



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
January 2012**

French

46551F/H

(Specification 4655)

Unit 1: Listening

Report on the Examination

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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Foundation Tier

General Comments

Most students attempted all the questions, with very few blank spaces found on the question papers. Many students managed to gain some marks for each question, though some individual vocabulary items caused difficulties. Once again, it cannot be stressed too strongly that students should be encouraged to write their answers as clearly and as legibly as possible in the spaces provided in the answer book. Pencil must not be used and black ink is necessary for maximum clarity.

Questions 1-3

Question 1 was well done, as students were very familiar with the key word, and singular and plural answers were accepted. Question 2 was the least well answered in this section with some guessing the meaning of *des livres*. Question 3 was successfully answered by the vast majority.

Questions 4-8

The first two questions were well answered, but a significant minority had problems with *la chimie* and *l'éducation physique* in Questions 6 and 7 respectively.

Questions 8-9

The main difficulty here occurred in Question 8 where many did not recognize *un film d'amour*. Otherwise there were many high scores.

Questions 10-12

All three questions were done well, with the most errors occurring in Question 11 where a small minority did not recognize *légumes*.

Questions 13-15

Generally, the first two questions proved straightforward. However, many struggled to give the correct answer for Question 15, where presumably many confused *chaussettes* (the correct answer F) with *chaussures* and chose the answer (I) in error.

Questions 16-17

There were many full marks scored on this question which proved very accessible.

Questions 18-20

Many students struggled with these questions, demonstrating a lack of knowledge of key environmental vocabulary. *Recycler* was widely recognized in Question 18, however many chose A (paper) rather than the correct B (glass) suggesting that *le verre* is not well known. Similarly, the word *bruit* caused problems in Question 19, and in Question 20 *les gens qui laissent tomber leurs papiers* was too challenging for most students.

Question 21

Students handled this question quite well. Blank answers were fairly rare as were inappropriate answers. There was the usual number of “hedged bets”, with two answers given, sometimes contradicting each other. The main confusion was that some thought he was doing the babysitting in his own house. In the disadvantage section, many mentioned the children’s poor behaviour rather than the fact that the speaker did not like children.

Question 22

There were a few displaced answers from the previous question e.g. ‘near to home’. Not many students expressed the idea of clients/customers. There were some vague answers e.g. ‘it’s nice’ or answers which were not quite accurate such as ‘colleagues are nice’, ‘meet new people’. Also, rather than leaving blanks, students resorted to sensible guesswork – ‘fun’, ‘weekends only’, ‘Saturdays only’, ‘good hours’, ‘good pay’, ‘free food/tea/coffee’, ‘tips’, ‘the boss’. For the disadvantage ‘tiring’ was often understood though conveyed in a wide variety of spellings.

Questions 23-25

Many struggled here and this proved to be the most challenging part of the paper for most students. Question 25 in particular caused problems, (*démodé*, and the idea of being laughed at by friends proved very challenging). Question 24 was the most successfully answered part, with Question 23 also proving demanding. It was hoped that the combination of *il est très beau* and *le rose ne me plaît pas* would lead students to the correct answer. However, once again, many students failed to recognize a negative expression.

Questions 26-29

Questions 26 and 29 were answered better than the other two questions. In Question 27, perhaps surprisingly, many did not link *faim* and *manger* with famine. In Question 28 few recognized the significance of *vivre dans les rues*.

Higher Tier

General Comments

There were a small number of pleasing, high scoring scripts though many clearly struggled, especially with the later questions. Examiners reported that a significant minority of students had very poor handwriting and it was often very difficult for examiners to work out what had been written, especially in the questions requiring answers in English.

Question 1

On this question, students wrote fuller answers than at Foundation Tier. Complete blanks were very rare. Again students seemed prepared to offer sensible guesses - ‘has to stay up late’, ‘long hours’, ‘pay isn’t good’, ‘children not well-behaved’. There were some misunderstandings, such as ‘the children don’t like him’, ‘works at his house/from home’, ‘he likes practical work’ and references to the frequency of his work. Some students negated correct responses by incorrect additions. English spelling sometimes proved a challenge for examiners.

Question 2

The errors made here were similar to those made by Foundation Tier students but far less often. Also, fuller answers were given in the disadvantage box - 'she's very tired when she gets home from work'. Vague answers e.g. 'people are nice', 'it's social/sociable' failed to score. As at Foundation Tier, 'tiring/tired' caused many students spelling problems, though the disadvantage was very often correctly conveyed.

Questions 3-5

This was well done with the most challenging being Question 5, where the idea of dropping litter was not always understood.

Questions 6 and 7

There was a wide variation between these questions, with Question 7(ii) very well answered (*le look est important* was easily spotted). There was a fair degree of success on both Questions 6(i) and 7(i). However, Question 6(ii) proved challenging. Some heard the word *essentielle* and chose A as the answer in error. The difficulty for some students was picking out *tous les élèves*, which eliminates option B (some pupils).

Questions 8-10

These questions proved demanding particularly Question 10, where the idea of having such an old phone that others would mock was not understood. Question 9 was more successfully answered, though the combination of *content* and the negative in *il n'était pas cher* led some to choose P/N.

Questions 11-12

Question 11 was answered slightly better than Question 12. There was some evidence to suggest that students noted the reference to laziness and lack of effort in Question 11, not noticing the phrase *pour l'aider*, which led them to choose the incorrect answer D (school work) before hearing Question 12.

Questions 13-14

Question 13(i) led to a lot of answers about the need to get fit rather than the correct key idea of feeling better. The idea of the cost in part (ii) was far more successfully answered. In Question 14 part (i) was done much better than part (ii), where many carried on the idea of the friends by saying 'when she was on her own'.

Questions 15-18

This was fairly well answered by most with Questions 16 and 17 slightly more of a problem than the others. The idea of homelessness in Question 17 was not noted by some.

Questions 19-20

Most students scored at least one of the available marks in each question but both marks proved challenging especially in Question 19. Students need to be advised to listen to the recording twice before making a final decision. It seems that as soon as many heard the word *université*, answer A (Bénédicte will definitely go to university) was selected wrongly.

Questions 21-24

Most students scored well on Questions 23 and 24, with the first two parts proving more challenging. Many did not notice *accro* in Question 21 and some found it hard to connect lack of social skills with sitting in front of a computer in Question 22.

Question 25

The deforestation answer was very accessible. However, the second mark for the loss of animals' habitats was more demanding. There were very many guesses with 'global warming' being a very common answer.

Question 26

This question also proved challenging. Where only one mark was scored, it tended to be for scientists exaggerating. The guesswork was quite varied, some of it based on an understanding of *monde* expressed as an incorrect answer – 'they talk about the world', 'they get to go all over the world'. Other incorrect answers included 'they make things up', 'they are not certain', 'they're boring', 'they're paid too much'. Quite a few students wrote about scientists helping them with their homework, presumably as a result of hearing *j'en ai marre de voir*.

Question 27

A small number of students scored maximum marks on this question. The idea of big countries/the US polluting was well understood and scored well. As in Question 26, well known environmental issues were given as possible answers - 'litter', 'recycling', 'global warming', 'ozone layer', 'sea levels are rising'. Plenty of good advice was offered – 'we should be more green/use public transport', 'use cars less', 'share cars', 'ride bikes'. The key idea of it being unrealistic to expect people to give up cars was rarely seen. There were lots of references to 'common transport' and 'ideal/idealistic' were sometimes confused.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion.