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Examiners' Report  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
In French (8FR0) Paper 01  
Listening, Reading and Translation  
Transcript

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The GCE French World Class Qualification (WCQ) 8FR01 was available for the third and penultimate time. It will be available in June 2020 for the last time. It was set as per the WCQ GCE AS 2016 Specification, and is consistent with the format of Specimen paper. One hour 45 minutes were allocated for the completion of the paper, with 45 minutes being recommended for the listening questions. Dictionaries are prohibited throughout this paper. Over 300 candidates sat the paper.

Candidates must attempt all questions, for there is no choice of questions, and a broad range of attainment was once again attested. Examiners mark this paper following principles consistent with both previous sessions. We take all passages from the published Themes 1 and 2 and their sub-themes. The first five passages are listening passages, the next five are reading passages, and the last passage is an unseen translation into English. The paper is worth 64 marks in total.

In this paper, Passage 1 of Section A (listening comprehension) was a multiple choice question worth four marks, about a lady who has chosen for various reasons to work part-time. In response to Passage 2, on a festival in Mons, Belgium, to commemorate a century since the end of the First World War, 4 marks were offered for short target language responses. Passage 3, considering the challenges faced by students who are parents, was a target language response question worth 8 marks, where candidates attempted five parts, each worth 1, 2 or 3 marks. Passages 4(a) and 4(b) comprised a two-part interview with Rickman, a musician from French Guyana. In Q4(a), candidates summarised essential points in French, and in Q4(b), they communicated key important information in English.

Section B (reading comprehension) began with Q5, where 4 marks were available, from multiple choice parts, and was a newspaper article on television broadcasting in Luxembourg. For Q6, relating to an article about the cost of student life, the four correct statements out of eight had to be identified, giving a total of 4 marks. Q7 was about the changing views of young people with regard to wedlock, and sought to elicit short responses in French, amounting to 4 marks. The article appeared in 2008 and was thus historical. Q8 was a magazine article about the expenses incurred by French Presidents, notably Emmanuel Macron, on make-up, and was a comprehension question with responses in French. Eight marks were on offer. A further 8 marks were available in Q9, the literary text taken from *La preuve irrefutable de l'existence du père Noël*, about Father Christmas' visit to the narrator's home. Question parts were all in French, and required short responses in French. In Section C (unseen translation), Q10 was passage about salegy music in Francophone Africa. Twelve marks were on offer for twelve distinct marking units, of varying difficulty, into which the examiners cut the passage.

Based on the performance in this session, and consistent with the feedback from the previous two sessions, the Principal Examiner proffers the following guidance to candidates:

A careful reading of each part, with attention to the specific question words, is important. The angle of the question needs attention,

especially when this might require inference, rather than lifting from the passage.

We often require manipulation and copying from the passage is only successful if the correct information is focused on the question.

Particular care is needed in the lifting passages, where indiscriminate and/or wholesale transcription does not always lead to comprehensible responses.

Although the quality of language is not explicitly assessed in this paper, the French offered needs to communicate unambiguously.

Examiners assess skills of deduction, assimilation and inference in this specification, and candidates will find that all necessary information cannot be copied from the passages.

The order of elements rule means that examiners only consider as many elements as there are marks available. We advise candidates to offer responses which are succinct and targeted.

Q4b is a summary exercise and selective candidates earn the highest credit.

In Q10, we are looking for natural English, so it is useful to re-read the response, hazarding plausible elements of the response rather than leaving gaps, and judging whether the English passage feels natural, rather than slavishly bound to the French in the original passage.

## Q2

This passage is the first which requires responses in the target language and comprised three parts, (a) and (c) being worth 1 mark each, and (b) carrying 2 marks. Responses which were addressed the question scored well. For instance, in (a), it was not the First World War itself which Belgians were commemorating, but its end.

In (b), candidates quite frequently offered two correct elements, as any two of three notions were acceptable. *il est tombé* however was not specific enough to score.

(c) was less successful, and many candidates transcribed inaccurately: *ils ont organisé des concerts*. *ils ont joué dans des concerts* conveyed the notion of the contribution of the artists, and a verb was not required, as the response followed logically from the question without one. We did not credit *ils ont chanté*, as there is no specific detail in the passage as to how participants they contributed.

## Q3

This passage seemed more accessible last session than in this or the first session, and only those candidates who were alert to the need to infer, summarise and

deduce were able to earn high marks. (a) and (g) most commonly provided marks, for the information was straightforward and factual. However, unsuccessful candidates frequently furnished information which was true, but not relevant to the question.

In (b), many unsuccessful candidates focused on the current situation and did not comment on the state of affairs a decade ago. This required inference and only the more successful candidates gained 1 mark.

In (c), there needed to be the idea of resuming higher education straight after secondary school. However, many candidates targeted the notion of a continuum which is an inaccurate lift: higher education is not continuing after secondary education, it begins. Education more broadly continues. The precise terms of the question warrant the candidates' attention.

*la reprise des études* was a rejected lift in (d) and gave candidates the correct information, but they had to deduce from this that the response would need manipulation into *reprendre leurs études* or similar. *reprises des études* was a targeted lift, and was accepted.

In (e), responses which had no comparison were not able to gain credit, for the conditional tense of the question targeted the change in situation. Therefore, *un système scolaire adapté* was rejected, but the addition of *mieux* was sufficient to gain 1 mark. The system was perhaps already adapted to so degree, but inadequately.

(f) as the part in which unsuccessful candidates more frequently lost marks for untargeted lifts. Many candidates correctly cited obstacles in the way of student mothers, but fewer candidates focused on the *resoudre* aspect of the question. Once candidates understood that speculation and deduction would be needed, based on the information in the passage, they merited 1 or 2 marks with relative ease: *des structures scolaires adaptées* scored, for instance.

(g) as largely well-understood, and provided that the notion of living together was conveyed, rather than just spending contact time with one another, candidates obtained 1 mark, whether the response implied that the child lived with the father or *vice versa*. *ils se voient moins souvent* was therefore too vague.

#### Q4

The summary skill is still a requirement of this specification with which candidates are not especially familiar, but there has again been improvement in the way in which they attempted the question. There have been many more candidates who succeeded in retrieving key information and conveying it succinctly, rather than writing everything heard, in the hope that it contained correct material. Once again, candidates need the opportunity to practise this less familiar skill. Consistent with the principles of the first sessions, but not necessarily in June 2020, examiners tried to award credit where candidates presented only one piece of superfluous information, and evaluated answers such that superfluous information impacted as little as possible responses.

In (a) (i), many candidates accessed some credit, either for the notion of pride or knowledge of history. *fiers* on its own could not score, as it did not target the question. A lift *il est important pour les jeunes de connaître leur histoire* was sufficiently focused to gain 1 mark.

(a) (ii) also had quite a number of responses which gained 1 or 2 marks. Candidates needed to convey *avec* or a similar idea, as *paroles* on its own does not respond directly enough to *comment*. However, if candidates wrote *paroles* and *tambours*, with no *avec* in either element, 1 mark was gained. *la chanson parle de l'Amazonie* was a fairly frequent and acceptable alternative for *paroles*.

(b) (i) yielded 1 mark for many candidates. Those who gained 2 marks were clear in their response that the cousin videoed himself dancing, rather than Rickman. This is an example of where checking the English regardless of the original, is useful, to avoid ambiguity which could forfeit credit.

(b) (ii) also provided reasonable scores, and the notion of the song going viral or international was widely conveyed. Less often was the idea of celebrities or a lot of people getting involved communicated felicitously, and references to the Antillais were erroneous. Their involvement was retrospective, not current.

Thankfully few candidates either failed to attempt (b) or responded in the incorrect language.

## Q6

The passage deals with the cost of student life, so falls clearly within Theme 1 of this specification. There were some good scores, but quite a number of 2 and 3 mark responses, which indicate that the question was able to discriminate across the ability range of the candidature.

B was quite often selected, perhaps because candidates assumed that the student unions and government would co-operate, rather than it being an aspiration, as per the passage. Not all candidates chose E, but G and I were frequently correct, possibly aided by personal experience which the passage bore out. Therefore, F was not uncommon, as many candidates would be used to the idea that higher education relies on financial support from parents.

## Q7

This passage, about the evolving attitudes of young people towards marriage, is a mere eleven years old, but is already historical. The information proved quite challenging in places to identify, and again, candidates who checked the terms of the question, rather than simply noting information which was true, fared most positively.

(a) his part was not as straightforward as might have been thought and the response *être en couple et vivre ensemble* abounded but could not score, as it did not specifically mention *sans se marier*, a key notion.

(b) candidates gained this mark if they indicated a general summary or assimilation of the information given on the decade in question. Therefore, and bearing in mind the order of elements rule, candidates needed to generalise, and not offer specific details of how young couples spent these ten years. Thus *une période d'essai* or *une période d'expérimentation* scored, but examples of activities, such as travel or charity work were interesting but not individually the reason to postpone marriage.

(c) was a successful part for many, and the idea of being a child, child-like or even childish for longer, scored, as did a response from the other angle: becoming adult later. *ils sont moins conscients du temps qui passe* was a creditworthy manipulation of the passage.

#### Q8

Some candidates performed reasonably well overall, but this proved to be perhaps most challenging reading question, more so than the literary passage this session. Less successful candidates actually tended to gain some credit, perhaps in the first three parts. The topic of appearance and its relationship to hypocrisy and substance seems to be familiar to candidates.

(a) offered a straightforward start to the question, especially as the mere fact of spending on make-up, not even how much, sufficed to gain the mark. If the answer did not include explicit reference to *maquillage*, there was no score, as the question does not mention make-up.

(b) was also a largely successful part, as it is presented clearly at the end of the third line of the passage, and was couched carefully so that, as is always the case, each part is independent. Therefore, success in (b) did not rely on (a) and *réduire ses dépenses* earned 1 mark, regardless of what this reduced expenditure was on.

(c) again did not need an explicit mention of *maquillage* or *maquilleurs* in the formulation *ils ont fait la même chose* scored. Otherwise, the response needed to target on what the expenditure was being made, and many candidates managed to do this. It is worth remembering that the responses should be free-standing, and not dependent on referring to the passage. That is why a mention of either *le même* or *maquillage* is needed.

In (d), many candidates gained at least 1 mark, and the contrast notion of high payment, but high demand was identified quite often. *le maquilleur était constamment présent* is an instance where a lift was deemed targeted, and references to needing to be on hand for frequent touch-ups were successful.

Candidates did not always understand (e), and the sense of *en réduisant* was not presented in some cases. *les aides au logement* is too ambiguous, and does not convey the idea of limiting housing expenditure.

(f) benefitted from an understanding of *se serrer la ceinture* and those candidates who did, were best placed to gain 2 marks. *dépenses superficielles* was the more common route to 1 mark, while reference to asking the public to make an effort was

more elusive, especially as it needed to be a financial one. Some candidates, unsuccessfully in this context, regarded Macron and indeed politicians generally, as *superflus*.

#### Q9

Candidates handled this reading comprehension question well on the whole, in this instance from *La preuve irrefutable du père Noël* by the Canadian author, Michel Tremblay. It fell squarely within the theme of festivals and traditions, and while the passage was from a novel, this once again did not mean that the language of the questions, or the conceptual challenge of the questions was exaggerated. Indeed, some very short and succinct responses scored well.

(a) *la porte* or *l'entrée* are not quite synonymous for *le seuil*. but examiners accepted them here, and *une portion* was not needed for the *tarte aux pommes* notion. This meant that many candidates were successful in gaining 1 or 2 marks.

Many candidates successfully attempted (b), and as long as there was *pour* or an equivalent idea, they gained 1 mark when linking it to the notion of *cadeaux*. *cadeaux* on its own was ambiguous.

(c) did not provide success for the majority of candidates and if candidates earned 1 mark, it tended to be in relation to the smell of the turkey. The lift *ça sent déjà la dinde* helped a number of candidates to score. However, the faulty transcription of *la dinde sont bon* was ambiguous, so examiners were obliged to reject it. Candidates sometimes grasped the notion of satisfaction or pleasure but only the most successful linked it to chocolates, and thus this part eluded in the main.

(d) required a supposition to be made, based on an understanding of the passage that the melting snow was liable to make the floor wet and dirty, so examiners credited any plausible negative reaction from the mother: *fâchée, pas contente*. More factual responses also scored for a goodly number of candidates: *maman voulait qu'il nettoie le plancher*.

(e) was a 2 mark part which was among the most successful in the paper, which illustrated the accessibility of parts of this literary passage. Candidates often gained 1 mark for the notion of *avoir le sac* or *trouver le sac*, and a correct description of this bag earned the second mark in many cases: *il trouve un sac rouge*.

#### Q10

Unseen translation into English is still a relatively new skill at this level and most candidates gained decent to good credit. The use of the several past papers would be beneficial for candidates preparing for the June 2020 session. This session avoided once again the difficulty of translating historical concepts, but there were some issues with grammar points such as *en fusionnant* and the passive voice. It is well worth candidates reviewing the programme of grammar study, in order that they are not wrongfooted by areas of it in the translation. In this passage, less successful candidates who persevered were often able to gain a number of marks from phrases which they translated felicitously, even if the passage as a whole was



difficult. The position of adjectives in English in contrast to French is worthy of care, especially when checking work.

*la musique salegy* did not require a translation of salegy but salegy music at least reflected usual English syntax, and in general, adjectival position is worth considering.

Boxes 3, 4 and 9 are examples where candidates of all abilities were able to access credit. However, candidates understood less universally key words such as *vedette*, *insulaire*, and *tendu*. Candidates would do well to pay attention to the precise details of the passage, so *sons* is not songs, *critiquer* is not automatically to critique, and the use of the definite article and choice of past tense need there to be sufficient time reserved for this final question, plus time to check it. There were some accomplished attempts, but others which seemed to have suffered from a lack of time to undertake this 12 mark question.

