

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

# FRENCH

In 1995 the total number of candidates sitting for the French examination in each course was as follows:

2 Unit	428
3 Unit	236
2 Unit General	439
2 Unit Z	576
TOTAL	1679

Although there was again a decline in numbers in some courses, it is pleasing to note that the general standard of performance is being maintained in all courses.

### 2UZ/2UG

#### LISTENING SKILLS

On the whole, the Listening paper was well attempted by most candidates. There were, however, a few problem areas which are outlined below. Perhaps the most avoidable mistakes were those caused by failing to answer the question in its correct format.

#### Item 1

This question was generally well answered. Mistakes occurred because candidates misunderstood the word *monnaie* and assumed that this was the total.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Item 2

This was generally well answered, although the phrase *J'en ai marre d'être blonde* caused some candidates to assume that she was fair (blonde).

### Item 3

Well prepared candidates had no problem with this question. Weaker candidates, however, gave incomplete answers such as *ice-cream with strawberries* or *glass of strawberries*.

### Item 4

The format here presented problems for a number of candidates. Some failed to identify the box with the letter and put a cross instead.

### Item 5

Many candidates thought that *douze* = 2. Others wrote *Saturday night* as being the day, and the name *Dupont* was misspelt by some.

### Item 6

*Photographer* and *stereo salesman* were the most original terms given for someone who rents apartments. Incomplete answers in part (b) failed to indicate the rent, others indicated that the *studio* had three rooms. Some forgot to give location details. *Mairie* was taken to mean *Marie*, *by the sea* and *near mum's*.

### Item 7

Most candidates answered part (a) very well. *Eclaircies* was not understood by all and *routes bloquées* was interpreted by some to mean *the weather was hot and block-out recommended*.

### Item 8

25% of candidates ticked four statements in this item, which was not answered well on the whole.

### Item 9

*Belgium* was not a familiar word for all students.

In part (b) candidates' answers were often incomplete. *Grand-mère* was taken to mean *mother*.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Item 10

Although this question appeared to be straightforward and simple, some candidates were not familiar with the subjects taught, others did not understand that, at *16:00 hours*, there was no class.

### Item 11

- (a) Many candidates had difficulty in recognising *près de*; also some confusion arose over the fact that Paris was the place of residence of the speaker.
- (b) Most candidates recognised *piscine*, but some failed to recognise *trop de monde*. While the skill of listening for key vocabulary is important, students should be able to use the vocabulary to answer the question rather than just writing isolated items as answers. Candidates who did not understand made up answers for this question.

### Item 12

Trying to find non-French expressions can be both distracting and time-consuming for candidates under examination conditions. Part (a) was generally well answered. Some candidates tried to avoid using the French word *pâté* whilst others tried to substitute a variety of words for the basic item *poisson*, e.g. *salmon*, *seafood*. Students should know that French words commonly used in English are acceptable. Answers which were mere lists of what was in the menu, rather than what was ordered, were penalised. 2UZ candidates were expected to be able to specify a *bottle of white wine*.

### Item 13

The best candidates were able to place each person in their correct relationship to Annie. There was some confusion over the relationship of Paul and Claudia with Annie, and some candidates were confused by the word *bébé* and wrote *baby* instead of *Nicole* next to *Paul*.

### Item 14

This was well handled item.

### Item 15

Most candidates performed well here; a few, however, seized on *Et c'est loin d'ici?* and selected answer A. Candidates should make use of the speaker's inflection to assist them in making the distinction between question and answer.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Item 16

This proved a challenging item, with a number of candidates experiencing difficulty in understanding what was expected of hopeful entrants in the competition. Many wanted to send their presents to Santa, some only wanted to put their names on a list. Candidates had greater difficulty in explaining that only one name would be drawn each week. While isolated items of vocabulary presented little difficulty, failure to link such items meaningfully was largely responsible for loss of points.

### Item 17

The date was generally well-handled as were the destination and class. There was, however, some variation in the time given, with frequent examples of *10h 05*, although most indicated a morning departure. Considerable difficulty was experienced in giving both the numbers 14 and 70 and in the correct order.

### Item 18

Candidates generally knew that an accident had taken place but the weaker candidates failed to discriminate between Nathalie and her sister, often missing *sœur* altogether and suggesting that Nathalie was *in hospital* rather than *at the hospital*. *Nuit et jour* was frequently translated as *eight (8) days*, while *rester* was often taken to mean *rest*.

### Item 19

This was generally well done. Many candidates did not know the meaning of *louer*. Candidates need to know that passports are produced on occasions other than travelling abroad: i.e. hiring a car, opening a bank account. There was a tendency for candidates to mark answer A simply because it involved travelling to Geneva/booking through a travel agent.

### Item 20

Answers here were generally not good. Moreover, the vocabulary was not well handled, e.g.

*accepter des cadeaux*

*de très bons résultats en vue*

*gymnastique légère*

*suivre les conseils de ta famille*

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Item 21

Although this was generally well done, a number of candidates did not use a process of elimination to reduce the possibilities to only one item; some took the word *restaurant* to be the key word, whereas the question was about an *invitation to go out* rather than the destination suggested.

## 2 UNIT Z

### SPEAKING SKILLS

The Speaking Skills of 2 Unit Z students were, on the whole, very fluent this year. The majority performed well and many demonstrated sound knowledge in all the items. There were, however, problems of pronunciation of common usage words and word order.

#### Major difficulties encountered by students:

- (i) prepositions, e.g.  

<i>à Paris</i>	<i>en septembre</i>
<i>près du</i>	<i>dans le métro</i>
<i>pour Londres</i>	<i>au théâtre</i>
<i>après</i>	
  
- (ii) time phrases, e.g.  

<i>aujourd'hui</i>	<i>ce matin</i>
<i>ce soir</i>	<i>après</i>
  
- (iii) vocabulary, e.g.  

<i>Londres</i>	<i>une section/partie non-fumeurs</i>
<i>l'horaire</i>	<i>les lunettes de soleil</i>
<i>l'auberge de jeunesse</i>	<i>théâtre</i>
<i>je pars</i>	<i>vous êtes ouvert</i>
<i>noir</i>	<i>trop</i>
<i>les montagnes</i>	<i>faire du ski</i>
  
- (iv) intonation - more care needed when asking a question or making a statement.
  
- (v) tenses, e.g. Present tense in Question 1 and Imperfect in Question 2.
  
- (vi) Question 4, line 1 - problems in linking the two ideas, and  
Question 5, line 1 - agreements with *lunettes noires*, *elles sont trop chères*.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- (vii) pronunciation, e.g.
- |                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Louvre</i>  | <i>le train</i>    |
| <i>Londres</i> | <i>ouvert</i>      |
| <i>louer</i>   | <i>aujourd'hui</i> |
| <i>soleil</i>  | <i>je préfère</i>  |
| <i>horaire</i> |                    |

Students managed to get around some items in the following ways:

### Question 1

Say that you want to go to Paris *J'ai l'intention d'aller à Paris*

### Question 2

Say that you lost your passport *Je ne sais pas où est mon passeport*

Say that you were in the Metro *J'ai perdu mon passeport dans le métro ce matin*

### Question 3

Ask if there is a non-smoking section *Est-ce qu'il y a une place/table/salle/non-fumeurs/pour les personnes qui ne fument pas?*  
Check whether they are open at 6.00pm *Je peux manger à 6 heures?*

### Question 4

Ask if there are buses that go to the mountains. *Je veux aller à la montagne. Il y a des autobus? Il y a des autobus pour les montagnes?*

Ask if they have a timetable. *Une liste d'heures pour les bus? Ya-t-il une liste d'heures pour les bus?*

### Question 5

... they are too expensive. *Je ne peux pas payer. Je n'ai pas d'argent.*

Pronunciation and fluency were often good, thereby outweighing some minor errors.

**Teachers are asked to keep their interruptions to a strict minimum and should interrupt only if absolutely necessary.**

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### 2 UNIT GENERAL

#### SPEAKING SKILLS

On the whole candidates did not perform as well as might be expected on this test. As in previous years, the English cues inevitably led some students to resort to anglicisms and verbatim renditions in some items. Credit was given for ideas/information conveyed fluently and accurately. There was no one correct version. Some samples of acceptable versions of ideas accompany the following question by question analysis.

#### Question 1

Students encountered considerable difficulties with expressions in this item:

of Australia	<i>de l'Australie</i>
ride a bike	<i>je vais à bicyclette</i> <i>je vais à l'école en vélo</i>
ten kilometres from	<i>à dix kilomètres de chez moi</i>

#### Question 2

Students coped well with the ideas of traveller's cheques and the final two items were especially well done, the following causing the only difficulties:

exchange rates	<i>le taux/ le cours d'échange</i>
The questioning phrases such as:	<i>Est-ce que, and</i> <i>Qu'est-ce que</i> were confused.
Swiss francs	<i>francs suisses</i>

*Je l'ai oublié* and *je l'ai laissé* were accepted variants for the fourth cue.

#### Question 3

Candidates expressed well *Je ne comprends pas* and the numbers required, although some did not pronounce the ending of *cinquante*. On the whole, however, this item was the least well done. The following were the most common errors:

parcel	<i>pacquet</i>
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## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

to Italy	<i>en Italie</i>
overseas	<i>à l' étranger</i> <i>dans un autre pays</i>
more slowly	<i>moins vite</i> <i>plus doucement</i>

### Question 4

Nearly all candidates seemed to find difficulties with this question, especially with the following expressions:

July 14	<i>le quatorze juillet</i>
in front of	<i>devant</i>
station	<i>gare</i>
to meet	<i>Si on se rencontrait</i> <i>Alors.. Rendez-vous</i>
to go on a picnic	<i>Si on allait faire un pique-nique</i> <i>Si on faisait .....</i>
What are you doing?	<i>Qu'est-ce qu'on fait?</i> <i>Qu'est-ce que vous faites?</i> <i>Qu'est-ce que vous allez faire?</i> <i>Qu'est-ce qu'on fera? etc</i>
to take	<i>emporter/apporter</i>

### Question 5

This item was the best one attempted by students, with many speaking both accurately and fluently. Some problems occurred with the following:

8.30 pm.	<i>vingt heures et demie</i>
prefer	<i>tu préfères (pronunciation)</i>
before	<i>avant</i>
after	<i>après</i>



## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

I invite you	<i>je t'invite</i> <i>tu veux venir</i>
special price	<i>un prix spécial</i> <i>un tarif réduit</i> <i>une réduction</i> <i>une remise</i>
for students	<i>pour les étudiants</i> <i>pour l'étudiant</i> <i>pour étudiant</i>

Note: Examination supervisors are asked to keep their interruptions to a strict minimum and should interrupt **only** if absolutely necessary.

