

GCSE

Edexcel GCSE

Applied French  
PILOT(2701/3701/3702)

Summer 2006

Examiners' Report

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Summer 2006

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## Unit 5701            Applied Oral Communication

There was a pleasing cross-section of tasks across the three specialist contexts and candidates were provided with imaginative stimuli in most centres, enabling them to show capability within the spoken language in both the interactions and the presentation and follow-up questions.

Some centres used stimuli provided in the oral training guide and adapted them to suit their own candidates; others used their own stimuli. In either case, centres are to be congratulated on the quality of the stimuli given.

### 5701/01            Interactions

Centres should be aware that all candidates should undertake at least three interactions during the course and that the best three interactions should be recorded, one of which should be from the period indicated between March and May in the final year. These will be submitted for moderation by Edexcel by B centres and kept by A centres in case they are required as part of a control sample.

The best tasks allowed candidates to use a variety of tenses, structures and vocabulary in each task. They demonstrated opinions and logical argument. Weaker candidates were able to offer simple sentences albeit often with much reliance on the stimulus material.

Poorer tasks did not encourage candidates to use more than one tense. Language was repetitive, with excessive reliance on the stimulus, and there was little standardisation of task choice within the centre.

Successful stimulus material was fairly brief, or where there was a series of pictures, the teacher examiner did not try to cover every point. Most stimulus material was in French, although moderators noted some in English.

Sometimes very similar work was seen across a whole centre. Moderators are looking to see how individual candidates manipulate the language to make it their own in order to reach higher mark bands. It is not good practice for all candidates to learn the same responses to the task and be asked the same questions. Indeed it penalises the candidates and prevents them from showing what they are capable of in terms of spontaneity.

The scenarios should be as authentic as possible for the candidate and teacher-examiners should be careful to ensure that the candidate is given the opportunity to fulfil the tasks required.

In order to access the higher mark bands candidates need to show that they can respond appropriately to an unpredictable element and therefore teacher-examiners need to have questions that are not printed on stimulus sheets. Different unpredictable questions should be asked to candidates and ideally will follow the responses of candidates to add to the spontaneity of the interaction

The excessive length of interactions was an issue in some centres. It is quite possible to obtain good marks for work, which meets the specification demands: 2-3 minutes. The three should be of roughly equal length and they should all relate to the same specialist context. Where stimuli are designed as a tightly defined series of tasks, candidates must be able to complete them within the prescribed time.

Centres are advised that there is little point in prolonging the activity for a candidate with minimal language skills, but equally should also be careful that they do not overrun for candidates of a higher ability.

Candidates and teacher-examiners should adopt the register appropriate to the task. Too often this was not the case and candidates should be reminded to make sure that they are consistent. A common mistake was to waver between the two, using *ton, ta* etc when using *vous* or *votre* when using *tu*.

## Assessment

On the whole, this was well done by centres. However some were generous but consistently so. Internal standardisation was usually successful. The two marking grids provided in the specification were mostly well used, although sometimes too much credit was given to tasks too reliant on the stimulus, to pedestrian or formulaic work. It is necessary to take into consideration how a candidate takes the initiative within the task rather than just go through a list of ideas taken from the stimulus. Centres should be aware that the highest communication marks are given to work that shows real flair and sophistication of ideas, opinions, structures and vocabulary. Under the heading of Application of Language, consideration must be given to the amount of ambiguity produced by poorly formed verbs and repetition of structure, verbs and vocabulary. Tenses used as an afterthought, rather than being integral to the piece, are unlikely to help the candidate gain high marks here.

### 5701/02 Presentation and Follow-up

There were many interesting topics chosen for the presentations and centres are to be congratulated on the way that these were undertaken. Most centres chose an appropriate topic related to the specialist context although there were few instances where the presentation did not match. In these cases the mark for Communication and Content was affected, but the marks for Application of Language and Accuracy were not.

Centres are also reminded that that the topic chosen for this element must not overlap with the topics chosen for the candidate's written coursework.

Centres are reminded that candidates are only allowed to take in notes which consist of no more than 30 words and which fit onto an A5 piece of paper. These notes may be in the form of bullet points or a 'spider diagram' or even illustrative material providing the word limit in French is not exceeded.

There was evidence of rote learning of a written presentation, which is against the spirit of the examination, and the presentation should be seen as an opportunity for creative oral presentation. Candidates should be prepared for presentations through regular practice. It was apparent that many candidates did not understand what they were saying and this became more evident when trying to answer the follow-up questions with a wide disparity of performance between the two elements. Poor pronunciation of a rote-learned presentation also affected the mark for Communication as it could not be understood by a sympathetic native speaker and, at best, was often more like English.

Where centres are preparing candidates for the presentation on a visit or something similar they should avoid a prescriptive text, which candidates learn by heart, sometimes very similar work was seen across a whole centre. Moderators are looking to see how individual candidates manipulate the language to make it their own. Invariably where this was the case the delivery of the presentation was less than confident and self-penalising.

The follow-up questions should be relevant to the specialist context and not just a general question and answer session. It should become as natural a dialogue as possible and questions should build on the responses of the candidate. Consequently there will not be a bank of questions that every candidate will answer! Questions should be appropriate to the level of ability of the candidate and give more able candidates the opportunity to use different tenses and to show off a range of vocabulary and structure.

The excessive length of presentations and follow-up questions was an issue in some centres. It is quite possible to obtain good marks for work, which meets the specification demands:

1 -- 2 minutes for each of the two elements, a maximum of 2 - 4 minutes for the test overall.

### **Assessment**

On the whole, this was well done by centres. However some were generous but consistently so. Internal standardisation was usually successful. The marking grids provided in the specification were mostly well used, although sometimes too much credit was given to presentations that were rather pedestrian without a highly confident delivery and lacking any form of intonation appropriate for the higher mark bands. Centres should be aware that the highest communication marks for the follow-up are given to work that shows real flair and sophistication of ideas, opinions, structures and vocabulary and that the candidate is able to respond to a wide range of question types.

Under the heading of Application of Language, consideration must be given to the amount of ambiguity produced by poorly formed verbs and repetition of structure, verbs and vocabulary. Tenses used as an afterthought, rather than being integral to the piece, are unlikely to help the candidate gain high marks here. It is also important that the candidate is able to use a variety of forms of subordination appropriate to the task.

In the Accuracy grid, it should be noted that the most verb forms have to be correct in order to achieve seven or more marks. This also means the use of more complex language, not simply the absence of error. Poor pronunciation will also be a bar to higher mark bands since it will contribute to the errors.

It must be remembered that the marks for Application of Language and Accuracy are marked globally across the Presentation and Follow-up Questions and that if a candidate is unable to respond to the same level during the follow-up this will affect the marks for these sections.

Centres are reminded that there are differences in the mark grids for Application of Language and Accuracy compared with the 1226 specification and care should be taken to familiarise with these.

### **Administration**

Most centres were extremely helpful in following the requirements for the Interactions and Follow-up Questions that were in the Oral Training Guide and in the Specification. When centres failed to do this, it held up the moderation process and in some cases penalised candidates. There were various specific problems, and centres are asked to ensure that the following takes place:

- Deadlines for the submission of work to Moderators and marks entered on the Edexcel Online website should be adhered to.
- All materials should accompany samples and be appropriately labelled.
- Three interactions should be recorded for all candidates.
- The presentation topic should be appropriate to the specialist context and from the same specialist context as the interaction.
- The latest version of forms should be used.
- It should include all the details requested.
- Addition of marks should be carefully checked.
- Marks for the Communication element of the Presentation and Follow-Up questions should be split as on the Assessment grids.
- The sample should be arranged in candidate number order.
- Candidate names and numbers should be on the tape inserts
- Centre Name and Number should be on both the cassette tape and box
- Stimulus material should be submitted - not references to pages in a textbook, electronic stimuli or Oral Training Guide
- When moderators request additional information, this should be provided promptly.
- When sending work through the post, centres should ensure that the full amount of postage is paid.
- When moderators point out anomalies and inaccuracies on forms, it is the responsibility of centres to inform Edexcel about any changed marks.



## Unit 5702            Applied Written Communication

There was a pleasing cross-section of coursework tasks across the three specialist contexts and candidates were provided with imaginative stimuli in most centres enabling them to show capability within the written language.

Some centres used stimuli provided in the coursework guide and adapted them to suit their own candidates; others used their own stimuli. In either case centres are to be congratulated on the quality of the stimuli given.

### Tasks

The best tasks allowed candidates to use a variety of tenses, structures and vocabulary in each unit of work. They demonstrated linking, opinion and logical argument. Weaker candidates were able to write simple sentences and paragraphs without too much adherence to stimulus material.

A wide variety of tasks should be made available and candidates encouraged to produce different styles of writing

Examples of successful tasks included:

- Use of minimal stimulus, such as bullet points
- Holidays, particularly ones where things went wrong
- Home town - description, history, opinions - or from an outsider's point of view
- A film or book review
- A restaurant review
- Creative and imaginative pieces of work
- Work experience
- Business style letters

Poorer tasks did not encourage candidates to use more than one tense. Language was repetitive, with excessive reliance on the stimulus, and there was little standardisation of task choice within the centre.

Examples of less successful tasks included:

- Fully prescriptive English stimulus which candidates attempted to translate (mostly unsuccessfully)
- Lists; labelling of pictures - for candidates who could do more than this
- Model letters - especially if just copied from a stimulus and only producing a few words of individual language
- PowerPoint presentations of a holiday - where there is repetition of structure and verbs
- CV's and letters of application
- Small postcards

Successful stimulus material was brief, often in the form of title plus bullet points. Some centres used past exam papers (Specification 1226 Paper 4) to good effect where appropriate to the specialist context. Most stimulus material was in French, although moderators noted some in English.

Some centres appeared unsure of the difference between stimulus and reference materials. The latter might include textbook pages or grammar worksheets, which help candidates with a particular piece of vocabulary or with a more complex structure. They only became a problem when candidates copied whole chunks of language from them - and sometimes very similar work was seen across a whole centre. Moderators are looking to see how individual candidates manipulate the language to make it their own.

The excessive length of submissions was an issue in some centres. It is quite possible to obtain good marks for work, which meets the specification demands: 350 - 700 words across the three pieces. The three should be of roughly equal length, including the piece written under controlled conditions, and they should all relate to the same specialist context.

Only a few centres had arranged for candidates to draft their work. If candidates do make drafts of their work, the teacher must not correct these. Feedback should only be given in the form of general comments; the use of form CFS1 is designed for this purpose. Drafts should be clearly identified and should be included with the sample. Moderators are instructed to ignore final drafts in those cases where first drafts have been marked with specific corrections.

Candidates are encouraged to use ICT when composing their coursework. They are however urged to check spellings carefully, especially accents. The use of Internet translation devices is not permitted, and centres are asked not to authenticate work produced in this way. In general, moderators were impressed this year in standards of word-processed work.

## **Assessment**

On the whole, centres very well did this. Some were generous but consistently so. Internal standardisation was usually successful. The three marking grids provided in the specification were well used, although sometimes too much credit was given to work copied from a stimulus, to pedestrian or formulaic work, and to work that was too short to meet the criteria. It is necessary to take into consideration both the length and type of task when awarding a mark for Communication and Content. Here too use of linking needs to be considered, and the extent to which the candidate expresses a logical argument. There was a tendency to award 9/10 because some logical argument was produced. Centres should be aware that the highest communication marks are given to work that shows real flair and sophistication of ideas, opinions, structures and vocabulary. Under the heading of Knowledge and Application of Language, consideration must be given to the amount of ambiguity produced by poorly formed verbs and repetition of structure, verbs and vocabulary. Tenses used as an afterthought, rather than being integral to the piece, are unlikely to help the candidate gain high marks here. In the Accuracy grid, it should be noted that the majority of verb forms have to be correct in order to achieve three or more marks. Correct use of accents, for example on past participles, is crucial. To gain four marks or more for Accuracy implies use of more complex language, not simply the absence of error.

Centres who also offer the traditional 1226 syllabus to their candidates are reminded that there are differences between the assessment grids for the two specifications, particularly for Knowledge and Application of Language and for Accuracy.

## Administration

Most centres were extremely helpful in following the requirements for the coursework that were in the Coursework Guide and in the Specification. When centres failed to do this, it held up the moderation process and in some cases penalised candidates. There were various specific problems, and centres are asked to ensure that the following takes place:

- Deadlines for the submission of coursework to Moderators and marks entered on the Edexcel Online website should be adhered to.
- The latest version of form CF1 (coursework front sheet) should be used.
- It should include the candidate number and be signed by the teacher and the candidate. In future, unsigned work will be rejected.
- It should contain an accurate word count and titles of the pieces of work undertaken.
- Addition of marks should be carefully checked.
- It is unhelpful to moderators if work is covered in ticks and other marks.
- The sample should be arranged in candidate number order.
- Work in the folder should be in the same order as on the front sheet.
- There should be no loose pages - especially ones without a name.
- Work is ideally presented in a plastic wallet or similar. Paper clips are not recommended.
- Stimulus material should be submitted - not references to pages in a textbook or electronic stimuli.
- When moderators request additional information or folders, these should be provided promptly.
- When sending coursework through the post, centres should ensure that the full amount of postage is paid.
- When moderators point out anomalies and inaccuracies on CF1 forms, it is the responsibility of centres to inform Edexcel about any changed marks.

## Unit 5703      Listening

Candidates generally performed well across the paper and there were some very good performances. Candidates were well prepared for the various test types although questions requiring answers in French are daunting for weaker candidates.

The questions which required the recognition of single lexical items or short phrases (Q1 *Au café* and Q2 *Ligne Infos Service*), were well done. The relevant vocabulary in Q1 *Au café* was well known and the majority of candidates scored full marks, giving them a confident start to the paper. In Q2 *Ligne Infos Service*, some candidates confused parts Q2(a) and (c) incorrectly matching *je vais prendre le train* in part Q2(a) with *le garage* and *J'ai un problème avec ma voiture* in Q2(c) with *la gare*.

Q3 *A Job in France*, required candidates to distinguish four correct statements from 10 in English and was well done.

The questions which were intended to discriminate did so and weaker candidates found the questions targeted at grades D and above demanding (Q4-8).

Q4 *Une Commande* and Q5 *Un Problème* were targeted at grades C/D. Q4 *Une Commande*, required candidates to answer in note form in French and this proved very difficult for weaker candidates. At this level candidates need to be able to record accurately numbers and letters of the alphabet (parts a and c). They also need to be able to spell common words in a recognisable form eg *petit* and *blanc* in part (b). Whilst marks are awarded for communication and candidates did score marks with incorrect spellings, it should be noted that poor spelling can lead to information not being communicated in a clear and unambiguous way, particularly where inaccurate spelling creates a new word either in English or in French. Answers in the wrong language are not awarded marks. In Q5 *Un Problème*, candidates were required to answer multiple choice questions in French which paraphrased the extract. Weaker candidates were unable to match what they heard with the various answers eg. *il est trop grand* with *la taille*, in part b *samedi* with *le week-end dernier*. The performance of weaker candidates was characterised by snatched listening, honing in on individual items of vocabulary and choosing incorrect items based on this one word eg in part (c) ticking 50 € when they hear *Normalement ça coûte 50 euros mais le jean était soldé, j'ai payé 25 euros*. In questions targeted at higher grades candidates need to listen to the whole rather than tick the first word they recognise.

In Q6 *Le Travail*, better candidates were able to successfully paraphrase what they heard and match it with the appropriate answers eg in part (a) *Mon travail n'est pas bien payé mais après deux ans je gagnerai plus* with *le salaire*.

Q7 *The Music I Like*, required the candidates to answer multiple choice questions in English and was well done by the better candidates. Weaker candidates were unable to distinguish between the various choices and again honed in on single lexical items instead of listening to the whole. This was also true in Q8 *Comment aller à Londres*, which required the recognition of opinions and attitudes. Better candidates performed well but answers given by weaker candidates suggested guesswork.

## Unit 5704      Reading

Candidates were well prepared for the various test types and generally performed well across the paper as a whole. However, some common items of vocabulary were not known and this cost candidates marks.

Q1 *On prend le train* and Q2 *Un travail*, tested the understanding of single lexical items and short phrases. Q2 was well done by all candidates but in Q1 many candidates did not recognise common words such as *guichet*, *salle d'attente* and *bureau de renseignements*, all of which are in the common core vocabulary.

Q3 *Une visite à Courcourcy*, required candidates to answer multiple choice questions in English. Candidates coped well with this question although Q3(c) involving the recognition of a negative statement proved difficult for many candidates.

Q4 *Choisir un hôtel* and Q5 *Didier se présente* were targeted at grades D and C and required candidates to demonstrate understanding through linking elements of the text with the relevant answers e.g. in Q4 the word *piscine* in the text with *On peut nager à l'hôtel* in the answer choices. Q5 proved more demanding for weaker candidates. Again it involved some paraphrasing and a careful reading of the text. The performance of weaker candidates was characterised by matching individual words in the text with words in the choice of answers e.g. in Q5(a) *Au collègue il préfère...* the most common incorrect answer was *les langues*, taken from the phrases *je ne suis pas fort en langues* in the text. Candidates need to read the text as a whole before starting to answer questions and to not just tick the first answer containing a word they recognise from the text. They also need to be aware of the use of negation.

The questions which were intended to discriminate did so and Q6-8 proved challenging for weaker candidates. Only better candidates were able to demonstrate the understanding required at this level.

Q6 *Forum des Jeunes* required candidates to recognise opinions and again to have the ability to recognise paraphrasing e.g. by matching *ce qui est bien c'est que les gens revendent des objets au lieu de les mettre à la poubelle* in the text with part (d) *Cela encourage le recyclage*.

Q7 *A Job that I Like* and Q8 *L'Avenir*, required careful reading in order to distinguish between the various alternative answers. The relevant question types made the questions accessible to the majority of candidates who felt confident to attempt these questions. However, only the better candidates scored high marks on these questions.

## Statistics

### Unit 5701: Oral Communication

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	90	72	62	52	42	36	30	24	18	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

### Unit 5702: Written Communication

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	66	55	49	43	37	30	23	16	9	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

### Unit 5703: Listening

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	32	28	24	20	17	14	11	8	5	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	0

### Unit 5704: Reading

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	32	26	22	18	15	12	9	7	5	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	0

## Overall Subject Boundaries

### 2701: Full Course

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Total Uniform Mark	300	270	240	210	180	150	120	90	60	0

### 3701: Short Course (Oral Communication)

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Total Uniform Mark	150	135	120	105	90	75	60	45	30	0

### 2702: Short Course (Written Communication)

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Total Uniform Mark	150	135	120	105	90	75	60	45	30	0



Summer 2006

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