comprehension
- 5 Cartoon description

Senior High School Test

Five sections

- 1 Introductory questions; picture questions
- 2 20 Questions
- 3 Describing 'How to...' do / make / use something
- 4 Listening comprehension
- 5 Cartoon description

Supplementary vocabulary and structures will be used in order to test the student's ability to infer meaning.

Rules of Eligibility

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

- 1_ Students must be a first year student of junior or senior high school during the 2009 school year (April 2009 to March 2010).
- 2_ Participants must not have spent more than three consecutive weeks in an English-speaking country.
- 3_ Up to ten students per school may enter. However, only five students per school may attend HEC summer camp in the Junior High category, and three students per school in Senior High category. This is done to ensure that a fair spread of schools is represented at camp⁹

Entry Fees

Below is the table of entry fees for the 2010 competition. (Please note that the fee schedule is graduated)

HAJET Members	Cost per student	Total cost
1st student	¥3000	¥3000
2nd student	¥2500	¥5500
3rd student	¥2000	¥7500
4th student	¥1500	¥9000
5th student	¥1000	¥10000
6th student	¥1000	¥11000
7th student	¥1000	¥12000

Non-HAJET Members	Cost per student	Total cost
1st student	¥4000	¥4000
2nd student	¥3500	¥7500
3rd student	¥3000	¥10500
4th student	¥2500	¥13000
5th student	¥2000	¥15000
6th student	¥2000	¥17000
7th student	¥2000	¥19000

The fifth student onward is set at a cost of ¥1000 (¥2000) each. Only ten (10) students per school may enter. There is no limit to the amount of students ALTs may enter in total.

We recommend that you ask parents to cover entry fee costs. A letter for parents will be included in the 'HEC 2010 LETTER PACK'. How much money you are required to pay will depend on the number of students you are entering. Please divide the total amount required equally among the number of students entering to determine how much each student must pay.

Also within the 'HEC 2010 LETTER PACK' will be a 'Letter to Schools Requesting Entry Fees' if for some reason you would prefer to ask your school to cover the entry fees.

Previous Years Participation Numbers

Year	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007- 08	2008-2009
JHS	137	179	N/A	118	97	39	63
SHS	21	22	N/A	31	43	32	68
Total	158	201	N/A	149	140	71	131

KEY

JH= Junior High Category
 SH = Senior High Category
 N/A = statistics unavailable

⁹ Subject to change based on number of entrants

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. Remember that if you enter a student, you do not have to attend camp. If you are unable to enter students, however, there are other ways to become part of HEC's team. Below is a list of the volunteer positions within HEC (note: the positions of HEC Coordinator and Camp Coordinator will next be available for the 2010-11 competition, open in the spring).

If you are unable to commit to HEC but would still like to show your support, there are plenty of opportunities to donate at HAJET fundraisers held throughout the year.

HEC is a non-profit program and is run completely on donations. One-hundred percent of everything we receive goes into paying for home-stays, prizes, and HEC Camp. Because of this, HEC encourages ALTs who wish to support HEC to enter students and if possible, hold fundraising events to help keep the program strong.

If you wish to make a donation at any time or know someone who would, please see 'Account Details' on page 21 for HEC's bank details.

Hec Volunteer Positions

HEC Coordinator

The coordinator is responsible for arranging home-stays, managing the budget, raising funds, releasing information, collecting entry fees and forms, and coordinating the test and judging. Position will be opened for spring 2010.

Regional Judges

Positions available: 8

Regional judges evaluate all video entries for their region and determine which students will go through to the final round. Regional Judges may enter students, but not within the region they are judging.

Head Judges

Positions available: 2 for Senior High School category, 2 for Junior High School category

Head judges select the overall winners and rank the top-placed entrants. Head Judges may enter students, but not into the category they are judging. However, we prefer that judges have experience of teaching the category of students they are judging.

Test Writers

Positions available: 1 for Junior High category, 1 for Senior High category

Writers are responsible for finding source material (i.e. pictures, cartoon strips) and writing test questions according to the established format. Test writers may enter their own students, but not into the category 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 Regional Representatives would like to, HEC would appreciate their aid in raising funds.

Summer Camp Positions

Camp Coordinator

Positions available: 2

Camp Coordinators are responsible for organizing the camp's location, schedule, sending out information, choosing volunteers and for managing the budget. The role of Camp Coordinator is separate to that of HEC Coordinator. Coordinators for 2009-10 have already been selected. Camp Coordinators for the 2010-11 year will be selected in the summer of 2010.

Camp Volunteers

Positions include

Camp Coordinator, Group Leaders, Kitchen Staff, First-aid, Junior Leader Program Coordinators, Crazy Olympic Coordinators, Disco DJ, Playwriting Coordinators, Letter-writing Coordinator, Drivers.

Kitchen staff

The head chef is responsible for designing a menu, budgeting appropriately, buying food, preparing food at camp.

Group leaders

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

Other positions such as *crazy Olympics, playwriting, disco DJ, letter-writing and Junior Leader Program coordinators* are responsible for organizing their activity, explaining proceedings to campers and volunteers, and ensuring the activity runs smoothly.

Staff volunteers work together to ensure the health and safety of students and to encourage them to use English during the duration of the camp. ALTs help coordinate activities to ensure students are at ease and enjoying their time at camp. If there is a surplus of offers for camp volunteers, priority is usually given to those whose students have entered the competition or are attending camp. No previous experience is necessary for any of the above jobs, but is preferred in the case of First-aid.

If you are interested in getting involved, and would like to put yourself forward for any of the above HEC positions, please e-mail thinkhec@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 e-mail heccamp@gmail.com with your name, location, and the position you are interested in.

Advice and Guidelines

Entering students for HEC 2010

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

Deadlines

FRIDAY MARCH 12th, 2010:¹⁰ Permission forms and entry fees must be received by this date. Until HEC has both, your student cannot be entered into the competition. It is encouraged that fees and forms be sent in as soon as possible.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 7th: Deadline for entries to be POSTMARKED to the appropriate regional judges.

List of tasks

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

- Distribute information to appropriate people
- 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
- Administer test
- Send test to Regional Judges

RECOMMENDED

- » Take time to look at old tests and familiarize yourself with the marking scheme.
- » Tests will be available for download on the HEC google group, HAJET yahoo group, the HokkaidoJET forums (hokkaidojets.org), and upon request if necessary.
- » Speak to ALTs who have entered their students previously to find out various ways to prepare your students.

¹⁰HEC cannot accept entries that arrive after March 15th any entries that are postmarked AFTER this date will be returned to sender, unopened and entrants will be disqualified. No monies will be refunded.

Detailed Recommended Timeline

Below is a 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-November-December

- 1_ Talk with JTEs about the competition. Print out HEC posters and flyers, hang them up/distribute them to students. Announce details of contest in class.
- 2_ Look out for students who might be interested. Discuss with JTE who might be suitable.
- 3_ Distribute letters to your supervisor, vice principals, JTEs and parents.
- 4_ If more than ten students from one school wish to participate, hold preliminary rounds to determine which ten may enter.¹¹
- 5_ Decide who will enter and make sure they and their parents understand test requirements, the judging process, deadlines and prizes.
- 6_ Familiarize yourself with the payment process and prepare permission forms. Start giving students permission forms to fill out and collecting entry fees.
- 7_ Begin practicing.

December-January

- 1_ Decide whether you will continue practicing throughout the holiday or resuming after the school term starts.

February

- 1_ Arrange a date and time with your students and JTE to administer the test. Be aware that students have spring vacation in March. Make sure the school you are testing at has a video camera and taps to record for the test. HEC does not provide tapes.
- 2_ Record a mock test to gauge your student's progress. Allow the student to watch him/herself on video to familiarize them with the process.

March

- 1_ Download the Test Guide Pack. *Familiarize yourself and student with the testing procedures.*
- 2_ Send in your entry fees and permission forms to HEC by **Friday March 12th**.
- 3_ Receive actual test in the mail at the *latest* by **March 19th**.
- 4_ **Administer the test.**
- 5_ Send videos to appropriate Regional Judges by **Wednesday April 7th**.

April-May

- 1_ Regional and Final judging.

June

- 1_ Results are announced and Results/Camp Information Packs posted on the website.
- 2_ Prizes and certificates and are distributed.

July

- 1_ HEC English Summer Camp 2010

¹¹Organization of preliminary rounds is up to the ALT.

Permission Forms Address

Post the completed permission forms to Friday March 12th 2009. Your students cannot be entered into HEC until both the entry fee and permission forms have been received. Send the forms to:

Hokkaido English Challenge

c/o Leke Ojumu

Fukushima Junior High School

Aza Tsukisaki

Fukushima-cho

Matsumae-gun

Hokkaido

049-1321

And for those Kanji inclined people:

北海道イングリッシュチャレンジ

c/o レケ。オジユム

福島中学校

049-1321北海道松前郡福島町字月崎322-1

Please email thinkhec@gmail.com to notify us that the forms have been sent.

Payment

2_ Please pay entry fees by furikomi. Furikomi (振り込み) forms are available at the post office. Note that not all post offices may be able to provide you with an English form.

1_ Ask for a furikomi form.

2_ Write in the HEC account number: 19040-12690631.

記号 19040
番号 12690631

3_ Write in the HEC account name: ホッカイドウイングリッシュチャレンジ

4_ Write your name.

5_ Write how much you are paying.

6_ Write your phone number.

7_ Email Leke at *thinkhec@gmail.com* if you want confirmation that your payment has been received.

HEC Account Details

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 19040-12690631

ACCOUNT NAME: ホッカイドウイングリッシュチャレンジ

Administering the Test

The Test Manuscript

Receive the test manuscript in a sealed envelope in the post at the latest by **MARCH 19th**. On the day of the test, you must show the video camera the sealed envelope to prove that it has not been tampered with. PLEASE NOTE: If , for whatever reason, an envelope is opened before the exam HEC will not reissue the exam and students WILL be disqualified. No monies will be refunded.

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 students' chances were affected due to poor sound quality.
- Once the test has been recorded, make a copy onto a video.

The Test Pack

The 2010 Test Pack will be available online nearer the test date. It will include:

Judging Guidelines	How your students will be judged
Equipment Needed	What you will need during the test
Recording Guidelines	How to make your recording; how to make multiple recordings
Declaration forms	To be signed by you and your JTE (or another witness) before the test envelope is opened
Evaluation forms	To be sent to the HEC Coordinator for your comments and suggestions for improving the contest in the future
Address of Regional Judge	Send video to this address

WEDNESDAY APRIL 7th
Deadline for entries to be POSTMARKED to the appropriate regional judges.

Permission from Schools

You may find that some schools are reluctant to allow their students to enter, viewing HEC as a distraction from more important commitments. If the initial reaction of the school is to turn the opportunity down, why not:

- » Suggest that they be allowed to treat the matter 'case by case' and adopt the rule that if the parents are happy for them to enter, then they should be allowed to, rather than looking at it as a matter for the whole school.
- » Remind them that your local Board of Education, as well as the Hokkaido board, supports the competition, and tell of any other schools in the area that are participating.
- » Tell them politely that the competition will aid the students work schedule rather than work against it, since the test is based on the year's syllabus.

Encouraging your students

You are likely to find that your student already has a busy schedule and that it is difficult to find a convenient time to meet. It may be wise to discuss with their teacher what sort of pressures they have from the school/from home regarding study and what extra curricular activities they are involved in. Please be sure to speak to your student about your practice schedule and to ask them what they want to get out of the contest.

Be aware of whether your student is responding positively and enjoying him/herself to practice. 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.

We recommend writing them the occasional letter or card to keep them motivated.

HEC Camp: Potential to clash with timetable

It is worth keeping in mind that students are busy throughout the holidays and may have cram school, sports tournaments, or band recitals scheduled around the same time as HEC Camp. It is important that you make it clear to the school and participating students that the camp takes place at the end of July. We recommend that you:

- » Try to get some sort of verbal guarantee from the students that they are free and can go (as far as they know).
- » Ask the school if their school club is likely to have an event around that time.
- » Assure them that in past years students who have had commitments to band recitals and sports tournaments have been able to attend camp with the support of ALTs and their school.

Do everything you can to ensure that the school will support the student and their participation in HEC should they win a place at camp.