### Advice to students:

- Remember that the examination is **NEITHER** a conversation **NOR** a translation exercise.
- Read English cues very carefully, e.g. Question 1, line 2, *skiing* is inappropriate in Paris.
- Avoid long pauses - candidates who gain extra *preparation time* this way may be penalised.
- Speak up, do not mumble, this applies especially to the weaker candidates who may be doubly disadvantaged if their answers are not clearly discernable.
- No Franglais should be used, e.g. *Est-ce que je peux hire les skis?*
- Attempt all parts of questions.

### Criteria for assessment:

The marking method is **impression marking** - to rank the students.

Discrimination is based on **communication**: is the message communicated effectively?

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

The following was used as a guide in assessing the candidates, bearing in mind fluency and accuracy:

- 5 As good as can be expected from a 2 Unit Z candidate (authentic rendering of English cues with minor imperfections).
- 4 Good communication, with some unevenness.
- 3 Average communication, with perhaps some hesitancy and inaccuracy.
- 2 Some communication, but with poor flow and numerous inaccuracies.
- 1 Minimal communication.
- 0 Non-attempt, perhaps disconnected words.

### 2/3 UNIT

#### LISTENING SKILLS

Students are to be commended on the high standard achieved in the Listening Skills examination. The majority made good use of the Candidate's Notes column and wrote clearly and succinctly in the space provided. In particular the multiple choice questions were handled extremely well, even when it was necessary to process large amounts of sometimes complex vocabulary (Item 11). Item 1 proved to be difficult for many. The majority of students wrote responses that revealed their understanding of each item and it was clear the vocabulary was familiar to most. It was, however, the depth and accuracy of the details given, and the fluency of English expression which distinguished the students from each other.

Common areas of difficulty were:

- students need to know numbers well for quantities, prices, times etc e.g:

#### Item 4

*trente mille* is **not** 30 million, *cent km* is **not** 5 km

#### Item 6

*douze mois* instead of *dix/deux mois*

#### Item 8

*de deux heures* does **not** mean *at 2 o'clock*

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Item 10

*cent vingt francs* is **not** *220 francs*  
*quatorze francs* is **not** *50 francs*

- directions, e.g. in Item 5 *à côté de* instead of *en face de*
- specific items of vocabulary

### Item 1

*une prise téléphonique*

### Item 2

*la cheville*

### Item 4

*exposition*

### Item 6

*le monde entier* instead of *le tiers monde*

### Item 10

*conférences, cycle*

### Item 12

*méditation* instead of *médication*

### Item 13

*informatique*

### Item 15

*à moitié prix* (reduced price was considered too vague)

### Item 18

*les émotions fortes*

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- time structures, including tenses e.g:

### Item 2

Imperfect tense

### Item 4

Future tense

### Item 8

Modifier *le lundi*

### Item 10

*des origines à la photo contemporaine*

### Item 12

*une fois* (in this case it did not have the meaning of *one time*) and vocabulary items *un quart d'heure*, *ça fait une semaine*

Students generally tried to avoid direct translations of cognates and to provide an appropriate English equivalent. Sometimes, however, this distorted the meaning of the answer provided, e.g.

Item 10      *origines* was translated as *history*.

Attention must be paid to *faux amis* as in

Item 10      *conférences* and *cycle*

Item 13      *informatique* does **not** mean *informatic* or *information*, and

In Item 14    *exposition*.

Students should be careful not to add information which makes an answer incorrect, e.g. in Item 16 (b) many students wrote that it was the first *Australian...*

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### SPEAKING SKILLS

Generally the students handled Part A competently and the format of giving the cues in French avoided students' becoming *blocked* because they might not have known a word. Fewer candidates abandoned their efforts than when cues were given in English. Students were often able to render the ideas in their own language and this helped to maintain their flow. Many, however, merely transformed the given cues and, although they were not disadvantaged this year, it is recommended that students interpret the situation in their own words when possible, e.g.

Part A, Question 1, *Je n'ai pas trouvé mes bagages* = simple transformation as opposed to *Je n'arrive pas à trouver mes bagages* or *J'ai perdu mes bagages*.

Students should be fully prepared for Part A, with short accurate responses to each cue. Lengthy responses might be to the students' disadvantage if they seek to *pad out* their answers with irrelevant details. Unnecessary elaboration does not attract better marks. The candidates should say what should be said under normal circumstances in order to fulfil satisfactorily the *requirements* of the French cues.

Teachers should encourage students to imagine themselves in the real situation and, therefore, to use the usual form of courtesy expected, e.g. *Excusez-moi, merci mille fois, au revoir*, etc. – and to work out whether the situation requires the use of *tu* or *vous*.

### Part A

For Part A timing is not necessary; stopwatches, recorder counters, banging on desks etc, are distracting to the candidate and impose artificial limits. **It is the quality of the response which counts.** The instruction *Speak for up to 5 minutes* is meant as a guide to total time only and does **not** mean that each question for Part A should be 5 minutes long, or even 1 minute long!

The criteria for performance in Part A are:

- Communication of the given situation with clear, concise, accurate and relevant language. (Listing is not necessary).
- Fluency is also important, but this does not mean that the student has to speak quickly. Nevertheless, lengthy pauses and hesitations will distract from the student's performance.

Intonation of voice in accordance with appropriate French speech patterns is also important since a monotonous delivery is not French, nor is a rising intonation at the end of a statement.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Common errors found in Part A

#### Question 1

*contenu* often not understood.

*le nom de l'hôtel* students often gave their own name instead.

*ma valise* frequently rendered as *mon valise*.

Students need to read the *setting line* - frequently they did not realise that they were at Nice airport.

Contents of luggage, e.g, purse, money, identification – not unusual items!

#### Question 2

Confusion between *vol* and *voleur*

Use of past tense, particularly verbs with *être*, was not well done in many cases.

Students also did not actually describe what had happened.

Poor pronunciation; *agent* as opposed to *argent*.

Position of *tout/beaucoup* in sentences.

*aux cheveux noirs* often became *aux chevaux noirs*.

#### Question 3

Students need to read the *setting* - it was odd to ask for a kitchen in an hotel room.

There is no sea near Grenoble.

Misuse of *satisfaisant*: e.g. *je ne suis pas satisfaisante*

instead of

*je ne suis pas heureux(se)/content(e)/satisfait(e)*

*au premier étage*

rendered as

*sur le premier étage*

*dans le premier étage*

*beaucoup des*

*A la fin de la rue* instead of *au bout de la rue*

*demander pour une chambre*

*chercher pour*

*derrière* for *arrière*

*assister* for *aider*

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Note: (to students who are prospective travellers): If one wants to be treated well in a hotel one should moderate one's anger/scorn. One should not be an *ugly* tourist – one can show displeasure but do not overdo it!

### Question 4

Confusion between *se rencontrer* versus *raconter/rencontrer*  
*dernier* and *prochain* were confused  
*apporter* not always understood  
*à + le* not well done  
*le parc* often became *la parque*

Giving lengthy, repetitive lists does not gain marks.  
Many candidates forgot to give the reason for the picnic.

Students needed to realise that this question required the *tu* form, whereas Questions 1, 2 and 3 required *vous*.

## **Part B**

### Question 6

This was the most popular question since the students probably felt most comfortable with here. They did not seem to find the 2 minute time limit daunting and appeared to enjoy the opportunity to expand on the particular topic.

### Question 5

This question required a more creative approach and was attempted by very few. A number of students failed to explain how they had won their prize, while some did not understand the word *vedette*.

### Question 7

Quite a few students attempted this question but found it strange to be giving advice to their peers.

In Part B, it was most important that students should fulfil the task required by the question, e.g.

Question 5 = *RACONTEZ comment...*

Question 6 = *JUSTIFIEZ votre choix*

Question 7 = *ESSAYEZ DE CONVAINCRE*

as this often discriminates between the quality of candidates' responses.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

In this section a variety of sentence structures is desirable. Students who use only subject–verb–object sentences do not display the same level of interest and sophistication as those who can use link words and vary their expressions, who can manipulate tenses and use a variety of sentence beginnings, e.g.

*d'ailleurs, en plus, de toute façon, néanmoins*  
as against *et aussi, et aussi, et aussi* etc.

### General Points:

Position of pronoun objects needs reinforcement.

The general *formules de politesse* when addressing a stranger should be used, e.g. *Bonjour Monsieur/Madame* and *merci beaucoup*.

Certain past participles caused problems, e.g. *couru; conduit; pris; disparu*.

Confusion of the *tu* and *vous* form in the one sentence/situation.

Sequence of tenses with *si*.

Both Part A and Part B are marked *by impression* as in past years, using the same criteria as set out in past reports.

This year Part A was marked out of 25 and scaled to 12 marks, while Part B was marked out of 10 and scaled to 8 as follows:

### PART A

Each question is marked out of 5 points, including  $\frac{1}{2}$  points, using the following scale:

5  
4  
3  
2  $\frac{1}{2}$  = **average candidate**  
2  
1  
0

Performance criteria for Part A:

- *fluency*
- *accuracy*



## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- *level of communication*
- *Content* is a lesser criterion, as long as most of what is required to get the message across has been covered.  
(The student who makes simple and appropriate transformations of given French cues will be considered to have covered the content sufficiently.)

### Part B

One question, marked out of 10 whole marks, and re-scaled to a mark out of 8, taking into account -

- *variety of structures and ideas* (including such things as range of tenses, vocabulary and manipulation of language)
- *accuracy*
- *fluency*

10  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5 = **average**  
4  
3  
2  
1  
0

This guide is used for fluency, with emphasis on accuracy and variety.

10	As good as can be expected from a non-native speaker
9	Excellent flow in general, with minor imperfections
8	Good flow with minor imperfections
7	Ability to communicate a range of ideas, perhaps with some unevenness
6	Ability to communicate a limited range of ideas
5	Average ability to communicate at a basic level only
4	Flow of basic communication hindered by defects OR very pedestrian, unimaginative communication
3	Communication exists but with very defective flow
2	Minimal communication
1	Barely intelligible
0	Unintelligible or non-attempt

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Teachers are once again reminded to check the quality of the recording of each student by playing back the cassette at least in order to hear the student's voice saying the student number, whilst the student is still in the room.

**There are still every year a certain number of recordings that are too faint or blurred or marred by background noise. Thus any student's performance can be unnecessarily disadvantaged for a mere technicality! It is advisable to check equipment before the examination and to replay a practice cassette on a second machine.**

Students, **not teachers**, are to say the candidate's number and the name of the course.

**Examination supervisors are asked to keep their interruptions to a strict minimum and should interrupt only if absolutely necessary.**

### Cognates in 1995 2/3 Unit Listening Comprehension Examination

championnat	cycle	compartiment
expo/exposition	conférences	irrite
liqueurs	origines	calendrier
visiteurs	la photo	images
hôtel	contemporaine	avril
région	série complète	films
réservations	exercice	rare
photographier	méditation	sports dangereux
camps	exactement	aventure
sévère	ingénieur	émotions
difficile	mécanique	élastique

## 3 UNIT (ADDITIONAL)

### LISTENING SKILLS

The 3 Unit Listening Skills examination, although demanding, was fair. It contained a good range of subjects based on topics relevant to the 3 Unit course. Students showed a good level of understanding, with some giving outstanding answers. On the whole the results were very pleasing. The following suggestions based on the responses of the 1995 candidature should assist future students when sitting for this examination.

Students should:

- read and listen to each question carefully. It is a good idea to underline the key words, e.g. who? what? how? why? in order to understand the exact nature of the question;

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- read instructions carefully, especially in multiple choice items so that students know whether they have to tick the correct statement or choose the correct statement and write the appropriate letter;
- not hesitate to cross out the incorrect statements as they eliminate them;
- avoid writing out parts of the question in their answer as this wastes time and cannot gain any marks;
- write as neatly as possible; some answers were virtually illegible;

In 3 Unit Listening, although more emphasis is placed on global comprehension, answers still need to be supported by appropriate detail.

During the first reading students should listen carefully for the whole idea, i.e. the contextual meaning of the item.

During the second reading attention to detail is required. The Candidate's Notes column should be used during and after the first reading to jot down answers so that they can be added to, organised and transcribed after the second reading when there is more time. If students do not have enough time to transcribe everything required, the two minutes at the end of the examination should be used to go back and complete the answer. It is also permissible to use a circle and arrow to designate relevant pieces of information from the Notes column that students wish to include in their answers. Students must ensure, however, that this is clearly done.

The multiple choice items were handled very well, although Item 22 was demanding, requiring careful attention. In this item, some students ticked (c), which was incorrect, because they misinterpreted the word *fermetures*;

Item 27 showed the importance of listening to the entire item in order to achieve full understanding of it, since information relating to the first part of the question is given at the end.

Students will not lose marks if they are unable to give an exact translation. At this level they are often required to interpret the information they are given and either to draw a conclusion or make a comparison, e.g. in Item 20, where candidates were asked the significance of *NF Environnement*, as part of their answer they needed to express the idea that these initials on a product meant that it was really environmentally friendly as opposed to other products which merely claimed to be *green*. Students were required to state specifically why this was so.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Students need to organise their answers as clearly as possible, within the time available. They should not hesitate to state the obvious. Students should not simply list items of vocabulary or unrelated ideas, they should clearly specify the relationship between such items. Answers should not only show that the candidate has understood the context but should also be as specific as possible.

Some students obviously did not listen to the entire item and therefore failed to comprehend, e.g:

In Item 24 *verre* was often interpreted as *vert*.

In Item 25(b)(ii) *rapport* was sometimes misinterpreted as *report*, although the context indicated that this was not the case.

In Item 27, although *plafond* was heard it was not associated with *la cave*. In this item students also heard the word *l'alarme* but it was given a variety of incorrect interpretations.

Students need to use qualifiers (adjectives, adverbs, quantifiers) as these often demonstrate greater comprehension of the whole idea, e.g:

Item 23 (b) (i) *une liste d'annonces exclusives*.

Item 24 (b) *environ deux ans, plus de 500 000 dollars*.

Students need to pay attention to the following:

- the use of singular as opposed to plural
- words like *et* and *ou*, which can make a big difference to the meaning of what is heard e.g. in Item 21(b) *accès à l'hôpital ou à la consultation d'un médecin*
- numbers - if large amounts are to be given e.g. \$500 000, it may be better to write these out in words to avoid using too many 0s.
- *faux amis* - these are not usually a problem with 3 Unit students if the word is treated in context.

Students should be careful in searching for synonyms as this sometimes results in responses that are too general. The equivalent expression used by the student should be precise enough to convey the correct meaning.

Students should not use etc as it will gain them no marks, e.g. in Item 24(a) *the second mountain was made of glass etc* did not fully answer the question.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

During the time given for checking at the end of the examination, students should make sure that what they have written actually answers the question and that no important details have been overlooked or not transcribed from the Candidate's Notes column.

Finally, from a practical point of view, students do not need to restrict themselves to the number of lines given; they may exceed these without penalty. Likewise, students do not need to fill all the lines given. Lines are an indication only of the length of answer required for an average writer.

### SPEAKING SKILLS

All topics were handled well by the majority of candidates. This year there was a slight decrease in the number of candidates who did the general topic, though this question was still attempted by over 50% of the candidature, with the next most popular topic being the Song Option.

Although very few candidates' comments were not on the topic, some dealt with it poorly. After an introduction vaguely related to the topic, these candidates confined themselves merely to telling the story.

*Mots charnières* (linking words) did not appear to be used as well as in previous years.

It was apparent that, as a result of candidates' being able to write notes in their preparation time, they had gained confidence, consequently their answers were generally better organised and structured, although the standard of language showed no noticeable improvement on that of previous years. There also appeared to be fewer pauses than previously, while the discussions sounded more convincing.

#### Some points of advice on the writing of notes:

- It is important that candidates should not attempt to write out their speech verbatim as the 10 minutes' preparation time may be insufficient for this to be done adequately, and their fluency may suffer if it is obvious that answers are being read. Preparation time should be spent in organising and structuring answers rather than in attempting to write a full speech.
- It is recommended that:
  - notes be in point form (although candidates may prefer to compose their introduction and conclusion more fully), and that
  - the outlines of the box not be exceeded.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Comments specific to each topic:

#### General topic

This appeared to be quite demanding, yet most candidates handled it well. Some very sophisticated answers were given.

A wide range of ideas were expressed, the most frequently mentioned being:

- Australia is the *lucky country* and therefore has an obligation to give aid to poorer countries. It is a question of striking a balance between helping our people first without denying help to other less fortunate nations.
- We suffer from natural disasters but, in developing countries, such disasters occur on a much wider scale and are more frequent and more severe.

Some candidates said that Australians should be looked after first and we should not provide any aid to other nations.

Although others focussed on *sécheresse*, *inondation*, *incendie*, rather than addressing the question, the better candidates avoided the trap of talking too much about the first part of the topic.

The idea of corruption (*organisations humanitaires corrompues*) was introduced by some, i.e. the money given to charitable organisations does not always reach the right people.

#### *Main difficulties encountered:*

- There were problems with the pronunciation of *sécheresse*, *inondation* – in the majority of cases pronounced as *in* (nasal sound)/ *nondation*– and *incendie*.
- The words *financière*, *médicale*, *éducative* were frequently used as nouns (e.g. *la financière*, *la médicale*).
- Many candidates began a sentence with *Australie*, omitting the article.
- Some did not know the meaning of *aggravée* and interpreted it as *grave*, e.g. *Il est vrai que l'Australie subit une crise économique aggravée*.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Song

Most candidates dealt with this topic competently, generally saying that all songs have a personal value as there is always someone who identifies with the song, which, therefore, acquires a universal value.

Fewer candidates than in past years quoted at high speed.

Every song could have been adapted to the question, and a wide selection of songs was used. Candidates needed to discuss both sides: *points de vue personnels + à valeur universelle*. Some tended to tell the story of the song without relating it to the question.

### Literature

Candidates appeared confident and very well prepared for this question.

Many stated that religion was a very important part of the author's childhood and the negative effects of religion were widely referred to.

A number of quotations were given and generally used appropriately. Candidates are advised to say *je cite* before starting to quote as, sometimes, it is not immediately apparent that they are quoting from the text.

Examples from the text were widely used and the level of the language was generally good. The better candidates synthesised an element across several stories, while the weaker candidates told the story without relating it to religion.

### Film

Most candidates approached the topic confidently although a number tended simply to tell the story and describe a few *scènes-clé*...

Since the topic stated: *Quel est pour vous le message le plus important...*, candidates could refer to any of the film's *messages* as long as they were able to relate their choice to appropriate scenes of the film. A number, however, dealt with more than one *message*.

Those who spoke about *l'amitié* were less able to link the message to the scenes.

### French for Commercial Purposes

Again, this topic was attempted by a very small number of candidates; those who did so appeared less competent than last year's candidature.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Candidates were expected to do more than just describe the diagram; they were expected to justify the changes and not only describe the diagram given.

They had to:

think in terms of the context of the speech, i.e. to whom they were speaking and for what purpose (in this case, a manager speaking to staff about a proposal for restructuring the organisation), and

use a register of language appropriate to the situation.

### Language difficulties most frequently encountered:

#### Pronunciation

<i>inondation</i>	( <i>in/nondation</i> )
<i>valeur</i>	( <i>value</i> )
<i>universelle</i>	( <i>universal</i> )
<i>personnel</i>	( <i>personal</i> )
<i>parents</i>	( <i>pèrents</i> )
<i>femme</i>	( <i>fèmmè</i> )
<i>l'amour</i>	( <i>la mort</i> )
<i>l'argent</i>	( <i>l'argente</i> )
<i>étudiants en médecine</i>	( <i>étudiants en médecin</i> )
<i>architecture</i>	( <i>arquitecture</i> )
<i>et aussi, et ils etc.</i>	(liaison between <i>et</i> and a word beginning with a vowel)
<i>personne</i>	( <i>person</i> )

#### Genders

un expérience, le société, la pays, la chanteur, une thème, le chanson, un critique, un scène

#### Contraction of *de+le*

à la fin de le film      instead of      à la fin **du** film

#### Verbs

- *mourir, souffrir* and *subir* were poorly used
- reflexive verbs used without reflexive pronoun:

*je rappelle*      instead of      *je **me** rappelle*



## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- singular subject with plural verb and vice-versa:

*Les gens va...* instead of *Les gens **vont***

- *avoir/être*

*Nous avons entré* instead of *Nous **sommes** entrés*

- using *faire* instead of *rendre*

*il faut faire la vie des autres  
plus agréable* instead of *il faut **rendre**....*

### Direct/indirect pronouns

*Elle lui regarde* instead of *Elle **le** regarde*

*Ils leur aident* instead of *Ils **les** aident*

### Possessive adjectives

*son religion* instead of ***sa** religion*

*son classe* instead of ***sa** classe*

### Prepositions

- with countries

*dans l'Afrique* instead of *en **Afrique***

- with verbs

*dépenser de l'argent sur* instead of *dépenser de l'**argent à***  
*penser de ses problèmes* instead of *penser à ses problèmes*

- using *par* with infinitive to translate "by" + present participle

*par diminuer* instead of *en **diminuant***

### Invented words/expressions

*financier, financiellement*

*la classe d'ouvrière*

*hypocritique*

*l'accroissement*

### Other common problems:

*un caractère* instead of *un **personnage***

*dans l'autre côté* instead of *de l'**autre côté***

*en mon opinion* instead of *à mon **avis***

*peuples* instead of *population*

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### General comments

Candidates are reminded of the importance of having an introduction and a conclusion and to structure their answers, especially since there is now the possibility of writing a plan.

Candidates should make good use of linking words (*mots charnières*), placing them in the right context.

Excessive use of opinion markers of the type *A mon avis, je pense* was less prevalent than in past years.

Quotations were generally used quite adequately. The practice of inserting relevant quotations into the answer is to be encouraged, as it demonstrates students' acquaintance with the specific text/song/film. Such quotations, however, are sometimes poorly articulated and spoken at a much faster pace than the student's own words. This can make both the quotation itself and the broader discussion difficult to understand.

Candidates are reminded that this is not primarily a test of vocabulary and grammar (a certain mastery of these is assumed), but of how they can put their knowledge to use in the context of a discussion that will invariably require some combination of the following functions:

agreeing, disagreeing, comparing, contrasting, paraphrasing, recounting, qualifying, expanding, analysing and synthesising, expressing personal opinions and feelings, evaluating, stating parameters of discussion, concluding, identifying whose point of view is being presented, and their position in relation to it.

Students are also reminded that their objective is not to overwhelm the listener with their argument or to declaim as from a pulpit or podium. This speaking test is much more akin to conversation at a dinner party than to formal debate or oratory. Any candidate benefits from opening up the topic rather than beginning with a blunt conclusion.

In evaluating discussion, there is no predetermined pattern to be followed. Arguments are not seen primarily as right or wrong, but rather as being convincingly or unconvincingly presented. Discussion is strengthened by candidates' defining the topic in their own terms, isolating key words and avoiding sweeping statements by indicating from whose point of view a particular position or idea is valid.

### Marking scheme

The following criteria were used to assess candidates' responses:

- **Fluency**  
Fluency refers to candidates' general performance and to their ability to maintain a good language flow, i.e. their ability to communicate well and to get their message

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

across. It is important to maintain a consistent pace without pausing for too long. Inaccuracies, mispronunciation of words and lack of adequate language resources are also taken into account when assessing a candidate's fluency.

- **Accuracy**  
This relates to grammatical accuracy (verb endings, use of tenses, agreements etc).
- **Variety**  
Variety takes into account richness of vocabulary, range of structures used and sophistication of language. This looks for positive points in the candidate's expression.
- **Quality of discussion**  
This refers to candidates' ability to present their point of view in an organised, logical and convincing manner.

Students should note that simply listing points does not constitute discussion. Satisfactory discussion of a song or literature theme, for example, requires:

- identification of themes/ideas  
some illustration through reference to events, characters, music, etc.
- some association with other ideas through expressing contrast, comparison, personal opinion etc.
- tying the various points into an argument.

## 2 UNIT Z

### SECTION I : READING SKILLS

#### Question 1

Students performed well on the whole, with many showing an understanding of most points. The majority attempted all questions and felt comfortable with the subject matter, namely teenagers' relationships with their grandparents.

Some confusion arose with expressions such as:

*faire la morale* - where difficulty occurred in deciding whether *morals* or *morale* was the problem.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Words such as *blagues* and *farces* were not well conveyed and *nous nous amusons* was generally misinterpreted as meaning *grandfather amuses us*.

Small words such as *vrai* (*un vrai clown*) and *très* (*très rigolo*) were often omitted, and this can sometimes cause candidates to lose points.

Words such as *chose* were wrongly translated as *choices* and *mots* often became *moths* or *dead people*.

Expressions such as *Elle m'écoute et me comprend* needed to be conveyed accurately and fully.

Careful reading of the text is recommended and students are advised to include all relevant details in their answers. They should also check that their answers make sense when re-read.

### Question 2

- (a) Students did not know *siècles* or omitted the concept from their answers.
- (b) Candidates often mistranslated *classées* as being the concept of educating people as to the dangers facing whales.
- (c) Students gave general answers, did not include the concept of increasing pollution, and were unfamiliar with the words *filets* and *pêcheurs*.
- (d) *Surveiller* was often misinterpreted as the concept of surveying the sea.

Some students did not include enough detail in their answers. *Entre* was not recognised as a preposition and a common mistake was assuming that the adoptive parent of the whale paid the amount of 250 F to observe his whale from a boat.

### Question 3

Generally, this question elicited a full range of responses from full marks down to zero, indicating that many candidates found it challenging. Since it was the last question, some candidates might not have allowed themselves sufficient time for answering it, and others might have been confused by the title, with its connotations of the well known film. This could also account, in part, for the often illogical answers given to several of the questions.

Particular difficulties with items of vocabulary included:

<i>dresseur de fauves</i>	<i>publicité</i>	<i>ouvre les bras</i>	<i>l'air féroce</i>
<i>je suis le chef</i>	<i>baisse la queue</i>	<i>un véritable numéro</i>	<i>crier</i>

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

These *faux amis* were not understood well, but candidates who drew upon their own knowledge and related the passage to this, then reread their answers to ensure that they made sense were able to avoid the most glaring errors made by those less careful.

- (a) Generally this question was well done in spite of difficulty with *dresseur de fauves*. A significant number of students chose, however, to write such answers as *She dresses animals for TV and the movies*.
- (b) Answers here were generally poor. Some students omitted important details while others expressed answers in general terms, choosing to say, for example: *She had had them for a long time*, rather than giving a more detailed answer such as *She had had and raised them from the time they were pups*.
- (c) A number of students had difficulty in comprehending this and also in expressing it in English, as it appeared difficult for them to imagine the situation portrayed in the passage, even to the point where *Je suis le chef* was interpreted as *I cook for them*. Many candidates also interpreted *montre les dents* as meaning *she shows their teeth*, *ouvre les bras* as *opens her bra* or as *opens their legs*, *'air féroce* as *breathes in furiously* and then *commence à crier* as *starts to cry*.
- (d) Some students did not show a sound knowledge of body parts. Others did not understand the question, particularly the word *submission*, which elicited answers such as *He shows his submission by being dominant*, while to others the concept of a male being submissive to a female was even more remarkable.
- (e)
  - (i) Answers to this part were too general; students need to refer to the text more closely to provide specific answers. A good answer to this question read *She can make them sit down and roll over on the ground at her feet*. The need for students to write as full an answer as they can to each question must be constantly stressed.
  - (ii) *Tous les soirs* was either badly translated or omitted. Some students are still failing to translate French phrases such as *Cirque de Moscou*, and should be encouraged to do so wherever possible.

Students need to be reminded that they must include as much detail as possible in their answers, and that what they write must make sense. Those who achieve the best results are often those who leave adequate time and space to reread and amend their answers and, to this end, it is important that candidates leave a line or two after each section of a question, just in case they wish to make a change or to add something. It is also helpful if candidates begin answers to each question on a new page.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Advice to students

1. Read all the information in a question and underline important points
2. Follow instructions given
3. Always give ALL relevant detail as lack of specific detail loses points
4. When in difficulty, stick to the literal translation or, if unable to do so, try for an answer which does not stray far from the information in the text
5. Be aware that statistics may not always be supplied in figures and that a time period may be required with a percentage
6. Avoid very informal language in answering.

## 2 UNIT Z

### SECTION II : WRITING SKILLS

There appeared to be more than the usual number of poor answers, with several candidates writing very little or nothing at all. More than 75% of the candidature attempted the letter; the next in popularity was the dialogue and very few students attempted the postcard/note. Many of those who attempted the latter did either (a) or (b), rather than both, as was required.

#### Question 4 : Letter

In the letter, students confused the idea of *vous voulez passer*, with *vous avez passé*, therefore many wrote about what they *had done* rather than what they *were intending to do*. The meaning of *projets* and *renseignements* seemed to confuse many. Some students did talk about their plans but failed to ask for information and vice-versa. Others were confused about who or where *Noël* was. Still others were unsure of where they were and the location of the person to whom they were writing.

#### Question 5 : Dialogue

Here the word *rêve* caused problems. Students talked about 5 star hotels and a star by the name of *Rêve*! Too many concentrated on a description of the star without any reference to the *soirée*.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Question 6 : Postcard and Note

In the postcard and note, students generally found the second part to be the more difficult, as it required the use of the past tense. Moreover, many appeared to be unfamiliar with the idea of offering thanks and, instead, spent most of their time talking about how bad their French was. Some students merely managed to say *merci* and re-write the words in the question.

The impressive scripts were those which used good cultural references. In all genres, students showed a limited knowledge of French culture, referring to beaches in Paris! Students should avoid breaking into English in mid-sentence and calling their penfriend in France Kylie or Bill. It helps with authenticity if a French name can be used.

Students should not write pre-learnt answers which have no relevance to the topic - such answers gain very low marks. Quite a number scored full marks for answering all components of the question in a fluent, though not necessarily faultless, manner.

Students should practise writing on alternate lines before the examination and should study copies of past papers so that there are no surprises and also so that they remember to answer both parts of the postcard and note question.

### **Weaknesses**

- Nominative pronouns were used for everything – candidates had little or no idea of pronoun objects.
- *Je suis* was used too much in translating future and present forms of verbs, e.g. *je suis aller*.
- Weather expressions were used inaccurately, including use of *il faut* instead of *il fait*.
- *Environ* was frequently used incorrectly.
- Too many showed a lack of knowledge of *futur proche* and past tense forms.
- Possessive adjectives were poorly handled.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### 2 UNIT GENERAL

#### SECTION I : READING SKILLS

##### Question 1

The majority of students scored quite well on this comprehension question.

- (a) Very few students, including some of the better ones, knew the word *conductrice*.
- (b) This part was generally well handled.
- (c) Only a small number of students knew the word *mec*, which was often translated as *mechanic*, or *mess*.
- (d) *Le long des voies* was rarely correctly translated. Some did not qualify the station. A general answer here was accepted for half marks, e.g. *takes the metro and walks 1 km*.
- (e) Many thought *vigilant* was *vigilante*. Answers such as *accident/emergency/crisis/panic/something going wrong* were not accepted for *en cas de panne*.
- (f) *Je m'ennuyais* was often misunderstood and many students thought that she had died behind her desk. *J'ai toujours aimé les trains* - translations in the present tense OR without the word *always* were not accepted.
- (g) *They were surprised* - this was very well answered, but *s'attendaient à* was frequently translated as *waited for*. There was a general misunderstanding of the concept here: students either described Evelyne's personality as being *virile* and *aggressive* or wrote that the other drivers acted aggressively towards her. *Virile* was often translated as *vile*. Very often the masculine connotation of this word was missed, i.e. it was not well understood in English.
- (h) Answers here were poorly expressed: *la veille* was not translated as *the day before*. Translations such as *day to day* and *the day after tomorrow* were not accepted.
- (i) (i) *Foyer* not well understood.

*Alone* was often not translated.

*Sympathiser* was incorrectly translated as *sympathise with*.

A general answer gained part marks: *goes to a restaurant or cinema with other train drivers*.



## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- (ii) Some candidates did not specify that she went home. Many could not translate (*standing*) *in front of the fridge*. Several candidates either omitted this altogether or wrote *television*.

Many students obviously did not re-read their answers particularly in relation to (a); by the end of the passage they had failed to understand that she was a train driver, and translated *conductrice* as *conductor*, or even *conductress*.

### Question 2

- (a) Answers here were generally good. Many students did not understand that the idea came from Pascal's record company: *ils* indicated this.

- (b) This part was poorly answered.

*Orienté* was translated as *oriental*.

Connection not made between *avenir artistique* and *chanson*, or between *monde* and *chanson* or, if made, it was translated as *songs of the world*.

- (c) (i) Students needed to understand the text rather than translate each word literally, otherwise they were in danger of misconstruing the text, e.g. saying *Pascal stopped playing the guitar*, *Pascal played the piano*, *without the help of the piano* and so on. The idea of spontaneity was important.

- (ii) Answers here were generally good.

- (d) Many candidates missed the idea of interaction between Pascal and the students. *SIDA* was not recognised as AIDS or was not translated.

*Travail* was often translated as *travel*.

*Le monde du travail* - no connection was made here.

*Sensible* was translated as *sensible*.

- (e) This was poorly answered. The majority of candidates misunderstood *découvert... d'une façon différente*. Most said that Pascal was a *different kind of star*.

*Manqué* was not translated in many cases, and *vedette* was not known by many candidates.

- (f) Here the reflexive verb was ignored. Students are encouraged to recognise reflexive verbs.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

*Tout le monde* was mistranslated by many.

*Textes* was often translated as *books*.

The importance of the conjunction *car* in the sentence was overlooked.

### General Comments

- Students need to practise thinking answers through before starting to write them down. They need to develop strategies of inferring from the text.
- Students should also practise viewing and dealing with text as a whole as well as dealing with thought groups.
- They also need to learn to recognise parts of speech, especially connecting words such as prepositions. They must avoid picking out items of vocabulary and connecting them in any way they choose.

## 2 UNIT GENERAL

### SECTION II : WRITING SKILLS

All three questions were easily understood by students who succeeded in showing their knowledge of French at various levels. Most students attempted the postcard or letter; while very few attempted the dialogue. This was probably because the two questions on future plans and school life respectively were more *conventional* and allowed students to write on topics with which they were very familiar. The dialogue required more creativity and, therefore, was often attempted by the more able students. Those who chose this question often scored high marks because they obviously had a greater command of the language and could use a range of expressions.

Very few students misinterpreted the questions or failed to write on the topic. Some did not fulfil the word limit, although most wrote considerably more. Those students who wrote closer to 100 words, rather than 80 words, tended to gain higher marks as they were more able to expand on their ideas. On the other hand those who wrote excessive amounts tended to penalise themselves, as the quality of their efforts deteriorated over the course of their writing.

Students should be aware that they are expected to write on alternate lines, which allows them to revise and make additions more easily.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Weaknesses:

- Weak students had difficulty with tenses, moving indiscriminately from one tense to another
- Pronoun objects, especially the position of pronoun objects, caused problems for many students
- Agreements of reflexive pronouns with their subjects were often ignored.
- Repetitious use of language and ideas was common in some cases
- No attempt was made to conjugate verbs (especially plural forms) by some students and phonetic spellings were often used
- Adjectival agreements were frequently neglected, e.g. in *ma matière préférée* or *mes matières préférées*
- *Ma amie* was a common mistake
- Expressions of distance frequently omitted à e.g. *à dix kilomètres d'ici*
- Expressions of quantity - here candidates often used incorrect forms of *de* in phrases such as *beaucoup de, un peu de*
- *tu/vous* forms were often used in the same sentences
- Prepositions were wrongly used in front of days of week when not required, e.g. *à mercredi* and *à* used before months of the year, e.g. *à décembre*
- Other expressions used wrongly included:
  - d'accord* instead of *ça va*
  - visiter* (*rendre visite*)
  - prendre* (*emmener*)
  - vers, environ* (*au sujet de*)
  - prendre* (*étudier*)
  - excité* (*content, ravi*)
  - chevaux* (*cheveux*)
  - moi* (*moins, mois*)
  - demain* (*le lendemain*)
- 'I can't wait' (when expressing excitement) was often translated literally as *je ne peux pas attendre*
- 'I am well' (*je suis bien*)
- 'I need' (*je besoin*)
- 'I am going' (*je suis aller* or *je serai aller*).

### Strengths

- Beginnings and endings of letters were well prepared.
- Good use of colloquial expressions.
- The French of good candidates had an authenticity which was very pleasing.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### 2/3 UNIT

#### SECTION I : READING SKILLS

##### Question 1

On the whole candidates tackled the comprehension question at an acceptable level. The better candidates did more than provide a direct translation of sections of the text and provided comprehensive answers. The question most poorly answered was (e), candidates, however, showed a good grasp of detail in (h).

A question by question analysis of responses follows:

- (a) Some pieces of information were very easy to understand, others were quite specific and therefore more difficult.

Candidates should not ignore small key words, e.g. *environ 25 ans*.

Students who only translated did very well but there were occasions when literal translation gave inadequate responses, e.g. *refinds by instinct his gestures*.

By Year 12, candidates should not be making mistakes with numbers, dates, parts of the body, etc.

It is pointless quoting the French text in answers, e.g. *choucroute, voie ferrée*, since, under no circumstances, can this be considered to indicate comprehension.

Many candidates found good ways of conveying the meaning of *cicatrice* even though they were not sure of the exact meaning, e.g. some translated it as *mark*.

- (b) This question was well done.
- (c) Candidates should have known the word *électronique*; students are right to be wary of cognates, but not to the point of avoiding them at all costs. *Electronics* was the correct English equivalent here.
- (d) If the question asks *Why?*, the answer should state or clearly imply a response *Because...*, and not just list facts and hope that the meaning is clear. In order to gain full marks, a candidate needed to show some understanding of the fact that Alexandre was called *Mr A* which stood for *anonyme/amnésique* and from this he was "christened" *Alexandre*.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- (e) (i) The wording *what proof*, being singular, was difficult for many candidates. Consequently they wrote no more than *a photo of him...*

Advice to candidates:

If you are not sure whether something is relevant, INCLUDE IT.

The colon suggests a list, but many candidates did not interpret this correctly.

- (ii) Candidates need to use their deductive powers, e.g.  
*voie* - refer back to knowledge of railway stations, e.g. *voie numéro 7*;  
*ferrée* - fer, or the chemical symbol (Fe).

Several candidates referred to the car's being found on a *ferry*.

- (f) Those who explained in their own words what Alexandre experienced, giving as examples points from the text, provided answers that were often easier to understand and, therefore, better rewarded than poorly worded literal translations of the text.
- (g) Candidates misinterpreted the words *with his parents* - his parents did not, in fact, go back with him. They translated the vocabulary too literally (with an ID card in his pocket - this really refers to the fact that now he had an identity. He did not go back with roots in his pocket.)

*faire des projets* does **not** mean *to make some projects*.

- (h) The correct answer required a lot of information. The word *impact* suggests (i) *forceful*, (ii) *immediate*, so some students were clearly in doubt as to where they should finish (in Corsica, at the point of renewing the bond with his mother, living happily ever after?). Although many included it in their answer, they must have wondered how the *smell of Corsican champagne* could possibly have made sense.

*au moment de sortir de l'avion* - many students thought this meant when he *boarded* the plane. Had they reread what they had written as well as the passage, it should have been clear to them.

Because there was only one comprehension passage this year, there were no cases of students answering questions on the first passage and then completely running out of time for anything else. Virtually all candidates wrote answers for all questions, obviously having found it easier to pace themselves.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Vocabulary which caused problems:

*brun* = dark-haired, **not** dark-skinned  
line 43, *souvenir*  
*voie ferrée*  
*étendu*  
*redémarrer*

### General Comments:

Students should:

- not cross out information given which may be relevant to their answers. Unless this information completely negates what has been written, no penalty will be incurred. In fact, if correct, it may well be what is required.
- take time to read all the questions before beginning answers. This may save time wasted in writing information in one answer which may, in fact, be required in answering a following question.

## 2/3 UNIT

### SECTION II : READING/WRITING

#### Question 2

Although this was the first year for this style of question, the candidates performed well. Most appeared to understand the passage and were able to write about various ways of obtaining pocket money.

Candidates are required to:

1. follow instructions
2. answer the question
3. show global comprehension
4. demonstrate their capacity to select and use stimulus material
5. provide evidence of effective communication

#### 1. **Following instructions**

The more successful candidates referred to ideas in the passage, expanded them and gave their own opinions.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

It was pleasing to see that most candidates observed the length required. Most wrote on every second line. It was also pleasing to note that those who forgot to do this did not waste time recopying.

### 2. Answering the question

Most candidates were able to respond in the format required: dialogue, journal entry, letter. The journal entry was not as popular as the letter and dialogue.

In the letter some candidates wrote only about what they did themselves and failed to give advice. Some of the memorised introductions to letters contradicted what followed, and responded in a way that was not commensurate with having received a letter full of complaints.

The dialogue was at times treated as a monologue. Contributions to a dialogue are to be made from *two* parties.

How the journal is addressed is of no great importance. The fact that what is being written is immediately recognisable as being a journal entry **is** important.

### 3. Global comprehension

Candidates needed to show more than an understanding of the fact that the text was about pocket money. Using ideas from the text, the most successful candidates in each question explained why they lacked money, why they needed more, on what they spent their money and two means of acquiring it: from their parents and through other activities. In the dialogue, for instance, candidates showed their understanding of the first few lines of the second section of the text by suggesting a number of ingenious, amusing and transparent stratagems for being diplomatic with their parents and cajoling them.

### 4. Capacity to select and use stimulus materials

The better candidates took ideas from the text, used, manipulated, expanded and developed them. It is not advisable to copy almost verbatim from the text with only minimal manipulation of language. *Tu peux tondre la pelouse* is an example of minimal manipulation of language.

### 5. Effective communication

The most successful candidates wrote accurate, fairly colloquial French. Their language mistakes/problems/difficulties tended to be those that have been mentioned in previous examination reports, e.g.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

failure to differentiate between:

*tu/vous*  
*dire/parler*  
*seul/seulement*  
*savoir/connaitre*  
*temps/fois*  
*travail/travaille*

Use of:

verb tenses

agreements

*ce qui, ce que, dont* etc.

prepositions after verbs (*Je demande à mes parents pour de l'argent*)

inappropriate idiomatic expressions

imperative forms

pronouns - form and position

It is worthwhile remembering the value of the franc. Asking for an additional 5 francs of pocket money is unrealistic.

### 2/3 UNIT

#### SECTION III : OPTIONS

##### Film Option

The standard of the responses to this question was very pleasing. Most candidates obviously understood the film and its themes, had come to grips with film techniques in relation to this film and appeared to have gained a great deal of insight from their film study. In general the technique questions were well handled, although some candidates still described a technique but failed to comment on its effect on the viewer.

