



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2011**

**French**

**46554**

**(Specification 4650)**

**Unit 4: Writing**

***Mark Scheme***

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all examiners participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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**Assessment Criteria**

**Content**

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
13-15	<b>Very Good</b> Fully relevant and detailed response to the task. Sound ability to convey information clearly, express and explain ideas and points of view. Well organised structure.
10-12	<b>Good</b> Mostly relevant response to the task and shows ability to convey a lot of information clearly, express and explain ideas and points of view.
7-9	<b>Sufficient</b> Response to the task is generally relevant with quite a lot of information clearly communicated. Points of view are expressed and ideas are developed.
4-6	<b>Limited</b> Limited response to the task with some relevant information conveyed. Simple opinions are expressed and there is some development of basic ideas.
1-3	<b>Poor</b> Very limited response to the task with little relevant information conveyed. No real structure.
0	The answer shows no relevance to the task set. A zero score will automatically result in a zero score for the answer as a whole.

**Range Of Language**

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
9-10	Wide variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures. More complex sentences are handled with confidence and verb tenses are used successfully.
7-8	Good variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures used. More complex sentences are attempted and are mostly successful.
5-6	Some variety of vocabulary and structures used, including attempts at longer sentences using appropriate linking words which are sometimes successful.
3-4	Vocabulary is appropriate to the basic needs of the task and structures are mostly simple.
1-2	Inappropriate vocabulary with little understanding of language structure.
0	No language produced which is worthy of credit.

**Accuracy**

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
5	Largely accurate, although there may still be some errors especially in attempts at more complex sentences. Verbs and tense formations are secure.
4	Generally accurate with errors occurring in attempts at more complex sentences. Verb and tense formations are usually correct.
3	More accurate than inaccurate. Verb forms and tense formations are sometimes unsuccessful. The intended meaning is clear.
2	Many errors which often impede communication. Verb forms are rarely accurate.
1	Limited understanding of the most basic linguistic structures. Frequent errors regularly impede communication.
0	No language produced which is worthy of credit.

- The mark awarded for Range of Language must not be more than one band higher than the mark awarded for Content. (See table below).
- The mark awarded for Accuracy must not be more than one band higher than the mark awarded for Content. (See table below).
- If a mark is awarded for Content, this will inevitably lead to the award of a mark for Range of Language and for Accuracy.
- If a mark of zero is awarded for Content, this will automatically result in a zero score for Range of Language and for Accuracy.

<b>Content Mark</b>	<b>Marks for Range of Language</b>	<b>Marks for Accuracy</b>
0	0	0
1 – 3	1 – 4	1 - 2
4 – 6	1 – 6	1 - 3
7 – 9	1 – 8	1 - 4
10 – 12	1 – 10	1 - 5
13 – 15	1 – 10	1 - 5

## Assessment issues

*It should be noted that the following guidance contains examples from French, German and Spanish.*

### 1. Task Planning Forms (TPF)

If more than 40 words have been used, examiners will ignore when awarding a mark, the parts of the student's response (ie the phrases or clauses) which use words noted on the TPF beyond the first 40.

If a conjugated verb appears on the TPF, examiners will ignore the clause(s) where that verb is used when are awarding a mark for Range of Language and Accuracy. If the sentence (with the conjugated verb discounted) still communicates, then it may be counted towards the mark for Content. The same applies to the use of codes (eg a picture of an eye to represent the Spanish word *hay*).

Visuals on Task Planning Forms are permitted for the last time in June 2011 and must not appear on Task Planning Forms in June 2012 and beyond.

### 2. Exactly what do examiners mark?

- They mark the student's response **to the title**.
- They do **not** mark a response to the bullet points which have the status of guidance. The student may choose to ignore the bullet points completely.
- The response must be relevant to the title.

### 3. Must the title relate directly to the Contexts defined in the specification?

No. The title can be anything.

### 4. How do examiners identify the title?

- The title is the task.
- The task and the scene-setting may seem blurred or merged together. The focus is the task.
- See examples in *Additional Exemplar Tasks: Controlled Assessment Writing and Speaking* on the AQA website within the Teacher Resource Bank for your language at <http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/languages.php?id=11&prev=10>, where the task and scene setting are clearly separated

### 5. What is a relevant response?

- The response must be relevant to the task.
- Students are not penalised for not responding to the scene setting details.

### 6. And what if there is a significant amount of irrelevant material?

- It would affect the mark for CONTENT.
- Only the material which is relevant should still be assessed for RANGE OF LANGUAGE and ACCURACY.

**7. What if a student has omitted an entire aspect of the title?**

A student with the task ‘Home, local area and special occasions’ who writes nothing about home area, for example, could be considered to have completed two thirds of the task. The piece could therefore be eligible for the 10-12 band for Content, assuming the piece fulfils the criteria for that band in other ways. This would still allow the student access to all mark bands for language.

**8. What if there is a significant duplication of material across the two pieces of work submitted?**

- The same material cannot be credited twice.
- Incidental and occasional overlap do not count as duplication.

**9. What if it is clear the student’s entire response is identical (ie exactly the same, word for word) to model answers in a textbook or to the wording of tasks from other students at the same centre?**

The work would be referred to AQA’s Irregularities/Malpractice Department.

**10. Does the number of words affect assessment?**

- The quality not the quantity of work affects the assessment outcome.
- 200-350 words across both tasks if aiming at grades C-G, 400-600 if aiming at grades A\*- C, is for **guidance** only.
- Obviously, the shorter the assignment, the more difficult it becomes to meet the upper bands of assessment criteria for CONTENT (and therefore other categories).
- There is no *upper* limit on the number of words. The whole piece will be read and marked by the examiner.

**11. How does the CONTENT mark affect the marks for RANGE OF LANGUAGE and ACCURACY?**

Content Mark	Maximum Mark for Range of Language	Maximum Mark for Accuracy
0	0	0
1–3	1–4	1-2
4–6	1–6	1-3
7–9	1–8	1-4
10–12	1–10	1-5
13–15	1–10	1-5

## 12. The criteria for assessment

### (a) CONTENT

**The criteria for CONTENT refer to ideas, points of view and, in the 4-6 band, opinions. In terms of assessment, how are they viewed?**

They are all viewed as one notion. Ideas, points of view and opinions are the same for assessment purposes. In terms of evidence, there must be more than one instance of this feature.

**How do examiners decide between the 3 marks available for CONTENT in each mark band?**

If the descriptor fits the piece exactly, then the examiner will award the middle mark in the band. If there is strong evidence of the descriptors and the examiner had been considering the band above, the highest of the three marks would be awarded. If there is just enough evidence and the examiner had been considering the band below, then the lowest mark in the band would be awarded.

#### 13-15 marks

- Students provide a **fully relevant** and **detailed** response with **almost all** information conveyed **clearly** and **developed**.
- They must offer ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2) and at least two of them must be explained or justified.
- The piece should have a well organised structure, ie a sound ordering of ideas but **not** necessarily a formal essay structure or an introduction, conclusion, etc.

#### 10-12 marks

- The response will be **mostly** relevant and **a lot** of information will still be provided and conveyed **clearly** and will **generally** be developed.
- There is a requirement to give **and explain** ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2)

#### 7-9 marks

- The response will be **generally** relevant with **quite a lot** of information conveyed **clearly**.
- There will still be evidence of an ability to **develop** ideas.
- There is a requirement to give opinions / points of view (minimum 2).

#### 4-6 marks

- The response is **limited** but **some** relevant information will be conveyed.
- There will be **some development** of basic ideas.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2). These could be very simple, eg: 'I like French. I like Spanish. France is good.' = 3 simple opinions.

#### 1-3 marks

- The response is **very limited** with **little** relevant information conveyed.
- There will be **no real structure**.

#### 0 marks

- No relevant information is communicated in a coherent fashion. If zero is awarded for Content, zero must also be awarded for Range of Language and Accuracy.

**(b) RANGE OF LANGUAGE**

- The immediate future (ie *je vais* + infinitive, *voy a* + infinitive, etc) counts as a future tense. A present tense verb with a future time marker (eg *Nächste Woche fahre ich...*) does not.  
The immediate future (eg *je vais aller*) is seen as a different tense from the future (eg *j'irai*).
- The present subjunctive does not count as a separate tense from the present indicative. A construction using the present tense to refer to the past (eg *Je joue du piano depuis 2 ans / Llevo 5 años estudiando español / Ich spiele Klavier seit 2 Jahren*) counts as the present tense. Similarly a construction using the present tense to refer to the future (eg *J'espère aller à l'université / ich hoffe, auf die Universität zu gehen / Espero ir al cine*) counts as the present.

9-10 marks

- A variety of **tenses** must be used **successfully**. This means two or more tenses and a minimum of one instance of a tense use which is other than the default tense used. The tenses could come from the same time frame (for example the preterite and the imperfect) but a greater range of tenses will add to the complexity of the language used. An overall judgement needs to be made as to whether “verb tenses are used successfully.” There needs to be evidence that the student can communicate messages successfully in more than one tense. There may be minor spelling errors (and in German occasional word order errors) but provided they do not prevent communication they can be credited.
- The use of different tenses is not a ‘passport’ to the 9-10 band.
- There must be evidence of **successful use of complex sentences**. This could be:
  - use of subordinating conjunctions (but this is not an absolute requirement)
  - use of adverbial phrases (*al llegar...*, *après avoir fait cela...*, etc).
  - use of infinitive constructions after a preposition (e.g. *sans hésiter / ohne zu essen / despues de ir*), after an adjective (eg *C'est facile à faire / einfach zu tun / fácil hacerlo*) or after a verb (eg modal verbs; *je préfère vivre en ville / Ich mag fernsehen / prefiero ir* etc)
  - a range of different structures leading to longer, more varied sentences (eg *suelo ir* rather than *voy*, *j'ai l'intention de...* rather than *je veux..ich habe vor* rather than *ich will...*)
  - use of pronoun objects
  - use of adverbial conjunctions (eg *heureusement, cependant, leider, sin embargo*) or prepositional phrases (eg *par contre / zum Beispiel / por ejemplo*)
  - regular use of connectives to form longer sentences.However, this is GCSE so even in the highest mark band examiners are not necessarily looking for use of the subjunctive or similar grammatical structures.
- There needs to be a **wide range of vocabulary**. This means that students will not be too repetitive in the words they use.

7-8 marks

- **Mainly successful** use of complex sentences. The note above about what constitutes complexity for the 9-10 band will also apply here.
- No specific requirement to use more than one tense but the use of different tenses may constitute evidence of ‘more complex sentences’.
- There must be a **good range** of vocabulary, so students in this band will again be trying to avoid repetition of the more common words.



5-6 marks

- There will be some attempts made at longer sentences using appropriate linking words. At this level this will often mean repeated dependence on simple connectives such as 'and' / 'but', though 'because' will also be found fairly frequently when students attempt to explain ideas and points of view. Use of other forms of complex sentences will often not be wholly successful.
- There should be **some variety** of vocabulary, though students will generally be using a more basic range of vocabulary than in the higher bands and there may be more repetition.

3-4 marks

- Language will be basic, with **short, simple sentences**. Attempts at longer sentences and more difficult constructions will usually not be successful.
- Vocabulary will generally be appropriate to the basic needs of the task but will be **limited**, with a lot of repetition and overuse of a few common verbs such as *to be, to have, to like, to go*.

1-2 marks

- Little understanding of language structure shown with just the occasional short phrase which is correctly used.
- Vocabulary will be very **basic**, with only isolated words correctly used. Vocabulary will often be anglicised.

**(c) ACCURACY**

**For ACCURACY, is there an implicit requirement for different tenses to be in evidence?**

No. Range of tenses is assessed under RANGE OF LANGUAGE. The range of tenses is not considered when assessing Accuracy.

There are 5 marks available to cover the whole range of ability (i.e. 8 grades). This means the mark awarded could represent quite different performances. Moreover, a mark of 5 will not be used only to represent an A\* performance.

5 marks

- **Largely accurate**.
- Major errors only usually appear in complex structures.
- There may be some minor errors (eg gender).
- Verbs and tenses are **secure**.

4 marks

- Errors occur but the piece is **generally accurate**. Mistakes made will not generally impede communication.
- Verbs and tenses are **usually correct**.

3 marks

- **More accurate than inaccurate**, though there will often be fairly frequent errors.
- The intended **meaning is clear**.
- Verbs and tenses are **sometimes unsuccessful**.

2 marks

- **Many errors.**
- Mistakes **often impede communication.**
- Verbs are **rarely accurate.**

1 mark

- **Frequent errors.**
- Mistakes **regularly impede communication.**
- **Limited understanding** of basic linguistic structures.

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below

**UMS conversion calculator** [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion).