

# GCSE

## Edexcel GCSE

### French (Short Course) (3226)

This Examiners' Report relates to Mark  
Scheme Publication code: UG071906

Summer 2006

Examiners' Report

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Publications Code UG017906

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## GCSE French Short Course (3226) - Paper 1F Foundation Level Listening and Responding

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 with many scoring high marks; however, performance varied from centre to centre (presumably dependent on how recently the relevant vocabulary had been revised). Some items of vocabulary were less known eg in Q2 *équitation*, in Q3 *la pêche*, and *je fais des économies* in Q9.

The questions that were intended to discriminate did so and weaker candidates found the overlap questions targeted at grades D and C challenging (Q11, Q12-13). Q12-13 with multiple choice answers proved challenging for all but the best candidates. It required candidates to listen to the whole and to discriminate. Many candidates, however, latched on to single lexical items and often ticked the answer containing the first word mentioned in the extract. Q12 (i) required the recognition of tenses and proved very challenging with the majority of candidates ticking incorrectly the first time mentioned (answer A). The most commonly correct answer was Q13 (ii) (*en deux semaines on ira en Espagne*), possibly because *Espagne* was the first country heard. Candidates do need to be trained to listen to the whole extract. Performance in Q11, requiring answers in French was pleasing. Many more candidates now feel more confident about answering this type of question and there were some very good scores. Part (a) was well answered but it was disappointing that some candidates failed to recognise common cognates like *téléphone portable*. In part (b) there are still candidates who write out numbers in full in French and then are unable to do so in a clear, unambiguous way and are therefore not awarded marks. It is not necessary to write numbers as words in French. Disappointingly, many candidates failed to recognise the number 45. Part (c) was generally well answered, the majority of candidates recognising the words *noir, petit, pratique* but weaker candidates failed to recognise these familiar items in unfamiliar contexts. Some weaker candidates gave illogical answers such as *petit et grand*. Very few candidates recognised or were able to communicate the response *appareil-photos*. Part (d) proved difficult *le 19 septembre* was rendered frequently as *dix-neuf sept ans*, other incorrect answers included *19 novembre / décembre / 18 septembre / dix-neuf heures*. For these types of questions candidates need to be able to recognise and record days, numbers, dates, times. 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 particularly where inaccurate spelling creates a new word. Unfortunately, there are still some candidates who answered in the wrong language for which no marks are awarded.

The questions in English continue to be a good discriminator. Unfortunately many candidates left these 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. Candidates were often unable

to express their answers in a clear and unambiguous way. Answers to part (a) (*dancer*) covered a variety of occupations including *dentist* and *doctor*. In part (b) only the better candidates picked up the word *varié*. Many candidates were unable to express the *aime le contact avec le public* and incorrect answers included *likes people, likes talking, likes contacting people*. In Q15 many candidates recognised elements of the extract but often put together separate pieces of information to create factually incorrect answers eg *she works long hours at the weekend, she can't eat chocolate at the weekend, even she has to eat chocolate at the weekend*. Some answers did not answer the question eg *it's long*.

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

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 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

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, Q2-3) was better than at Foundation level from good candidates but the performance of many was similar to that of Foundation level candidates.

Performance in Q1, requiring answers in French was pleasing. Many more candidates now feel more confident about answering this type of question and there were some very good scores. Part (a) was well answered but it was disappointing that some candidates failed to recognise common cognates like *téléphone portable*. In part (b) there are still candidates who write out numbers in full in French and then are unable to do so in a clear, unambiguous way and are therefore not awarded marks. It is not necessary to write numbers out as words in French. Disappointingly many candidates failed to recognise the number 45. Part (c) was generally well answered, the majority of candidates recognising the words *noir, petit, pratique* but weaker candidates failed to recognise these familiar items in unfamiliar contexts. Very few candidates recognised or were able to communicate the response *appareil-photos*. Part (d) proved difficult *le 19 septembre* was rendered frequently as *dix-neuf sept ans*, other incorrect answers included *19 novembre / décembre / 18 septembre / dix-neuf heures*. For these types of questions candidates need to be able to recognise and record days, numbers, dates, times. 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 particularly where inaccurate spelling creates a new word either in English or in French. Unfortunately there are still some candidates who answered in the wrong language for which no marks are awarded.

Q2-3 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. Q2 (i) required the recognition of tenses and proved very challenging with the majority of candidates ticking incorrectly the first time mentioned (answer A). The most commonly correct answer was Q3 (ii) (*en deux semaines on ira en Espagne*), possibly because *Espagne* was the first country heard. Candidates do need to be trained to listen to the whole extract and to listen for tenses and tense indicators.

Q5 was accessible for the majority of candidates although in part (iv) some candidates failed to match *émissions* and *on passe* as relating to *la télévision* and in part (v) some candidates failed to link *voir un film sur grand écran* with *le cinéma*.

Q4 required the recognition of opinions and points of view. Some candidates scored well on this question which is demanding. Weaker candidates were unable to link

what they heard with the questions eg *et si on faisait du camping pour changer un peu* with answer (b), *Je voudrais faire quelque chose d'un peu différent.*

The questions in English (Q6) were as always, a good discriminator. Only the better candidates were able to supply the detail and accuracy required at this level. Some candidates left this section blank. Of those that did attempt the questions lack of attention to detail often cost candidates marks. In Q6(a) *un village* became often *villages* and amongst weaker candidates *town*. In Q6(b) weaker candidates combined separate elements to create incorrect answers eg *buy sports equipment for the school, build a school*. In both Q6 (b) and Q6 (c) the use of tense was also important. In Q6(b) despite the wording of the question (what are they trying to do) some candidates wrote *they have built a centre* for young people and in Q6 (c) instead of *they sell cakes* some candidates wrote *they sold cakes*. The word *récréation* was generally not known. Q6(c) gave rise to a multitude of answers connected to fund raising some based loosely on a misinterpretation of what was heard eg *sell shoes (from basket), cake eating contests, boat sales* (mishearing of *bateaux* for *gâteaux*) but some based on imagination and lack of understanding eg *wear own clothes day, bike race, car boot sale, sponsored walk*. The inability to recognise sounds let candidates down *contre les profs* was heard as *entre les profs* which led to the incorrect answer *organised a basketball match between the teachers*. Most disappointingly a significant number of candidates interpreted *un match de basket* as a *football match*, possibly down to World Cup euphoria but alarming at Higher Level.

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 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

Candidates built on previous years' strong performances in the oral test and clearly used classroom practice to perform well across most aspects of the examination. There was an even performance across the majority of rôle plays and the conversation section although examiners report fewer candidates reaching the highest mark bands in Rôle play C and the conversation.

### Rôle play A

This generally provided a secure basis for marks and offered encouragement to most candidates to attempt the B rôle play. However there were significantly few candidates who scored full marks in this element of the examination and weaker candidates again found this element demanding.

It is evident that candidates are more aware of items of food and drink, clothes and classroom objects but many were unable to score well in less familiar situations in this rôle play. All situations are well covered in textbooks and are taken from the minimum core vocabulary.

A6, *Classeur* and *journal* were unknown. A12, *ballon* was rarely heard, although football was. *Caisse* continues to be a problem for many candidates, most commonly pronounced as *casse* or *cassé*, neither of which could be credited.

Learning of the minimum core vocabulary is essential for these common items that are in everyday use in survival situations and teacher-examiners should be aware that a variety of vocabulary is used across the rôle plays.

There remains confusion where a candidate combined two responses. It is not necessary for teacher-examiners to ask again for a quantity, colour or size. Teacher-examiners are reminded that responses may be combined without penalty. Where teacher-examiners insist on the response for a second time this often confuses the candidate and puts him/her at a disadvantage.

### Rôle play B

The majority of candidates were able to experience some success in rôle play B although a significant number of candidates scored zero. The rôle plays challenged Foundation level candidates and provided Higher level candidates with an accessible beginning to their speaking examination.

Candidates should be advised that only rarely will one word utterances be possible to satisfy the demands of the B rôle play although this can be the case in response to unpredictable questions.

Marks are lost if the required message is only partially completed. Candidates should check that they communicate the entire message indicated by the words and pictures on their card.

Many candidates successfully answered the unpredictable questions. However *combien de temps ...?*, *qu'est-ce que ..... ?* and *quand .....?* were poorly answered, and *On se retrouve où ?* even by a significant number of more able candidates at both levels, despite being answered correctly later during the conversation.

Teacher-examiners should not rephrase the unpredictable question in any way. When this happens, candidates cannot be credited for their answer, however appropriate it may be, nor can any response be credited when a teacher-examiner asks the question for a second or third time following an initial response that was incorrect.

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 an 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 their weekend job. Similarly, if more than one item is offered only the first will be marked, even if it is incorrect and the others correct.

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, particularly when attempting such tasks as 'Ask what you have to wear?' etc. *Qu'est-ce que tu fais normalement le soir?* was particularly difficult for many candidates and few were able to master the use of obligation. However some more able candidates were able to get round this by alternative means. Task 4 continues to be a good discriminator within many of the rôle plays.

### Rôle play C

This was much more successfully attempted this year and many examiners reported that teacher-examiners and candidates appeared more at ease with the more user-friendly format of the rôle play. Candidates were able to engage more when they knew where the unpredictable questions were going to be asked.

However, an increasing number of candidates failed to read the rubric at the top of the card rendering some of the responses irrelevant during the rôle play, so that although they seemed to say a lot they cannot score marks for these elements.

A significant number of centres do not encourage candidates to expand the rôle play and therefore prevent them from accessing the higher mark bands. 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 must not, however, turn the role-play into a mini conversation, as there is often much irrelevance that cannot be credited as expansion and often affects the communication of the points needed.

At the same time, simple reading of the bullet point or from the stimulus material will not score well. Expansion of a bullet point can be achieved quite simply by the use, for example, of a short phrase or by offering some extended description.

Centres are reminded that where there is a question mark within the tasks they 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.

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 appropriately 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.

The bullet points were on the whole accurately completed although *Achats*, *Logement*, *Salaire*, *Distractions* and *Où?* continue to cause problems for many candidates on all the occasions they are used.

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

Teacher-examiners should not rephrase the unpredictable question in any way. When this happens, candidates cannot be credited for their answer, however appropriate it may be nor can any response be credited when a teacher-examiner asks the question for a second or third time following an initial response which was incorrect.

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.

*Quand... ?* was often confused with *Comment ...?* when dealing with returning home and vice versa when talking about how one was going to travel.

*Vos détails ...* is still often very superficially dealt with, often producing just a forename. Details of a mobile telephone number and offering a passport were not seen as successfully completing the task nor were descriptions of the person or their family.

However there were many excellent rôle 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

In many cases the conversation of the test is well structured and interesting to hear. However this year's examination was marked by a more than thorough preparation of the conversation topic in many centres, where an increasing number asked an insufficient variety of questions throughout the centre, and 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

were unable to take the initiative and often 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. It is against the candidates' interests to follow them slavishly with no personalisation 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.

There were an increasing number of centres where candidates took up the option to start the conversation with a presentation. Centres are reminded that this should be not more than one minute in length and should be followed by questions on the appropriate topic. The presentation should be linked to the chosen topic area. Material outside the area chosen cannot be credited in terms of communication. Where there are no questions asked and the topic is a monologue, this is self-penalising as candidates are unable to satisfy the assessment criteria requiring candidates to respond to questions and a variety of question types.

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
- 3-4 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 respond in simple terms to alternatives offered by the teacher-examiner.

There were many centres who were able to help candidates fulfil their potential through skilful questioning, enabling the candidate to expand and use more complex language, eliciting a range of structures, tenses, opinions and descriptions. 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.

Teacher-examiners are informed that the conversation topic may be introduced in English or the target language, and that candidates should be aware of this before they enter the examination room.

However in general the use of English within the examination is not acceptable and teacher examiners should not introduce the rôle plays and links to the next element in English.

## Marking

Candidates cannot be awarded full marks when there was ambiguity in a candidate's response particularly in rôle play A. The pronunciation of *caisse* was an example of this and *casse / cassé / casser* was often credited.

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

Some centres failed to appreciate that there are significant differences in the Assessment Criteria for rôle plays A and B and candidates who were unable to successfully convey the necessary tasks in rôle play B were often over marked.

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 marks were overvalued as communication needed to access the higher mark bands was not achieved.

In the conversation section 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 and total reliance on the teacher-examiner cannot be awarded high marks. Accuracy and Application of Language are dependent on the amount of French conveyed by the candidate and it is unusual for a candidate who scores in the lower ranges in communication to score highly for 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 inlay in the Instructions for Conduct of the Examination 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.
- Cassettes should be dispatched with the Optems or Attendance Register. The L3s should be in a different package.
- Candidates' performance should not be split between sides of the 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.
- In 2B centres both copies of the L3 should be sent to the moderator.
- Centres should adhere to the time limits for sending materials to examiners and moderators.
- The conversation section has time limits to be observed.
- Introductions on tape of candidates should be effected as briskly as possible in the interests of allowing the candidate to begin speaking.
- 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 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 much evidence of excellent examining technique.

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

### Note to Centres

The following statement appears in the Information Manual for 2006/2007.

*Please note that Awarding Bodies are currently reviewing the purpose and format of feedback given to centres regarding internally assessed units. Edexcel has adopted a standard online feedback form E9 which offers centres improved feedback with results via Edexcel Online. We are no longer able to provide centres with subject-specific feedback on the papers which are not classed as "internally assessed".*

*Summer 2006 is the last examination for which Edexcel will provide U9L reports on Paper 2 Orals. We will continue, however, to give feedback via the standard E9 reports on the coursework paper 4C.*

## GCSE French Short Course (3226) - Paper 3F Reading and Responding

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 (Q1 and Q2) were attempted rather successfully. In Q1, most parts were answered correctly except for (a) where many candidates gave 16% as the answer possibly showing they had seen the word *aéro* in *aéroglysieur* and thinking it was related to the aeroplane in the picture. Not surprisingly, quite a few candidates gave 25% as the answer to (d). Q2 was the best answered question on the paper as candidates were obviously very familiar with this vocabulary area and were able to make the right links between the descriptions of the activities in the bubbles and their counterparts in the advert.

The overlap questions discriminated very well, but were attempted with varying success. Q3 was attempted quite successfully. Many stronger candidates scored full marks here and for the weaker ones, the negative section was done much better than the positive one. Candidates lost marks however often for honing in on the wrong part of the text, for example *le printemps arrive* in the positive section and *je suis facteur depuis longtemps* and *surtout en décembre* in the negative section. Alternatively, candidates quite often repeated the examples as their answers or gave part answers such as *toujours mon travail* in the negative column thus showing a lack of understanding of the text. There was very little evidence of candidates transposing the answers in each section except for the answer *je peux aller chercher les enfants* which featured often in the negative section. The loose copying of *dangereux* was often dubious and many translated it into English, whilst in the positive section, many candidates missed out *aller* in the answer in the positive section and gave: *je peux chercher les enfants*.

Very few candidates scored very highly on Q4, the other overlap question demanding notes in French and there were more blank answers for this question than for any other. Parts (d) and (e) were completed the most successfully, but sometimes candidates gave just *tête affreux* as the answer. However, the word *temps* in the prompt was misinterpreted by quite a few candidates who gave *jouer au tennis mais le soleil* as an answer thereby showing that they had understood *temps* to mean *passé-temps* and therefore the mark could not be awarded. This was also the case in (b) where candidates very often gave *faire une promenade*, *faire du vélo* or *regarder de ma fenêtre* as an answer. A fair number of candidates coped with (a) well, but weaker ones honed in on the word *aime* in the text and matched it with the same in the question and therefore gave the answer *la pluie et le vent*. For (c), the answer (*fait*) *peur* was perfectly acceptable, but a considerable lack of knowledge of pronouns was apparent here as candidates tried to change the first person reflexive

pronoun in the text into its equivalent in the third person which resulted in such answers as: *elle se fait peur* to *ça elle fait peur*. Quite a few candidates were unable to copy words from the text correctly. This was very often the case in (b) where candidates gave the answer *orange* instead of *orage*.

The English questions (Q7 and 8) were attempted very well by the majority of candidates, but quite a few gave all the answers in French, but rarely were answers left blank. However on Q7 very few candidates scored full marks because of their answer to (a). As in past papers, the answer holidays on its own was not sufficient to gain a mark, but very few candidates wrote Easter, but instead gave summer holidays or next week and many misread the question and snatched one of the first words from the text resulting in the answer on stage. A few candidates seemed to be confused by this question and gave the answer doesn't say. Most candidates scored at least one mark in part (b), mostly for the answer mechanic, but *coiffeur* was unknown by many resulting in interpretations varying from caretaker, coffee shop, coffin maker and waiter in a café to wild guesses such as office worker, nurse and midwife. Parts (d) and (e) were attempted the most successfully, but sloppy answers in (d) such as break time, lunchtime, in the afternoon and in the middle of the day were prevalent. For (e), popular interpretations of *bibliothèque* varied from laboratory, biology lab, RE room to computer room and some guesses resulted in office and careers room. Although candidates are not judged on their English spelling, sometimes it was difficult to discern the word written. There were innumerable variations of the words mechanic and library.



## GCSE French Short Course (3226) - Paper 3H Reading and Responding

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. However, candidates on this paper tackled these questions with greater success. This was especially the case on Q1 where most candidates scored full marks showing the ability to choose the exact parts of the text required to answer the questions and to write them correctly. Also in Q4, candidates interpreted the word *temps* correctly and were discerning in their answers.

Q2 was successful, with a large number of candidates scoring full marks in (a). Those who didn't, failed to choose (ii) as a correct answer, but instead chose the others once again by snatching at individual words without understanding the whole sentence. In (b), most candidates gave *généreuse* as the right answer, but many coupled that with *sportive*. Q3, a similar test type to the previous question was attempted with varying success. Generally parts (i) and (iv) were answered the most successfully. There was no obvious pattern in the wrong answers given in the other parts which would indicate a certain amount of guesswork was involved.

This year's English question was attempted much more successfully than in previous years with very few candidates leaving answers blank or answering in French. However, in (d) there were many candidates who did answer in French and therefore did not score any marks in that section. Candidates who did well on this question were those who were able to read carefully and with attention to detail and express themselves clearly and in good English. In (a), there was ample opportunity for candidates to pick up 1 mark, but through guesswork, imprecision, poor English expression, a misinterpretation of the text or by honing in on the wrong part of the text, the following typical answers were given: you can travel; you can make new friends; you can learn a language; you can be perfect in a language; you can get good at/practise your language; you can get a beneficial experience with children; you can work with children; you only work 5 or 6 hours a day. Some candidates just mentioned the fact that it was cheap without adding the idea of getting away. Part (b) was done the most successfully by most candidates, but as in (a), there was guesswork and evidence of using words in other parts of the text to produce answers such as: how long it's for, working hours, board and lodging, garage facilities, garage for your own car. Part (c) was the least well done. Many candidates honed in on the housework vocabulary and gave answers such as: you'll have to do housework/babysitting showing that they had not understood that that was acceptable according to the text. Others clearly did not understand the word exploited in the question and interpreted it as sacked, therefore giving such answers as: if you don't do what you are asked to. Many candidates honed in on the word garage in the text and gave such answers as: you may have to stay/work/live in the garage. Those who did understand the idea that one might be asked to do too much work or work which one shouldn't do, showed a precise

understanding of the text, but unfortunately there were too many candidates who negated their correct answer by going on to give incorrect examples such as: clean the garage (instead of clear); load the dishwasher; work in the greenhouse (*grenier*). Part (d) was done very successfully by those who answered in English. There was no clear pattern of incorrect answers, though quite a few candidates gave Scotland as an answer.

## GCSE French Short Course (3226) - Paper 4C Written Coursework

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 this choice, with candidates producing good work according to their potential, and teachers administering and assessing the work very successfully. Different entry patterns in the last few years have meant that there were very few low-scoring candidates.

### 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.

Examples of successful tasks this year included:

- Use of minimal stimulus, such as bullet points
- Holidays, particularly ones where things went wrong
- School and future plans - but only when some variety was added, e.g. a description of a teacher or of the school uniform or of an ideal school
- A restaurant visit - again, especially when things went wrong
- Home town - description, history, opinions - or from an outsider's point of view
- A film or book review (but only the best candidates were successful here)
- Biography of a famous person or member of the family, with reasons given for the choice of subject
- Creative and imaginative pieces of work
- Current affairs and social issues
- 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
- School life and routine
- Descriptions of house or family
- 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 some 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 chunks of language 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 two 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 in previous years, 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: 200-250 words overall for grades G-D, and 350-400 words overall for grades C-A\*. The two units of work should be of roughly equal length, including the one done under controlled conditions.

A few 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.

Only a few centres had arranged for candidates to draft their work. If candidates do 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 again 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 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. 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. Under the heading of Knowledge and Application of Language, consideration must be given to the amount of ambiguity produced by poorly formed verbs. 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.

### **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:

- 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 an indication of topic areas chosen.
- Addition of marks should be carefully checked.
- The OPTEMS form should be completed in full, without error, and should be signed on every page.
- If separated, OPTEMS pages should be placed in their correct order.
- Absent candidates should be marked X not zero.
- It is unhelpful to moderators if work is covered in ticks and other marks.
- The sample should be arranged in candidate number order.
- If a sample candidate is absent, then the work of the next candidate on the list should be included.
- The work of the candidates with the highest and lowest marks in the centre should be included.
- Work in the folder should be in the same order as on the front sheet.
- There should be no loose pages - especially ones with no name on.

- Stimulus material should be submitted - not references to pages in a textbook.
- 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 and OPTEMS forms, it is the responsibility of centres to inform Edexcel about any changed marks.

# 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	18	15	12	10	7	5	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	18	15	12	9	6	4	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





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