In general, too, when answering a question such as 'What is Julien's attitude to Bonnet and his religion by the end of the film?' it is important to justify the answer by referring to particular scenes in the film.

##### Question 3

- (a) There was some misunderstanding of the function of the imperfect tense. A number of candidates tried to incorporate an idea of the future as well. Some contradicted themselves and so failed to understand the point that was being made.



## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- (b) (i) Some vocabulary problems were caused by *saland*, *fouiner* and *Hippo*. Hippo is not an animal.

For a language quotation like this, students need to show that they understand the meaning in context. A translation is often helpful to show understanding.

- (ii) Candidates must be aware that both sides of the argument can be given if this seems appropriate. In such a case they would need to use *on the one hand...* to show the structure of their answer.

A positive argument was expected, but well presented and balanced arguments also scored points.

There were many scenes to substantiate arguments in the film, so it was unnecessary to use *babasses* as an example twice.

- (iii) This was well done. Most candidates found *babasses* easily. Students must be aware that the text refers to the printed segment on the examination paper **not** the whole text.

### Question 4

- (a) (i) This part was handled well.
- (ii) Candidates needed to look carefully at the text and not limit themselves to the first line.

Comment on implies more than simply translating.

An analysis of François' explanation was expected, e.g. Why did he give such stock answers? Was he perhaps more interested in Mlle Dovenne?

- (iii) Not all candidates indicated Julien's attitude to his religion; instead, they limited their answer to his attitude to Bonnet. It was necessary to base answers on examples from the film.
- (b) Although many candidates spoke of Joseph as victim and black marketeer, they neglected his role in the final betrayal.

### Question 5

- (a) Candidates did not always distinguish between the function of the mirror in each of Stills 3 and 7.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- (b) Candidates often described very well the shot composition in Stills 5, 6 and 10, but failed to comment on its significance. They should have described the shot and the effect created. In describing the shot, it is important to include all the elements, e.g. for Still 5, the photo, the book and the hand, as well as their interrelationship should have been discussed and the effect created explained, e.g. Julien's hand here reminds us that this is an invasion of privacy.
- (c) Candidates are reminded that here descriptions of film technique are insufficient. The answer must relate to the question. Reading the script may be useful to candidates, but they must also realise that all shots are not included in the examination paper. In this particular case, the techniques should have been related to the two boys in their conflict.

## 2 UNIT GENERAL

### SECTION III : OPTIONS

#### Film Option

The standard of 2 Unit General answers here was, on the whole, very good. Students seemed well prepared and showed a pleasing understanding of language and film technique. Most students seemed to have benefited greatly from their film study.

#### Comment on Responses

As for 2 Unit except for 7(b) and 8(c).

#### Question 7

- (b) Students occasionally ignored the word *previously*, apparently forgetting that the chronology of the film is important. It was easy to find many reasons why Julien suspected that Bonnet was different.

#### Question 8

- (c) Although candidates were asked to comment only on shot composition, camera angle or editing, many discussed lighting or soundtrack and could not be given credit for this.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### 2/3 UNIT

#### Literature Option

Many students are still failing to gain maximum marks in their responses to questions by omitting the analysis demanded by the wording of each specific question.

Words like *comment*, *how*, *explain*, *what is the significance*, all demand some level of analysis by the candidate, not simply a recounting of the story or incident.

#### Question 6

- (a) Many failed to state the assumed/hypothetical/supposed identity of M. Eaton.
- (b) Many weaker students thought M. Eaton was English rather than English-speaking.

#### Question 7

- (a) Both parts of this question were marred by a lack of analysis from a large proportion of the candidature who either did not assess or did not understand the key word *significance*.

#### Question 8

This was well done.

#### Question 9

*Narrative perspective*, although essential, was not adequately understood by the majority of candidates. Hence students could not discuss narrative perspective in the specific lines. Very few managed to link narrative perspective to tense and other linguistic markers.

#### Question 10

Many candidates did not understand the expression *nous faire la loi* and therefore were unable to develop an appropriate response.

#### Question 11

Students tended to paraphrase the content of the prayer rather than to comment on it.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Question 12

Given the importance of religion in all the stories in this collection, a large proportion of candidates failed to demonstrate an analytical grasp of the importance of religion in the community of Roch Carrier's childhood. Students tended to quote examples of where religion occurred rather than trying to develop a cohesive account of religion's effect on the community.

In this question, few candidates managed to make a general observation which was then linked/developed across the two specific stories.

### Question 13

Many students did not have an adequate understanding of register, e.g. colloquial, informal, formal, etc, and therefore found great difficulty in fulfilling the requirements of the question. The question demanded specific reference to two paragraphs reporting direct speech, and this was often ignored.

### Question 14

It is vital that candidates should be familiar with the meaning/significance of the title. This is imperative for **all** stories. It was quite apparent that many students had their first thoughts about the title during the examination.

## 2 UNIT GENERAL

### Literature Option

Generally speaking the responses of the 2 Unit General Literature candidature here were significantly improved over those in previous years.

### Question 9

- (a) Answers here were good.
- (b) Students were required to differentiate between English and English-speaking in this context.

### Question 10

An analysis of the speech of Roch Carrier's mother was required here. Many students tended simply to paraphrase rather than indicate her reaction to his resistance to wearing the *chandail*.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Question 11

Answers here were good.

### Question 12

The concept of immediacy, as implied by the use of the present tense here, was generally well understood. Concepts of narrative perspective and change of tense were, however, not well understood.

### Question 13

Students must give textual support to any analysis made many failed to do so in answering this question

### Question 14

As for 2/3 Unit Question 11.

### Question 15

As for 2/3 Unit Question 12.

### Question 16

As for 2/3 Unit Question 13.

## **2/3 UNIT**

### **Song Option**

It was very pleasing to see that students handled the Song Option with more confidence and insight this year. The majority displayed an understanding of issues that are raised in the songs and were able to communicate their knowledge. In addition to this, their ability to focus on key words in the questions was an advantage. An improvement has been noted in the way in which students approached the music question, and their ability to relate the musical analysis of the songs to the themes and moods of the songs.

### **Marie-Jeanne Gabrielle**

The questions in this part were well answered, with the more able students showing a very good knowledge of the song. Most students could interpret what the questions were asking,

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

but some answers were very wordy; with the new length of the paper, answers need to be more concise. The majority of students have stopped talking about music in general but there is still the problem of their inability to link what happens musically with the question asked.

### Question 15

- (a) Most students answered this part fairly well, although some missed out on valuable marks by simply paraphrasing the opening chorus rather than looking further and giving some interpretation. For example, all students mentioned the women waiting for the sailors; some, however, failed to extend this to comment on their patience, sense of duty, etc. They said that the women were battered by the winds but not that this revealed their strength or resilience.
- (b) It was pleasing to note that nearly all students focused on the different aspects of the music to which they were asked to refer. Many, however, failed to link the musical elements with the image of the women and did not comment on the effectiveness of the voice, instrumentation and rhythm in supporting this image. To obtain full marks students needed to state that the music was effective in conveying the notion of the patience or strength of the women but that, nevertheless, it contrasted with the harshness of the elements and their lives. For example, the repetitive, regular, constant rhythm was most effective in conveying the image of the women's lives as being dominated by the seasons and the tides but, nevertheless, contrasted with the harshness of the elements. The melodic and tender voice conveyed well the image of the patience of the women as contrasted with the harshness of their lives.

### Question 16

- (a) This question was very well answered by some students, with most understanding that religion is an important, integral part of the lives of the people of the Ile de Sein. Specific examples should have been given to show the strength of religion there. For example, the people have a hymn peculiar to them that is sung to guarantee safe passage through the Raz de Sein; this hymn reflects their belief that their souls will go to heaven. When asked to refer to specific lines students should support their answers with quotations, but, to obtain full marks, these need to be fully explained.
- (b) Students found this question challenging and many not only indicated how positive memories were being conveyed by positive images of remembrances of things past, but also discussed stylistic and musical aspects; they could have gained full marks without doing so. Unfortunately many ignored the *how* in the question and simply translated the stanza. For example, it was not enough to say that the child was running on fine sand. They also needed to state that this gave the idea of childhood, nostalgia, youth, happiness. Students needed to comment on the fact that life on the island was like a paradise, not simply that one could believe in paradise there.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- (c) This question was well answered by a large number of students who obtained full marks by commenting only on the positive images of death found in the first part of the song, e.g. “grand Sommeil”, “les âmes vont au ciel” but many pointed out that the peoples’ faith faltered in Stanza III and superstition took over, e.g. *la barque ensorcelée*.

### Question 17

- (a) Although a relatively easy question, this was poorly handled by a number of the students. Many did not attempt to explain how life has changed but simply gave a translation of the stanza. Students need to ensure that their answers are drawn from the song itself, not from general information given as a background to the song. For example, students could have answered by saying that the fishermen are being made to embark on very long fishing expeditions to far distant places, or that many have abandoned the sea and sought employment on land; any additional information on the state of the fishing industry or industrialisation in Brittany was, however, irrelevant.
- (b) (i) A surprising number of candidates did not seem to understand personification or else did not actually specify what was being personified. Students are reminded that, when asked to explain a specific aspect, a mere paraphrase of the lines is insufficient.
- (ii) This question was done badly. Even some very good students who appeared to understand personification in (i) had difficulty in identifying and explaining another example of personification, even though there were many to choose from, e.g. *ton pays s’est endormi, règne le flambeau de la Vieille, la barque ensorcelée*.

### **Nantes**

### Question 18

- (a) This question was a change in that students were asked to analyse the music in this part. Many talked about the musical elements of the whole song when they were merely asked to discuss the opening four lines. They needed also to refer to the full range of musical elements and not merely to voice and instrumentation; a comment on the rhythm or tempo is usually required as well.
- (b) Some had difficulty with the concept of drawing a parallel, and with realising that a comparison should have been made between the singer’s mood and the appearance of the town. The majority of students were able to work out some idea of the rain: *il pleut sur Nantes* mirroring both her mood of sadness and the wan or colourless hue of the town; *un teint blafard* showing how gloomy and drained of emotion she was.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Many, however, did not understand that Barbara's sense of unease and sorrow was linked to the idea of *inconnue* and *jamais venue*.

### Question 19

Students found this question challenging and some underestimated the amount of detail required. There were many relevant factors in this question and the better students were able to talk about the complex nature of the singer's relationship with her father. The majority talked about the estrangement between the two and the fact that the singer had hoped for some sort of reconciliation. The discriminators, however, were:

- the fact that there was a bitter-sweet tinge to the singer's attitude as well as the fact that she had not been in contact with her father for so long, and
- the meaning of *en plein coeur* illustrating the intensity of her emotions about her father, and
- the fact that she was willing to drop everything because he had asked to see her.

