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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In French (4FR1) Paper 02R: Reading and Writing

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Introduction

This June 2019 session was the first for this new specification, International GCSE French 4FR1. There were 800 students for this series. The total time allocated to this 80 mark paper was 1 hour 45 minutes. Questions 1 to 6 were compulsory, in Q7, students selected from three tasks, each worth the same number of marks. Finally, Q8, a grammar exercise, was the final question of the paper. The vast majority of students attempted all questions drawn from the five prescribed topic areas, with varying outcomes. Teachers have clearly supported their students in achieving some excellent performances with regard to the requirements of the paper.

Question 1

The format of the first question of this new specification was different to the previous specification as students had to read the text thoroughly in order to answer the six questions with multiple options. The vast majority of students did exceptionally well in this question, often scoring full marks.

Question 2

Students answered most questions well, which shows that they have practised the format of this exercise and therefore they were confident to put the correct and relevant type of word for each question. For Q2d, students had to look for the correct adjective and refer to the last section of the passage. In the same passage, the students had to find the correct verb for Q2f to complete the sentence.

Question 3

Most students scored very high marks in this question, showing excellent good grasp of the vocabulary of the topic. Students have clearly understood and applied the instructions throughout the exercise by only ticking the right name(s) per statement.

Question 4

The text of this question was well understood and this question was tackled extremely well by the majority of students. Where problems arose, this could have been in the following parts of the question:

- Q4c: Students did not note the preposition 'au lieu de' before the first time phrase mentioned in the text, which resulted in the wrong length of travel given as an answer.
- Q4d: Some students seemed to be confused between Lyon and Genève as the arrival destination.

When copying the answer, the pupils must be careful about the spelling of the words they are writing, as a mistake could make an answer wrong. In Q4f, the pupils must ensure that the answers are complete with verbal

clauses. The number of points also indicate the number of elements that needed to be written; therefore, "surpris" could not score all the marks.

Question 5

This question was met with more varied success as it was more demanding as one would expect. Those who were well-versed in question words did well whereas those who used guesswork to provide answers were unlikely to be consistently lucky. Students seemed to know their question words well on the whole and many scored well. Many students answered this question very well although there were a few examples of some answers written in English.

Most students scored well on parts Q5a, Q5c, Q5d and Q5f. On Q5b many students scored did not score the mark as their answer did not address the question which was focused on what employers do instead of what employees get. In Q5e, there were some examples of where students copied huge chunks from the text but unfortunately omitted the very part which contained the answer and put an emphasis on the adjective 'difficiles' in the question. Many students lost marks on Q5g by failing to note that the question was in the negative form and therefore some manipulation of the paragraph was necessary. With regard to Q5h, the question was not well answered as the answer must target what the law forbids and not what it allows.

When a question could be answered through a lift from the text, the pupil must ensure that the answer is complete and logical.

Question 6

This question was quite well tackled and many students chose to underline the four words which needed to be included in the written piece. Students seemed to have been well prepared on the whole for this question, with the majority successfully including the four key words in a nice logical order.

The question allowed even weaker students to score well, as they were gently and helpfully guided by four key words, but had sufficient freedom to show what they could do. Some students did not use 'émission' correctly as they linked the noun to the topic of the environment, hence the importance to check that the short piece of writing is within the scope of the topic mentioned at the top of the question.

Some of the essays in this question were truly outstanding; students writing far more than they were supposed to and including a wide range of complex structures, ideas about the media and relevant and pertinent observations. Weaker students still managed to score reasonable marks as they managed to incorporate the 4 set words judiciously in simple essays.

Question 7

In general, students approached question 7 in a serious manner and tried very hard. There was an abundance of students scoring in the 7 – 8 sections of the mark scheme with work being mostly coherent with significant evidence of accurate language. A significant number scored in the highest band because they used some more complex language and were successful with verbs as well as keeping their responses relevant and coherent.

Often the students who kept to the recommended word count were those who scored the highest marks as they were less likely to go off the point. There was often a mix up between future and conditional which cost students some valuable marks and the past tense was used with varying success though most students could express something in the past even if it was not sustained.

The bullet points that must be addressed are designed to help the students express themselves in three different time frames. Therefore, students must ensure that they write using three different time frames in order to reach the highest mark in “Linguistic knowledge and accuracy”. Some students manage to address a bullet point without using a specific time frame. By doing so, they wrote about an intention, and not a future plan, and they therefore did not take the opportunity to write using a future time frame. This could result in the use of only two time frames in the whole essay, leading to a lower mark.

Question 7a

This question was the most popular choice and the large majority of students were able to write about their region with details for each bullet points. Point four was quite challenging for some, but many had some good ideas and clearly knew the topic well. This question triggered the best essays which were generally well developed, highly structured and used a wide range of topical vocabulary and language structures. This question triggered the best essays which were generally well developed, highly structured and used a wide range of topical vocabulary and language structures. Tenses were adhered to and some personal, interesting scripts were produced.

Question 7b

This question was the second most popular question and students used a variety of tenses to address the four bullet points successfully. Most students answered with a nice clear structure, giving a number of good ideas for points two and three. Most managed to successfully convey whether one should get money to help their parents. In many cases, students drew upon a vast range of chores throughout their piece of writing. Point 4 proved to be challenging for some students as the use of the conditional tense was not successful in most cases whilst the ideas the

students wanted to convey were sensible. Overall, tenses were adhered to and some personal, interesting scripts were produced.

Question 7c

This was the least popular question and the question where most students struggled to offer a convincing piece of writing. Most students offered very good descriptions for bullet point one and three, however, they failed to draw upon the verb 'préparer' for bullet point 2 by simply write about a past birthday celebration. With regard to bullet point 4, students described their future plans for their birthday celebration instead of using the conditional tense to describe an ideal birthday celebration. It is worth noting that there was noticeable confusion between the future and conditional tenses by a significant number for point four.

Question 8

Students lost marks for this question when they have not included the auxiliary when applying the past tense, made spelling mistakes and did not use the correct gender agreements. It is important to note that some students did not answer Q8 as they might have omitted that the grammar question was the last question of the paper and not the extended essay question as per the last specification.

Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Check the spelling of their written work carefully.
- Check the verb endings of their written work carefully and revise how to form the past tense.
- The future and the conditional tenses are distinct tenses and they should be applied as such.
- All topic and subtopic areas should be given the same attention when studying and revision for paper 4FR1_02R.
- Students should practise their grammar with more consideration in order to score higher marks in the last exercise of the paper.