

GCSE

Edexcel GCSE

French (Short Course) (3226)

This Examiners' Report relates to Mark
Scheme Publication code: UG016519

Summer 2005

advancing learning, changing lives

Examiners' Report

Edexcel GCSE
French (Short Course) (3226)

Edexcel is one of the leading examining and awarding bodies in the UK and throughout the world. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers.

Through a network of UK and overseas offices, Edexcel's centres receive the support they need to help them deliver their education and training programmes to learners.

For further information please call our Customer Services on 0870 240 9800, or visit our website at www.edexcel.org.uk.

Summer 2005

Publications Code UG016519

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Edexcel Ltd 2005

Contents

Paper 1F Examiners' Report	1
Paper 1H Examiners' Report	3
Paper 2F/H Examiners' Report	5
Paper 3F Examiners' Report	11
Paper 3H Examiners' Report	13
Paper 4C Examiners' Report	15
Statistics	19

GCSE French Short Course (3226) Paper 1F
Foundation Level Listening and Responding Examiners' Report
June 2005

There were fewer candidates than in previous years for this examination and it is therefore difficult to draw conclusions about performance. There were some good performances but generally there were a lot of candidates who found elements of the paper daunting particularly the questions requiring answers in English.

The questions requiring the recognition of single lexical items Q1-5, Q6-10 proved accessible to most candidates, however, performance varied from centre to centre. There were obviously centres where school subjects in Q1-5 had not been revised and candidates from these centres did not score well. Means of transport in Q6-10 were well done by some candidates but not all. The picture for Q9 (*mobylette E*) was often confused with picture G (*scooter*), this was an understandable error and this fact was taken into account when grade boundaries were decided.

The questions that were intended to discriminate did so and many candidates found the overlap questions targeted at grades D and C challenging (Q11, Q12-13). Q11 tested the identification of opinions, a skill required at grade C. This continues to challenge candidates at this level and the question proved difficult for all but the best candidates. Parts (i) (matching *il faut avoir une voiture* with answer F, *il y a des problèmes avec le transport*) and (iii) (matching *l'air est plus pur, il n'y a pas de fumée* with answer D *c'est moins pollué*) proved the most accessible.

Q12-13 were multiple choice questions and proved challenging for candidates. The task required candidates to listen to the whole extract. Weaker candidates tended to latch on to single words and to tick the answer containing the first word they heard, eg in Q12 part (i) many ticked (a) as soon as they heard the first sentence of the extract, *Je travaille dans un grand hôtel, il y a un restaurant...* Candidates needed to listen carefully in particular for negation and for key phrases eg in Q12 part (i) *je suis réceptionniste*.

The questions in English continue to be a good discriminator. Unfortunately many candidates left these two questions blank. Of those who did attempt the questions, many failed to listen to the extract as a whole, they honed in on individual items of vocabulary and then constructed answers around individual words or else gave one word answers which didn't always answer the question.

In Q14 (a) some candidates recognised *magasins* but did not pick up on the quantifier, *beaucoup de (magasins)*. Weaker candidates gave *magazines* as an answer. In part (b) many lost marks because of short answers that did not supply the necessary information eg *his parents* on its own, rather than *shopping with his parents*. In part (c) *c'est ennuyeux* became *annoying*, or was often rendered as, *they (his parents) are boring* rather than *shopping/ it is boring*. In Q 15 there was evidence of weaker candidates associating French sounds with English words, *boulangerie* was frequently rendered as *lingerie shop* and gave rise to answers such as *underwear/ sex shop*. *Laundry* was also another common incorrect answer. Quite a lot of candidates gave *butcher* as an answer (presumably after having learnt the words at the same time). *Tabac* was not generally well known. Answers such as Asda, Tesco, Morrisons were common among weaker candidates.

Many examiners commented on the candidates' poor expression in English and their inability to express basic answers in an unambiguous way. Many answer with one word only which is often not enough detail to answer the question. Poor spelling of basic English is also a problem.

The administration of many centres was excellent but there were centres who failed to complete and/or return both the Foundation or Higher register. This is essential otherwise it is hard for examiners to know if a candidate who was marked absent for the Foundation Paper, was absent for the whole examination or took the Higher Paper.

There were fewer rubric infringements such as ticking too many boxes or writing in the wrong language, both of which are penalised.