### Question 20

Students need to realise that several atmospheres can be created in a particular stanza and that this was this case in lines 17-24. A number restricted themselves to a detailed analysis of one atmosphere and therefore underestimated the complexity of the question. Some did not fully understand the meaning of *with close reference to the text*; many students gave an excellent and perceptive analysis but lost marks because they failed to support their answers with quotations from or references to the text.

### Question 21

A challenging question, this was open to a variety of interpretations. Students should recognise that, when asked to comment on a particular line, they must look at the structure and also the musical elements of that line. Some did not understand the idea of the effect of a line and simply explained why she said these words. The majority stated that this line was the emotional climax of the song. More comprehensive answers included the following points, however:

This is where her voice is very emotional and she almost breaks down when she is singing;

She sings this line unaccompanied, giving it a further intensity and sense of anguish;



## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

It is a very short line in comparison to what has gone before so its structure and repetition highlight its importance.

There is also an idea of reconciliation in this line: an idea that she could find the reconciliation after death which she could not find in life.

### 2 UNIT GENERAL

#### Song Option

##### Marie-Jeanne Gabrielle

This year, for the first time, 2/3 Unit and 2 Unit General candidates did not have the same Song Option questions, although there were common parts which allowed some points of comparison. The quality of candidates' answers varied from good to very poor, with many of the better candidates performing as well as 2/3 Unit candidates in the common questions. Some, however, barely answered any of the questions and appeared to have little knowledge of the song at all. It is important to note that even those whose written and/or oral French is weak can gain valuable marks by making a serious attempt in the Song question.

#### Question 17

See Question 15 (a) 2 Unit

#### Question 18

See Question 16 (b) 2 Unit

#### Question 19

- (a) Unfortunately some candidates were unable to gain full marks in this question because they failed to explain the references but, instead, simply translated the quotations. Candidates needed to go beyond the fact that black clothes are worn for mourning and explain that this shows that death is a constant factor in the lives of the women because of the risks the sailors take at sea.
- (b) This question was fairly well done; candidates need, however, to understand that their answers must be based on the words of the song. The better candidates were able to explain that the sea is taking its revenge on the fishermen by making them embark on very long and distant fishing expeditions and that many of them have abandoned the sea and sought employment on land. Here additional information on the state of the fishing industry or industrialisation in Brittany was irrelevant.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Question 20

In this type of question candidates needed to define the atmosphere of the song and then to describe the musical elements separately, showing how each helps to create the atmosphere created by the music. For example, the guitar played in the manner of a Celtic harp creates an atmosphere of a Celtic folk dance, or the melodic, sweet, tender voice creates an atmosphere of nostalgia. Often candidates knew a great deal about the music technically, but failed to relate their knowledge to the atmosphere and so could not be awarded any marks.

### **Nantes**

The number of 2 Unit General candidates has increased significantly this year and the quality of the answers has risen accordingly. Many students showed a perceptive and sensitive appreciation of the song and their answers reflected this. Nevertheless, there were still some candidates who found interpreting the song difficult.

### Question 21

- (a) This question was generally well answered. There were only a very few candidates who did not know why the singer was called to Nantes the previous year.
- (b) Many students had some idea of the nature of the relationship between the singer and her father. As with the 2/3 Unit, students did not fully understand the idea of *en plein coeur*, i.e. her father's re-entry into her life was an intense experience for her and she was willing to drop everything to go to see him because he asked to see her.

### Question 22

- (a) The majority of candidates gained some marks in this question because it was generally understood that her father had already died. There was some confusion about the meaning of *à leur regard*, not *how they looked* but *by the looks on their faces*.
- (b) This was a difficult question and many students found it challenging. A number misunderstood *dernier rivage*. Students need to understand that the singer's father was a sailor, that this reference relates to his final resting place by his beloved sea and that it was an entirely appropriate place for him to be buried, given the lifestyle he had led.

### Question 23

As for 2 Unit.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Question 24

Many students were well prepared for the music question and gave a detailed musical analysis. Some, however, did not respond well to the idea of voice and the fact that Barbara changes her voice several times to produce different effects in the song, e.g. vibrato, the breathy quality, and the idea of *décalage*, nor did they relate this to the atmosphere in the song.

## French for Commercial Purposes

### General Comments

On the whole most students were able to complete the questions within the new time constraints. The sequence and setting out of questions provided the appropriate context for students to understand the situation, and the level of performance was good in the first and third questions.

### 2/3 UNIT

#### Question 22

Candidates had no difficulty in completing the *Bon de commande*; students are reminded, however, to leave blank the sections of the form for which there is no available information in the original document.

Candidates experienced difficulty in placing the appropriate pieces of information on the cheque, including inserting the amount of the cheque in full.

Students need more practice on the completion of cheques, especially on

- the placement of the following items:
  - amount in digits
  - amount written in full
  - bearer
  - place and date
  - SIGNATURE: most students omitted to sign the cheque.
- the writing of the amount in full. Students should practise writing numbers in full; many experienced difficulty in this area.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Question 23

Very few students understood *Service contentieux* and therefore missed the threat of legal action.

In Part c(i), *AR* was accurately rendered by relatively few students considering that it has appeared in the option for the past three years.

In Part c(iii), candidates misread the question, translating it as *what is the purpose of this letter?*. Students must read all questions carefully.

In dealing with comprehension questions, students should be encouraged to answer as precisely as possible. They should pay particular attention to the following:

- Write out the French expression precisely in reply to the question

*What does AR stand for?*

*Accusé de réception*

- When the question asks for an explanation of the expression, its meaning should be given, or an equivalent expression in English.

*Explain the expression Recommandée avec AR.*

This expression means that it is a registered letter which has to be signed for upon receipt.

OR

Registered/certified letter with acknowledgement of receipt

- (STAMP) *Who has put this stamp on the letter? For what purpose?*  
Students should give as much details as possible.

1. An employee of the Institut de Langues Oustine
2. Purpose: proof of the date of receipt of the letter AND internal records of the company, i.e. filing.

### Question 24

Students showed good knowledge of letter format. Nevertheless emphasis should be placed on the accuracy of the *formule de politesse*. Students must master a number of such formulae, e.g.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

*Nous vous prions d'agréer, Madame,  
l'expression de nos sentiments  
(nos salutations)  
respectueux(euses)*

*Veillez croire, Madame, en  
l'assurance de nos sentiments  
distingué(e)s  
dévoué(e)s*

The *formule de politesse* should generally be prefaced with expressions such as *Dans l'attente de votre réponse/de vous lire*, etc.

Similarly, the introductory paragraph of the letter should bear a reference to any previous communication, verbal or written, e.g.

*Pour faire suite à notre conversation téléphonique, ...  
En réponse à votre lettre/commande ...  
Nous accusons réception de votre lettre du (date), ...*

The letter should be signed and the signature situated above the full printed name and position of its sender.

### Content

All the handwritten annotations should be addressed accurately and care taken not to omit any. They should also be expanded and reformulated. In a large number of papers, the handwritten annotations were very often reproduced without any manipulation by the students.

i.e. *Regrets mais aucune faute de notre part  
Nous exprimons nos plus sincères regrets pour ce contretemps/ incident qui ne résultait  
d'aucune faute de notre part / qui a été causé par le retard de notre banque.*

Appropriate links between the different points should be expressed through the use of adverbial expressions or conjunctions, e.g. *Pourtant, toutefois, c'est pourquoi.*

### Register

Students need to be careful to use the *vous* form instead of *tu*, and *nous* rather than *je*, as required by the commercial register.

Word choice is also an important contributor to register,

e.g. *Nous vous remercions* rather than *Merci*  
*Nous vous signalons* rather than *Nous vous disons*

Complete sentences should be formed and students should be careful, for instance, not to omit the verb.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### 2 UNIT GENERAL

#### Question 25

*Bon de commande*

*Chèque*

see comments for 2/3 Unit (Question 22)

#### Question 26

*Who has sent this document?* : The reply should state the name of the person, his/her position, and the name of his/her company.

Students should be encouraged to answer as precisely as possible, especially when dealing with acronyms:

- write out the French expression precisely in reply to the question *What does ... stand for?*  
ex: • *P.J. - What does this stand for?*  
*Pièces jointes*
- *Explain its purpose*  
Students should give as much detail as possible, i.e. there are documents attached to/ enclosed in the letter.

#### Question 27 (See comments for 2/3 Unit, Question 24)

As for 2/3 Unit, a large number of students showed good knowledge of letter format. However the *formule de politesse* was very often inaccurate e.g. *Veillez agréer, Madame, à l'expression de nos...*

Teachers should also ensure that students master a number of such formulae.

- see table in 2/3 Unit comments

The *formule de politesse* should generally be prefaced with expressions such as *Dans l'attente de votre réponse/de vous lire*, etc.

Candidates had difficulty in finding the first part of the introductory sentence and linking it to the rest of the paragraph: *Nous accusons réception de votre lettre du 22 courant par laquelle vous nous avez avisés ...*

The letter should be signed and the signature situated above the full printed name and position of its sender.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

### Register

Students need to be careful to use the *vous* form instead of *tu* and *nous* rather than *je*, as required by the commercial register.

Word choice is also an important contributor to register, e.g.

e.g. *Nous vous remercions* rather than *Merci*  
*Nous vous signalons* rather than *Nous vous disons*

Complete sentences should be formed and students should be careful, for instance, not to omit the verb.

### 3 UNIT (ADDITIONAL)

#### Question 1 : Reading

Candidates found the passage to be accessible and appeared to understand the intent of the questions. This year, although there were fewer questions on the passage than in previous years, the majority required some analysis of language in the response. Candidates appeared to manage this new format well.

A question by question analysis of students' responses follows:

- (a) This lead-in question was well handled. Very few candidates could not identify on what occasion the diary entries were written. This type of question does not require an extensive response.
- (b) Most candidates were able to identify the personification used in the passage quoted. They were also required, however, to make close reference to the text to support their interpretation.

Students should be careful to choose relevant, accurate quotations. Some candidates appeared to quote at random phrases which did not necessarily support their argument.

- (c) This was, generally, a well handled question. Candidates needed only to refer directly to the passage to locate the correct response.
- (d) This question proved the most difficult. Students were required to explain the effect of the change in verb tense in the passage quoted. It is expected that 3 Unit candidates can identify verb tenses; many, however, were unable to do this. This meant that it was difficult to explain the *effect* of change. Candidates often merely interpreted the

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

present tense as an indication of action occurring in the present as against the past actions presented earlier in the paragraph. The better candidates described the sense of immediacy created for the reader and commented on how this reflected the state of mind of the writer. Some stated that creating a desired effect for a reader is unusual in the diary form.

- (e) This question also proved challenging. Many candidates missed the fact that sentences varied from short to long and that a variety of punctuation marks were used; consequently they were unable to discuss the effect of these. The best candidates, however, related the sentence structure to such things as the insignificance of man as opposed to the dominance of the volcano with the short sentences mirroring the emotion felt by the writer.
- (f) As in (b), most candidates were able to identify the personification of the volcano, as there was a fairly clear indication of this in the question. Once again, however, candidates needed to refer closely to the text to support their answers.
- (g) Many candidates had some difficulty in demonstrating understanding of the words quoted and then explaining their effect. The question alerted them to the fact that it all began as a diary entry. The best responses referred to the fact that all entries summarised phases of an assault on the volcano, some likening it to a military exercise, or four stages in the conquest of the volcano.
- (h) Here candidates needed to go beyond a reiteration of the question, ie that the perspective was limited as it was told through the eyes of Jean-Louis Étienne. A good response referred to:
- the others mentioned in the passage and the fact that their points of view were not represented;
  - the unanswered questions that remained;
  - the fact that the entries were extracts and therefore subject to editing, and
  - the fact that the narration of events is largely linear in the diary form and therefore not subject to references to what happened prior to these events nor to future events.

### Question 2 : Writing

The standard appeared to be as high as in previous years except that, on one hand, fewer responses could be described as very poor and, at the other end of the spectrum, there were fewer that could be described as outstanding.



## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Marks were awarded according to the student's level of:

- **Fluency:**
  - *Frenchness*, authenticity of the language,
  - how well the student's responses flow or read,
  - the fact that the required number of words is provided.
  
- **Variety:**
  - in use of structures and vocabulary,
  - ability to draw on a range of structures and vocabulary to present ideas,
  - richness of vocabulary and expressions,
  - level of complexity of structures.
  
- **Accuracy:**
  - grammar,
  - spelling,
  - basic grammatical forms – of verbs, endings, agreements,
  - more complex structures.

NOTE: Accuracy refers to *density* of errors relative to level of *complexity* of language attempted or successfully used, not just *number* of errors.
  
- **Discussion:**
  - addresses the question,
  - relevance of ideas and examples used as illustrations,
  - comprehensibility and clarity of argument,
  - structure and cogency of argument,
  - introduction – sets the approach,
  - conclusion – synthesises main thrust or provokes further thought.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

<i>Mark</i>	<i>Each level of response may be characterised by some or all of the following:</i>
10-9	<p><b>Fluency:</b> excellent level of fluency and "Frenchness" – in sentence structure, phrasing, choice of vocabulary and idiom, and in approach to discussion</p> <p><b>Variety:</b> draws on richer, more sophisticated and complex vocabulary and structures</p> <p><b>Accuracy:</b> on the whole very accurate</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> addresses the question very well, clarity and cogency, connected argument, draws on relevant examples to illuminate case, ideas approach a sophisticated level, some indication of pros and cons or of subtleties in question, engages the reader OR evidence of some originality/freshness in approach</p>
8-7	<p><b>Fluency:</b> at times excellent, with occasional breaks in flow or Frenchness</p> <p><b>Variety:</b> uses a reasonable variety of structures and vocabulary, sometimes rich vocabulary</p> <p><b>Accuracy:</b> some errors, occasional basic errors</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> addresses the question well, generally well argued, some irrelevancies or lack of clarity, good range of ideas and of examples which illustrate the case OR consistency and good development of argument within a single example</p>
6-5	<p><b>Fluency:</b> generally comprehensible but lacks "Frenchness", some influences of English</p> <p><b>Variety:</b> vocabulary more basic on the whole, use of some good words, sometimes inappropriate usage</p> <p><b>Accuracy:</b> frequent errors especially in verb forms, about half correct, use of more simple structures OR attempts at using the more complex not correct</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> addresses the question, argument can generally be followed but takes a more simple or sometimes basic approach OR uses irrelevant examples</p>

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Mark	<i>Each level of response may be characterised by some or all of the following:</i>
4-3	<p><b>Fluency:</b> does not read well, when trying to express a more complex idea does not have the appropriate linguistic resources to express it, strong English influence present</p> <p><b>Variety:</b> invented words, more simple vocabulary, lacks richness, repetition of vocabulary and structures, insertion of learned sections may contrast with the rest of the piece</p> <p><b>Accuracy:</b> many errors, especially of a basic kind, poor spelling, occasionally a correct sentence</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> some attempt at argument but often simple or basic statements or descriptions and/or at times disconnected or hard to follow</p>
2-1	<p><b>Fluency:</b> often not comprehensible, or very strong English influence OR minimal French answer</p> <p><b>Variety:</b> limited vocabulary, many invented words, frequent repetition of vocabulary or structures</p> <p><b>Accuracy:</b> very little correct, basic grammar very poor</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> confused, ideas disconnected, argument not there or hard to follow OR does not come to terms with the topic OR the topic completely ignored</p>

The question this year was a complex one involving a pragmatic theme which, nevertheless, had a philosophical underpinning. The opening question related to the adventurer's motivation for pursuing a goal. Is the enticement *purely* that of personal satisfaction or is it also the idea of making a worthwhile contribution to society? Is this not just a restatement of the age-old altruism versus egotism argument? The second part of the question called on students to support their view by drawing on examples from one or several of the aspects given. A preference for one approach over another did not prevail, although *l'impact sur la population indigène* was often not discussed so convincingly. In many responses, enthusiasm to discuss the examples outweighed the writer's commitment to argue the question itself.

Students certainly needed to think about what the question required them to discuss. Some may have seen the topic as a little remote from their experience but those who gave some thought to their line of argument were able to handle the complexities of the question reasonably well. Most wrote well over the minimum number of words required.

It is important to point out here that there are infinite possible variations in approaching the 3 Unit discursive writing question. It is recognised that, within the time limits of the examination, it is not possible to explore every nuance of the specific question. Students should reflect on the angle that they will take, briefly plan their argument and set about the task without examining every possibility. They should, however, have a clear idea of what

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

line they are going to take and ensure that they are consistent. A correct argument is not being sought, only a cogent one expressed in good French.

A number of students simplified the argument into a unilateral case:

- (a) Adventurers have a negative impact on society, the environment, team members and their families, and on indigenous peoples.

More students simplified the argument into a bilateral case:

- (a) adventurers embark on expeditions for their personal satisfaction AND/BUT  
(b) adventurers do not/do contribute to the progress of society.

Within (b) most discussions reflected a negative view of *adventuring*, for example:

- adventurers are no longer needed as the greater part of the Earth has already been *discovered* and only space remains to be conquered;
- throughout history the desire to acquire territory has been the cause of much civil and international conflict;
- adventures drain money from government and private funds which could be better spent on more worthy causes such as medical research, Third World countries, the support of the unemployed, the homeless and the aged or ailing;
- adventurers put themselves and others at risk and are irresponsible;
- the rescue of adventurers costs money and endangers the lives of the rescuers;
- diseases are introduced to indigenous people by adventurers.

The positives mentioned in (b) included:

- the fact that adventurers may be seeking personal satisfaction in no way diminishes the value of such expeditions;
- we need to have such people among us to show us all to what limits human endurance can be stretched;
- it is important for us to follow dreams and to achieve against all odds;
- an irrepressible human spirit and an innate desire to learn will always drive some people to undertake such adventures;

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- scientific research is often one of the main reasons for undertaking such exploits;
- through films and stories of these adventures we learn a great deal about our world and are made more conscious of the need to protect its peoples and endangered species.

Surprisingly no-one defined an adventurer. Hence there were some odd arguments about holiday campers, tourist centres, tourists climbing Uluru and even Jacques Chirac and the nuclear tests. The reference to *les aventuriers du type de Jean-Louis Étienne* caused confusion for some. Those who had given a little thought to what type of adventurer he was were able to use more appropriate illustrations of adventurers. Well known adventurers who were cited included Marco Polo, Columbus, Captain Cook, Neil Armstrong, Isabelle Autissier and Dick Smith. The latter served the student's purpose well as he is renowned for his contribution to society (through charity work etc) as well as for his personal passion for adventure. Some also cited the recent deaths of climbers of Everest. Many mentioned the mountain of rubbish at the foot of Everest which had been referred to in the 3 Unit Listening Examination.

Several students took the words *environnement* and *pollution* and proceeded to write on these two topics without relating them to the question, or they connected them very vaguely to the theme of adventurers. This is regarded as not writing on the topic and is penalised. There were also sometimes shades of former HSC questions appearing as inappropriate developments of the discussion, e.g. *les rêves, la technologie, l'espoir*.

Few students realised the significance of *ne...que*; those who did so were able to see implicit in the question the fact that, of course, adventurers seek personal satisfaction. They then argued that this **is** OR **is not** their only motivation.

Most students successfully presented their approach to the discussion in an introductory paragraph and gave a synthesis of their argument in an appropriate conclusion. There were some students who did not correctly rework the question form in their introduction and said for example; *les aventuriers ne contribuent-ils pas au progrès de la société?*

Strengths were noted in the use of certain grammatical structures, Causative *faire* was generally well handled. There were no obvious causes of *subjunctivitis* this year. Students are, on the whole, using the subjunctive appropriately, correctly and judiciously.

As has been mentioned in earlier reports students are encouraged to write legibly as it is not to their advantage if the script is hard to decipher.

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Some common inaccuracies and weaknesses were:

- invented words or misspelling of words which occurred in the question or the passage, e.g.
  - contributer* for *contribuer*,
  - des volanoes* for *des volcans*,
  - l'environnement* for *l'environnement*,
  - l'individuel* for *l'individu*
- the use of *c'est* instead of *il est* and vice versa
  - use of a feminine adjective after *c'est*, e.g. *c'est belle* instead of *c'est beau*
- third person plural present tense of irregular verbs, e.g. *faire*, *recevoir*, *croire*, *mourir*, *offrir*, *découvrir*, *vaincre* (*ils font* for *ils font* occurred frequently)
- failure to use the gerund, e.g. *en accomplir* instead of *en accomplissant*
- *par exemple* for *par exemple*
- invented words, e.g.
  - rescuier* for *sauver*,
  - protecter* for *protéger*,
  - endanger* for *mettre en danger*
- the past participle of *ouvrir*, *découvrir*, *offrir*
- the plural of nouns and adjectives ending in –al e.g.
  - socials/financials* for *sociaux/financiers*
- the use of *dont* e.g.
  - l'équipement dont on a besoin*
- the use of the pronoun following a preposition, e.g.
  - c'est la raison pourquoi* for *c'est la raison pour laquelle*

## 1995 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

- confusion of *moins* and *moindre*, e.g.

*le moins désir* for *le moindre désir*

- incorrect verb endings when verb follows a pronoun object, e.g.

*ils nous donnons*

- the over-use of *chose(s)* where a more precise word could be used

- tautologies, e.g.

*notre monde contemporain en ce moment*

*à mon avis je crois que...*