The performance of better candidates was recognised by:

- careful reading of the question
- listening to the whole extract rather than honing in on individual words
- attention to detail, giving complete rather than partial answers
- applying logic
- reading over their answers

GCSE French Short Course (3226) Paper 1H Higher Level Listening and Responding Examiners' Report June 2005

There were only a small number of candidates who took the paper this year and this makes generalisations difficult. Whilst there were some very good performances with candidates scoring well across the paper as a whole, quite a lot of candidates found the paper very demanding and possibly a demoralising experience. These candidates would perhaps have benefited more from taking the Foundation paper. The performance on the overlap questions, targeted at grades C and D, (Q1-2, Q5) was better than at Foundation level from good candidates but the performance of many was similar to that of Foundation level candidates.

Q1-2 were multiple choice questions and proved challenging for candidates. The task required candidates to listen to the whole extract. Weaker candidates tended to latch on to single words and to tick the answer containing the first word they heard, eg in part (i) many ticked (a) as soon as they heard the first sentence of the extract, *Je travaille dans un grand hôtel, il y a un restaurant...* Candidates need to listen to the whole extract and to listen in particular for negation and for key phrases eg in Q1 (i) *je suis réceptionniste*. Q5 tested the identification of opinions, and this proved difficult for many candidates. Parts (i) (matching *il faut avoir une voiture* with answer F, *il y a des problèmes avec le transport*) and (iii) (matching *l'air est plus pur, il n'y a pas de fumée* with answer D *c'est moins pollué*) proved the most accessible.

Q4 required the identification of opinions and points of view. Again better candidates scored well on these questions which were very demanding. The questions required candidates to understand paraphrasing and to link vocabulary in phrases in the extract with the questions eg *ce n'est pas compliqué* with answer (v) *C'est très facile; tu n'as même pas besoin de sortir* with answer (ii), *On peut faire des courses sans quitter la maison*. In this type of question, which is a conversation between three people, it should be pointed out to candidates that each speaker finishes with the name of the person who is going to speak next.

Q3 required answers in note form in French and was marked for communication only. There were a few good performances. Many candidates left this question blank and despite a generous mark scheme (with 9 possible answers and tolerance of certain grammatical errors) many candidates were unable to score highly on this question. Candidates lost marks because they either failed to understand the extract or were unable to record their answers in an acceptably recognisable form or give the detailed information required. Weaker candidates latched on to single words regardless of which film they referred to, hence answers like *c'est amusant, j'adore ce film* were common incorrect answers. As at Foundation level there was evidence of poor transcribing *j'adore ce film* was frequently rendered by weaker candidates as *j'adore Sophie*, highlighting weaker candidates inability to recognise French sounds. The most common correct answers were *acteur préféré* and *c'est un film français*. Although answers were marked for communication and incorrect use of pronouns and possessive adjectives was not penalised, it is worth noting that the majority of candidates were unable to use possessive adjectives accurately, *elle acteur préféré, s'acteur préféré* were common answers. It was disappointing to see the number of candidates who could not spell the word *français* accurately even though it was printed in bold directly above the space for candidates' answers. It is also worth

pointing out that sometimes inaccuracies and the inability to spell words in a recognisable form can lead candidates to lose marks, *actor* (in English) was a common error.

The question requiring answers in English, Q6, was as always, a good discriminator. Only the better candidates were able to supply the detail required at this level, most candidates found these questions very demanding. Some candidates did not attempt the question, and the answers of those that did often bore little resemblance to what they heard. Many candidates based their answers on the context/title, Transport Problems, and used their prior knowledge rather than what was heard to answer the questions e.g. in Q11(b) there were frequent references to car pools/ more expensive petrol. There was again evidence of candidates transcribing French sounds as English words e.g. in Q6a, *campagne* became *companion*, in Q6b *cher* became *car sharing*, candidates obviously need more awareness of pronunciation and the sounds of various letter combinations in French. Many answers were characterised by lack of detail eg in Q 6b, the word *freedom* on its own, instead of *gives freedom*. Other candidates took elements from different parts of the extract and put them together to give factually inaccurate answers eg in Q 6a *cars are essential to go to the country*, *cars are essential to go to work*, *people in the country can go to town to work* etc. Many candidates were unable to express themselves unambiguously in English.

Q6 (a) proved the more accessible question with many candidates scoring marks for *it is useful*, *it gives you freedom*. However, as identified above, many candidates confused different elements of the extracts and gave answers such as, *gives you freedom to go to the country*. *Campagne* was confused with the English *companion* and gave rise to answers such as *going out with friends*, *cars are companions*, *cars are like a friend*. In Q6b insufficient details in answers such as *electric cars* on its own (for *il faut encourager les gens à acheter des voitures électriques*) meant candidates did not score marks. In this particular sentence *gens* was frequently confused with *jeunes* and answers involving young people were common incorrect answers. *Améliorer les transports en commun* was frequently rendered as *more public transport*, the word *billets* led to answers about parking tickets and *cher* to answers about sharing cars.

There were fewer rubric infringements such as ticking too many boxes or writing in the wrong language, both of which are penalised.

As was highlighted last year, the performance of the better candidates was characterised by:

- careful reading of the rubric
- listening to the whole extract rather than honing in on individual items of vocabulary
- attention to detail, giving full rather than partial answers
- expressing themselves clearly and unambiguously and relating their answers to facts in the extract
- applying logic
- reading over their answers

**GCSE French Short Course (3226) Paper 2F/H
Foundation/Higher Level Speaking Examiners' Report
June 2005**

Candidates generally built on good practice in the classroom to perform well in the speaking element of the examination. The vast majority of candidates were well prepared and confident with the format of the examination and there was an even performance across the majority of role-plays and the conversation section.

Rôle play A

There was a significant number of candidates who did not score full marks in this element of the examination and weaker candidates clearly found this element demanding although it was an appropriate entry for the majority of foundation level candidates. *Caisse* is still unknown by the majority of candidates, with a number of different pronunciations which affected communication, particularly *cassé* and many were also unable to ask where places were. Interestingly, candidates found it easier to ask for *la gare* than *le téléphone*.

There were still a number of candidates who offered a price rather than the cost of an item and *C'est combien?* remains difficult for many candidates, *combien?* on its own does not fully satisfy the task.

It is evident that candidates are more aware of items of food and drink, but many were unable to score well in other situations. Many found difficulty with items requested in A1, *shampooing* and *brosse* were not widely known. A6, *lampe* was often badly pronounced and *ouvre-boîte* and *couteau* rarely heard and even more seldom correct.

Learning of the minimum core vocabulary is essential for these common items that are in everyday use in survival situations. Candidates must be aware that simply using the English pronunciation for cognates does not gain credit.

Rôle play B

The majority of candidates were able to experience some success in role-play B although there was significant number of candidates who were only able to answer the unpredictable questions. The rôle plays challenged Foundation Level candidates and provided Higher Level candidates with an accessible beginning to their speaking examination.

Many candidates successfully answered the unpredictable questions. However, the question *quand* was poorly answered, even by a significant number of more able candidates at both levels.

A significant number of candidates offered items of vocabulary other than those indicated in the rôle plays and centres are reminded that where there is oblique candidates must offer one of the items as part of the message required. This was particularly the case when candidates were offering information about favourite subjects in B2. Similarly, if more than one item is offered only the first will be marked, even if it is incorrect and the others correct.

Centres should be aware that marks cannot be gained if the message in a task is only partially conveyed and that it is rare that any of the tasks, other than an unpredictable question, can be fully communicated with a single verb or noun. This was evident in B8 where candidates were required to say what they want for breakfast.

Although many candidates score highly, particularly those at Higher Level, candidates should be aware that tense errors affect the communication of a task and that poor tense usage will reduce the marks gained. There was a considerable number of candidates at both levels who used infinitive or imperfect forms for the present tense of *er* verbs.

Most candidates were able to attempt the four tasks although for a significant number the framing of questions and common question words are difficult and such tasks are often not clearly communicated. *Qu'est-ce qu'on va faire demain?* was particularly difficult for many candidates and few were able to master the use of obligation. However some candidates were able to get round this by alternative means. Task 4 continues to be a good discriminator within the role-plays but even more able candidates find increased difficulty if the question is earlier in the rôle plays.

Teacher examiners should also take care not to read the part of the candidate, as any subsequent response for this task cannot be credited. This often occurs in task 4 and was particularly evident in B2 where a significant number of teacher-examiners asked the question rather than the candidate. Equally, rephrasing of the unpredictable question is not allowed and any response where this is the case is unable to gain marks.

Rôle play C

Many examiners reported that teacher-examiners and candidates appeared more at ease with the format of the role-play and that the candidates were able to engage more when they knew where the unpredictable questions were going to be asked.

However there was still a significant minority of centres where the Teacher examiner's knowledge of the situation was less than adequate and consequently did not respond adequately to the candidate thus causing confusion. Where the Teacher examiner is able to respond naturally to the candidate's responses, whatever they may be, candidates generally were more at ease and therefore able to score more highly. This was particularly evident in C2 in the response to prompt 4 *Vêtements?*

Weaker candidates failed to understand some of the prompts on the cards, notably *Logement?* and *Repas?*, and a significant number of candidates failed to read the rubric at the top of the card, particularly in C12, where candidates wanted a reservation rather than refer to the reservation that had already been made.

Some centres do not encourage candidates to expand the role-play and therefore prevent them from accessing the higher mark bands. It is not necessary to expand all the tasks but there are opportunities within the bullet points, and one of the unpredictable questions is more open-ended, in order for candidates to expand and show what they are capable of.

Centres are reminded that where there is a question mark within the tasks, candidates are expected to ask a question. If a candidate produces a statement they are considered not to have conveyed the task successfully and often only the more able candidates were able to frame questions successfully.

The unpredictable questions continued to be a good discriminator and candidates were able on the whole to answer the more closed question.

Question words however are still a major problem for many candidates who either are not listening carefully or are unaware of the true meaning of them.

Qu'est-ce que vous pensez faire dans la région? was often answered about what the candidates thought about the region ignoring *faire* and *Quand?* when referring to a period of time in work place situations was inappropriately answered. *Détails personnels*, whether as a bullet point or unpredictable question, is still often very superficially dealt with, often producing just a forename. A mobile telephone number and offering a passport were not seen as successfully completing the task nor was a description of the person or their family.

However there were many excellent role-plays. Candidates responded well to teacher examiners who used the prompts thoughtfully and where encouragement and careful responding to their replies enabled them to expand effectively.

Conversation

This year's examination was marked by over-thorough preparation of the topic in many centres, where an increasing number of teacher-examiners used an insufficient variety of questions. There was a significant minority of centres who asked the same questions to all candidates. Invariably candidates, where this happens, are unable to score highly during this element.

Teacher examiners are reminded that the specimen questions in the Handbook are merely suggestions. There were a large number of centres where the teacher-examiners only asked the candidates these questions. This penalised candidates who only produced short responses. These questions are at times non-sequitur and therefore often confused candidates who were unable to follow the thread of the conversation. Teacher examiners should use the responses of the candidate to stimulate the next question.

Naturally, the best conversations occurred when teacher-examiners listened to candidates' answers and progressed in a natural way rather than working through the questions in the handbook

The conversation is marked globally and in an increasing number of cases candidates who were able to speak well, in a variety of tenses during the pre-learnt, prepared section, were unable to offer responses to simple questions during the rest of the topic. These candidates could not be awarded high marks. Similarly it is unacceptable for a candidate to produce a presentation with no follow-up questions on other aspects of the topic as this does not satisfy the requirements of the examination.

Timing continues to be a concern in a minority of centres and centres are reminded that candidates cannot gain credit for responses outside the time limits given in the rubric. Candidates should be given the opportunity to use appropriate structures and language within the time allotted for this part of the examination.

- 2-3 minutes Foundation Level conversation
- 4-5 minutes Higher Level conversation

Similarly short conversations will prevent the candidates from demonstrating their ability.

The higher levels of the assessment criteria require a wide range of structure and vocabulary both in terms of the questions and responses. High marks cannot be scored when a candidate is offered simple questions, a series of closed questions or simply responds in simple terms to alternatives offered by the teacher-examiner.

It should be noted that a series of closed questions, whilst helping some candidates to offer a response will not score other than in the lower mark bands. Candidates can only access the higher mark bands if they are asked a wide range of question types.

Marking

Full marks cannot be awarded when there is ambiguity in a candidate's response particularly in rôle play A.

In rôle play B an incorrect tense often affected communication. Responses of a single word or verb did not convey the message or the rephrasing of an unpredictable question meant that the performance was often overvalued.

In rôle play C there was often insufficient expansion for higher marks to be awarded. Tense errors, responses without a verb, or the failure to ask questions when required, meant that candidates were unable to produce the communication needed to access the higher mark bands.

In the conversation section the performance of Foundation Level candidates who appear to say quite a lot, but have mostly repeated much of what the teacher examiner has said through a series of closed questions, or have total reliance on the teacher examiner, meant that they were only able to access the lower mark bands. Similarly, at higher level, teacher-examiners need to use more complex question forms in order to test candidates appropriately to access the higher mark bands using a variety of open-ended questions. Accuracy and Application of Language are dependent on the amount of and complexity of French conveyed by the candidate. It is unusual for a candidate who scores in the lower ranges in Communication to score highly in these sections as there is not the breadth of language required.

Administration

Many centres continue to provide an excellent service in this area. However some points to note are summarised below:

- Cassette boxes and tapes should be labelled meticulously. It is helpful to use the inserts in the Instructions for Conduct booklet. Each should be labelled with Specification Name and Number, Centre name and number, candidate name and number, level of entry, order of recording and name of teacher examiner.
- Cassettes should be numbered sequentially across the centre, not by individual teacher examiners.
- Cassettes should be rewound to the start of side A.
- Candidates' performance should **not** be split between two sides of a cassette or on two different cassettes.
- Foundation and Higher level candidates should be recorded on different cassettes.
- L3 mark sheets for each candidate should be arranged in candidate number order across the whole centre.
- Both copies of the L3 should be sent to the moderator.
- Centres should ensure that they follow the correct rôle play sequence for 3226 French
- The conversation section has time limits to be observed.
- The microphone should favour the candidate rather than the teacher examiner. Centres should be aware that where automatic recording levels are achieved by some tape recorders candidate details and the beginning of the examination are at times inaudible.
- Parcels should be securely packaged for posting using protective bubble wrap or similar for the protection of the tapes.

Conclusion

Although reports on examinations invariably highlight difficulties, it must be stressed that the majority of teacher examiners prepare and carry out this element of the examination successfully.

Many candidates were well prepared for the examination and there was evidence of excellent examining technique.

Examiners would like to thank teacher-examiners for their efforts this year.

GCSE French Short Course (3226) Paper 3F
Foundation Level Reading and Responding Examiners' Report
June 2005

- Candidates were well prepared for this paper on the whole and the majority were entered appropriately.
- The paper was completed in the given time with very few candidates leaving answers blank.
- Presentation was good with very few candidates overwriting letters.

Straightforward vocabulary testing questions (Qs1 and 4) were attempted successfully. In Q1, candidates showed a good knowledge of classroom vocabulary. However, the item which was the least known was *trousse* and the floppy disk and pen were the two incorrect items chosen the most. In Q4, parts (i), (iii) and (iv) were answered correctly, but quite a few candidates gave the distracter *histoire* as the answer to (ii) and the answers to (ii) and (v) were often transposed. There were very few candidates who gave more crosses than necessary in Qs 1 and 4.

The overlap questions discriminated very well, but were attempted with varying success. Q2 was done quite successfully with a few candidates scoring full marks and others performing well in parts (iv) and (v), but less so in the first three parts. One can only assume that the choice of C for (i) by many candidates, A, D and C for (ii) and D and F for (iii) was due to guesswork.

It was pleasing to note that the new question type used this year, i.e. making notes in French in positive and negative columns in Q3 was dealt with well by many Foundation candidates, with only a few writing all the answers in French or a mixture of French and English. Copying of words from the text into the grid was not always very successful. Some candidates failed to score marks for incomplete answers such as: *très confortable* on its own without *hôtel* and *aller à la plage* without *tous les jours*. The negative column was not as successful with many candidates giving the adjectives without the noun: (*le service*) *lent*; (*le personnel*) *un peu impoli*. There was a good number of candidates who obviously recognized negative or contradictory expressions and gave those as answers: *malheureusement* and *d'un autre côté*. It was very pleasing to note that there were hardly any cases of candidates transposing answers in the two columns.

The English Q9 was a very straightforward question which the majority of candidates did well with very few giving all the answers in French. Quite a few candidates scored full or nearly full marks and very few left answers blank. Whilst parts (b) and (e) were answered correctly by most candidates, there were still many who did not recognize *dimanche* as Sunday and in fact every single day of the week was represented across the candidature in answers to (c). Part (d) was answered successfully, but loose interpretations of *tennis de table* led to tennis as an answer and some candidates chose to take their answer from the pictures rather than the French which led to the answer roller blading/skating. The answer which prevented many candidates from scoring full marks on this question was part (a) where very few candidates actually understood that the party was celebrating the end of the school

year or the beginning of the Summer holidays. Answers ranged from loose interpretations of *la fin de l'année scolaire* such as finished/finishing school, end of school, whilst others honed in on the word *scolaire* to give the answer: she has a scholarship. Equally for *le commencement des grandes vacances*, candidates gave answers such as going on holidays, start of Summer. Others invented their own reasons for the party: birthday or anniversary.

GCSE French Short Course (3226) Paper 3H
Higher Level Reading and Responding Examiners' Report
June 2005

This report is based on a very small candidature. On the whole, candidates had been appropriately entered for this paper. There were very few candidates who did not complete the paper. The paper seemed to differentiate well between those who only honed in on isolated lexical items and those who were able to read texts in detail and comprehend the texts globally, a higher skill tested at this level.

For the overlap questions, see the report on the Foundation paper. Candidates tackled these questions with greater success. This was especially the case on Q4 where candidates were able to choose the exact parts of the text required to answer the questions and to write them correctly. Most candidates scored full marks in Q1.

Q2 was done quite well on the whole with parts (i) and (iii) being the most successful although quite a few candidates gave *parents* for the answer to the latter, perhaps using a knowledge of grammar rather than careful reading of the text to help them. This was also the case for the frequently wrong answer for (ii) being *raison*. For part (iv), there were many candidates who understood the text well and gave the right answer, but equally, many gave the answer *indépendant* and a few, *content* showing again that they had used grammatical knowledge rather than the text to answer the question. Part (v) was done quite successfully, but many gave *a* as the answer whilst a large number gave both *a* and *veut*.

Q3 was tackled very successfully. Candidates have experienced this question type before and coped very well with Section A. Candidates really had to understand the text to be able to handle this question as all the verbs in the questions were in the 3rd person plural and therefore one couldn't rely on grammatical knowledge. Section B was also done very well.

The English Q9 proved to be an excellent discriminator, but was not as well attempted as in former years. There were quite a few candidates who left answers blank, but hardly any who answered in French. A very few strong candidates scored nearly full marks whilst weaker candidates only scored on (e) (i). Part (a) was targeted at the sentence beginning *il essaie de*, but many candidates did not realize this and therefore gave answers taken from the sentence starting: *il aide son équipe...voisins*. However, many candidates did score well in (a), but there were imprecise translations of the two phrases; for *profiter de la vie en plein air*, candidates gave *spend life/work outside/get plain air*. Some weaker candidates honed in on *plein* and *air* and gave answers such as *fly airplanes*, others added *profiter* to get *make profits from airplanes*. For the idea of being there for the children, many candidates were again too imprecise and mentioned his children or be/spend time with the children.

Part (b) was a little more successful with candidates understanding the idea that one shouldn't stay too long, though unfortunately, quite a few omitted the idea of too long and instead wrote *much longer*; *for a long time*; *long term* etc. More successful was the interpretation of the fact that one should stop the job when one doesn't enjoy it any more, though some candidates failed to include any more. Only the more able candidates were able to interpret the last sentence successfully. Weaker candidates honed in on *s'amuser* and gave answers such as: *he wants to have fun, he*

will stop when he's not having fun. Others snatched at *rester* and gave the answer: *he needs a rest.*

For many candidates who did not score very highly on parts (a) and (b), they were able to score on (e) (i). However, sometimes, they were unable to justify their answers from the text, but instead hypothesized: *because he looks after children; because he runs activities* etc.

Candidates at this level need to be aware that they must be precise in their answers to gain marks on the English question.

GCSE French Short Course (3226) Paper 4C Written Coursework Examiners' Report - June 2005

This year coursework was again much more popular than the examination. As in the past, it was pleasing to see that the vast majority of centres benefited from their choice, with candidates producing good work according to their potential, and teachers administering and assessing the work very successfully.

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 slavish adherence to stimulus material.

Examples of successful tasks this year included:

- Holidays, particularly ones where things went wrong
- School and future plans - especially when some variety was added, e.g. a description of a teacher or of the school uniform
- A restaurant visit - again, especially when things went wrong
- Home town - description, history, opinions
- A film or book review (but only the best candidates were successful here)
- Biography of a famous person
- Work experience
- Health (especially those who wrote from a particular viewpoint, e.g. that of an alcoholic or heavy smoker)
- The importance of friendship
- Agony aunt letters/replies

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:

- Lists; labelling of pictures - for candidates who could do more than this
- The environment - for candidates without the resources to deal with this
- Interviews - these did not allow candidates to use linking
- Titles covering two or more topic areas
- Hotel booking letters - especially if just copied from a stimulus
- Hotel complaint letters - likewise
- CV and letter of application
- Healthy eating - for candidates without the resources to deal with this
- Je me présente - often very dull writing was produced here

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. Most stimulus material was in French, although moderators noted more this year in English. Often, centres chose safe and predictable topics, and only the better candidates were able to develop these quite unpromising titles into good pieces of work that fulfilled the criteria for higher marks. 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 passages from them - and sometimes the same copied work was seen across a whole centre. Moderators are looking to see how individual candidates manipulate the language to make it their own.

Candidates in a few centres were penalised because they had not been asked to fulfil the specification requirement of writing three units of work from three different topic areas. Where candidates had written two units from one topic area, only the better of the two marks was taken into consideration, and the other mark was discounted. Clearly this had a serious effect on the overall marks of such centres. As last year, the most common problem was setting both school and work experience (Education, training and employment) and holidays and home town (At home and abroad). Centres are reminded to check the specification carefully before setting tasks.

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: 250-350 words overall for grades G-D, and 500-600 words overall for grades C-A*. The three units of work should be of roughly equal length, including the one done under controlled conditions.

Some centres did not meet the requirements for controlled conditions, and they too were penalised by having the marks of one unit discounted. Controlled conditions work must be done in the classroom and under the supervision of a teacher. Stimulus material and a dictionary are allowed; reference materials, notes or first drafts of the work are not permitted. Candidates may prepare the work in advance and may wish to memorise parts of it; it is not however in the spirit of the examination to invite candidates to learn by heart pieces of French which they have not composed themselves, such as textbook pages.

If candidates make drafts of their work, these must not be corrected by the teacher. 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 by the improvement in standards of word-processed work.

Assessment

On the whole, this was very well done by centres. Some were slightly generous but consistently so. Internal standardisation was usually successful. The three marking grids provided in the new 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 which was too short to meet the criteria. In the Accuracy grid, it should be noted that the majority of verb forms have to be correct in order to achieve 3 or more marks. It is necessary to take into consideration both the length and type of task when awarding a mark for Communication and content.

Administration

Most centres were extremely helpful in following the requirements of the Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination (the ICE booklet), which are issued well in advance of coursework deadlines. 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:

1. The latest version of form CF1 (coursework front sheet) should be used.
2. It should include the candidate number and be signed by the teacher and the candidate.
3. It should contain an accurate word count and an indication of topic areas chosen.
4. Addition of marks should be carefully checked.
5. The OPTEMS form should be completed in full, without error, and should be signed on every page.
6. Teaching groups should be indicated on the OPTEMS.
7. If separated, OPTEMS pages should be placed in their correct order.
8. Absent candidates should be marked X not zero.
9. The sample should be arranged in candidate number order.
10. If a sample candidate is absent, then the work of the next candidate on the list should be included.
11. The work of the candidates with the highest and lowest marks in the centre should be included.
12. Work in the folder should be in the same order as on the front sheet.
13. There should be no loose pages - especially ones with no name on.
14. Stimulus material should be submitted - not references to pages in a textbook.
15. When moderators request additional information or folders, these should be provided promptly.
16. When sending coursework through the post, centres should ensure that the full amount of postage is paid.

Statistics

Paper 1F - Listening and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	25	15	12	10	8	6	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	59	50	40	30	20	10	0

Paper 1H - Listening and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw Boundary Mark	25	17	14	11	9	7	6	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	35	0

Paper 2F - Speaking

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	27	22	18	14	10	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	59	50	40	30	20	10	0

Paper 2H - Speaking

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	40	34	28	23	17	14	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	35	0

Paper 3F - Reading and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	25	16	13	10	7	4	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	59	50	40	30	20	10	0

Paper 3H - Reading and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw Boundary Mark	25	17	14	11	8	6	5	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	35	0

Paper 4C - Written Coursework

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	40	34	30	26	22	18	14	10	6	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0

Overall Subject Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Total Uniform Mark	360	320	280	240	200	160	120	80	40	<40

Further copies of this publication are available from
Edexcel Publications, Adamsway, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 4FN

Telephone 01623 467467
Fax 01623 450481

Email publications@linneydirect.com

Order Code UG 016519 Summer 2005

For more information on Edexcel qualifications, please visit www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications
Alternatively, you can contact Customer Services at www.edexcel.org.uk/ask or on 0870 240 9800

Edexcel Limited. Registered in England and Wales no.4496750
Registered Office: One90 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH