

GCE



**Chief Examiner's Report**  
**French**

Summer Series 2018





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Education (GCE) in French for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



## Contents

<b>Assessment Unit AS 1:</b>	Speaking	3
<b>Assessment Unit AS 2:</b>	Listening, Reading and Use of Language	4
<b>Assessment Unit AS 3:</b>	Extended Writing	9
<b>Assessment Unit A2 1:</b>	Speaking	12
<b>Assessment Unit A2 2:</b>	Listening and Reading	14
<b>Assessment Unit A2 3:</b>	Extended Writing	18
<b>Contact details:</b>		21



## GCE FRENCH

### Chief Examiner's Report

#### Assessment Unit AS 1 Speaking

##### Conditions in Schools

Examiners were, as usual, warmly welcomed and well treated by teachers, who showed their usual courtesy and hospitality, with arrangements for tea/coffee and lunch breaks much appreciated. Schools were usually helpful in providing timetables for candidates, and e-mail communication facilitated the speed and efficiency of the administration of the test. In all schools, examination conditions were very good to excellent and created positive conditions for the examiners and candidates. Teachers continue to be helpful in informing examiners of difficult cases or sensitive issues among candidates. Special arrangements made for some candidates went smoothly.

However in some instances, examiners found it extremely difficult to arrange visits because of clashes. It should be understood that it is only a clash with another language examination or oral which is sufficient grounds for refusing a visit on a given date.

Schools should also be aware that, for moderation, training and supervision purposes, the Principal Examiner, as has also been the case, may visit the oral examiner for their school in the examination room. This is a longstanding practice, commended by Ofqual. These visits are essential for quality control, the maintenance of high standards, and the smooth running of the examination. All steps are taken to ensure that the candidate(s) being examined can concentrate on their interview with the Visiting Examiner.

##### Briefing Meetings

In these meetings examiners encouraged a positive attitude to assessment and created a pleasant and sympathetic atmosphere for candidates, seeking to calm nerves. Extreme nervousness is rare, with most students able to give of their best, so this approach continues to prove its worth. They enabled candidates to get to know the examiner in a non-threatening setting, and develop a rapport with him/her, usually, and more helpfully, without the presence of the teacher.

##### Presentation

This element of the examination has proved more successful in the new format where there is no requirement to question the candidate on his/her presentation.

The quality of presentations was high, on occasions outstanding, and there were very few poor performances. It is refreshing that AO4 has been reintroduced as an assessment task. Candidates have clearly enjoyed and benefited from engaging directly with themes based on France and Francophone countries. A diverse range of topics was addressed with some interesting original choices, and provided evidence of extensive and helpful research. Some talked more about themselves than was appropriate, and others focused on narrative or were too general and factual, failing to show any personal critical engagement. One major problem that emerged was that some candidates talked well short of the three-minute requirement, and so deprived themselves of accessing the scores in the higher bands. The presentation is marked on three minutes of content.

## Conversation

The removal of questions on the presentation reduced pressure on candidates, and led to a simpler transition to the conversation test. In addition, the overall shorter length of the test made the oral a more positive experience for both candidate and examiner.

The clearer focus of the conversation element on the themes of relationships and lifestyle made the oral more manageable and was more relevant to the experience of the candidates. It meant less of a leap from GCSE to demanding issues such as university and career, although there were candidates who wished to discuss aspects of those areas and sought to lead the conversation in that direction. It should be stressed that, while the candidate is encouraged to take opportunities to lead the conversation, the overall direction of the questioning belongs to the examiner.

It is important, however, also to underline that this is a general conversation, being undertaken in French, so that questions about what they are studying in French or about France are not off limits, but rather a natural expression of the situation in which they find themselves and cannot be considered as addressing the A2 topic of school.

Overall performances in this aspect were good, with a readiness to speak without recourse to prepared speeches and an encouraging willingness to engage naturally with the examiners. There is often a clear difference in quality between a well-structured and carefully prepared presentation and the more unpredictable aspects of a conversation. Here, grammatical accuracy and knowledge of vocabulary still need to be strengthened. There is still work to be done, for instance, in developing the knowledge of tenses.

Candidates who had practised with their assistants or stayed with French families did very well. On the other hand, there were some outstanding performances by students who had never been to France. It was good to note that many students took French alongside science subjects, often achieving high marks.

## Assessment Unit AS 2      Listening, Reading and Use of Language

### Overall Performance

This paper was successful in discriminating between candidates of varying abilities and the full range of marks was used. The questions were such that the very best candidates were able to score very high marks. There were also sections of all questions that were accessible to all candidates, meaning that less able candidates could be credited for what they knew and could do.

Candidates should be advised to ensure that their response fits the requirements of the task and that they do not transcribe information from the passage that does not relate to the question posed.

Handwriting was occasionally so bad as to impede comprehension.

### Section A – Listening

This section was accessible to most candidates. A very small number of candidates infringed the rubric and answered some questions in the wrong language.

## Question 1

Overall, this question proved accessible to most candidates. Several were able to score full marks. Some candidates managed to transcribe successfully in order to answer questions but some lifted sections of language which did not address the question and therefore did not show understanding.

- (a) This question was generally very successful despite various attempts to spell *voit*. Some candidates transcribed the text and wrote *Je vois*, losing the mark.
- (b) Most candidates got the mark for this question. However, some did not understand the question word *Qui*. The spelling of *fil* caused some difficulty and some candidates failed to use *son* in front of *fil*, simply transcribing *mon fil*.
- (c) This was quite successful.
- (d) This question was challenging. A number of pupils confused the sounds so that *informé* was often mistaken for *en formé*.
- (e) This question was well answered despite various spellings of *longtemps*.
- (f) This question was generally well answered however several candidates did not recognise *poste*.
- (g) This question was well answered with regard to *pas de publicité* but *contenu* was often misspelt.
- (h) This question was generally very well done.

## Question 2

Although the question was well addressed, some candidates lifted sections of language from the passage which did not address the question and therefore did not show understanding.

- (a) This opening question was successful for most candidates although some candidates transcribed and used *my age* instead of *his age*.
- (b) This question proved challenging for many who did not understand *bulletins*.
- (c) This question was generally quite well done. Expositions caused difficulty for some.
- (d) A challenging question for many candidates. Many did not understand *tableaux*.
- (e) In this question, a number of candidates wrote alternative answers. Candidates should be advised that when alternatives are given, neither can be accepted.
- (f) This question was generally well answered, although some simply wrote that his grandmother was his best friend.
- (g) *Bricolage* proved difficult for some.
- (h) Several candidates wrote between the age of 4 and 6 and therefore lost the mark. This was a good example of the importance of reading the question carefully.
- (i) Most candidates got the idea of security although a number failed to mention her parents' divorce.
- (j) This question focused on daily routine vocabulary which is normally covered at GCSE. It serves to remind students of the importance of revising more basic vocabulary.
- (k) This question was well answered although a number of candidates indicated eating cake rather than making it.

## Section B – Reading

### Question 1

This question was successful in discriminating between candidates of varying abilities. However, marks were typically lost for cases of unsupported lifting from the text which did not answer the question.

Candidates should be advised to ensure that their response fits the requirements of the task and that they do not provide information that does not relate to the question posed. Whilst there is no obligation to rephrase as AO3 is not being assessed, candidates should be aware that lifting directly from the text will not be rewarded when it does not actually answer the question. Marks were lost where candidates failed to use the correct subject/pronoun/possessive adjective, etc. in their answers, having indiscriminately lifted entire sections from the stimulus.

- (a) This question was generally well answered with most candidates getting a mark for dans le camping but many did not mention the futur aéroport. Many referred to ce projet, which constituted lifting material which did not address the question.
- (b) This question was generally well done.
- (c) There was a mixed response to this question. A number of candidates lifted superfluous material from the text and could not be awarded the two marks.
- (d) This question was well answered although there were some examples of rephrasing which caused candidates to lose marks.
- (e) A number of candidates lifted irrelevant material to answer this question. A common example was L'opération s'était déroulée à 200 mètres de gendarmes qui n'étaient pas intervenus. A more appropriate and accurate answer would have been, Rien.
- (f) In general this was well answered although some candidates, in lifting from the text, were too vague in their answer, using a pronoun instead of sa fille or Geneviève.
- (g) This question was another example of where some candidates lifted indiscriminately from the text. For example, Elle a renouvelé son appel aux militants pour qu'ils lui rendent sa liberté. It is not clear to whom the word lui refers.
- (h) Generally, this question was well answered although some lifted without selecting the relevant information. A shorter concise answer would have been preferable, such as simply, sur les réseaux sociaux.
- (i) This question was well answered in general.
- (j) This was quite successful with most candidates getting a mark for Camille leaving the campsite. However, many wrote contrairement à son amie and no mention of Geneviève.
- (k) Most candidates got the mark.
- (l) This was a very successful question overall. However, a number of candidates could not be awarded the 2 marks because they left the word intéressants out.

## Question 2

Most candidates coped well with the translation. It is an excellent robust academic exercise which serves to discriminate amongst candidates of differing abilities. Some had difficulties with tenses, subject pronouns and possessive adjectives. A significant number lost marks through poor spelling. The most common examples were:

He skies instead of he skis  
 reccomendation instead of recommendation  
 negociate instead of negotiate  
 it's maximum volume instead of its maximum volume  
 unfortunetly instead of unfortunately.

### Section 1

This first section did not start well for many candidates who started with Since. Many candidates did not get has been falling asleep as they did not understand s'endort. Most candidates did not get is fighting and a number used to renounce instead of to give up. A number of candidates wrote his dad instead of his father.

### Section 2

A number wrote college instead of school and many candidates could not spell negotiate.

### Section 3

Many candidates did not get at bedtime. Many candidates used confesses instead of confides and most of the candidates did not understand cutting himself off and translated coupe des autres as copy the others.

### Section 4

A number of candidates did not include his before music. Many candidates erroneously spelt music in French. Duration was wrongly used by many candidates and a number translated audition as audition instead of listening.

### Section 5

This proved to be a challenging section. A number of candidates missed its before maximum volume. On sait, régler and appareil caused difficulty.

### Section 6

Some translated chance with luck and a significant number of candidates used the teens or the adolescents instead of young people. Many did not recognise accros. Most candidates did not use an appropriate verb before their phones and a significant number did not recognise jusque as until.

## Section C – Use of Language

This section again proved to be a discriminator with a wide range of performances. With the new GCSE and its greater emphasis on grammar, it is hoped that candidates will perform increasingly better in this section. It was clear that the subjunctive has been well taught in the majority of centres and the use of pronouns was also addressed well by the majority of candidates. It was evident that some grammatical terms were misunderstood or not understood. Candidates are advised to acquaint themselves with the grammatical terms

listed in the GCE French Revised Specification and in the Fact Files on the CCEA GCE Revised French Microsite.

### Question 1

A number of candidates placed an article in front of the word. For example, le sportif and le chaud.

- (a) A number of candidates used the feminine form (sportive), and lost the mark.
- (b) Chaleureux was credited as well as chaud.
- (c) Cultivé was credited as well as culturel.
- (d) Jaloux was often misspelt.
- (e) Anorexique was often misspelt as anorexic.

### Question 2

This was quite well answered however there were a number of candidates who did not manage to respect the correct word order, despite having the correct pronoun.

- (a) Some used les instead of leur.
- (b) Many mistook the word order.
- (c) Most got the correct pronoun but a number mistook the word order.
- (d) The majority got the correct pronoun but a number put le before va.
- (e) Many erroneously put avec eux instead of avec elles.

### Question 3

It was clear that some candidates were unaware of what the partitive article was. Nevertheless, many were able to fill the blanks correctly, based on the meaning of the sentence.

- (a) Some candidates got the wrong gender or used the definite article.
- (b) The most common mistake was de l'alcool.
- (c) The vast majority of candidates put des and lost the mark.
- (d) This was addressed well by a significant number of candidates.
- (e) Most candidates got des fraises.

### Question 4

Most candidates coped well, suggesting that the majority of centres have taught this area of language well.

- (a) Most candidates coped well with this question although a number chose to use the present tense instead of the subjunctive mood.
- (b) This was well answered.
- (c) Again, while most coped well with this question, a number chose to use the present tense, and not the subjunctive mood.
- (d) A number struggled with fasse.
- (e) A significant number failed to put the s on tu puisses.

## Question 5

This section was answered well by the majority of candidates. Again, gender and agreement tended to cause the most problems.

- (a) The main problem was the definite article at the start of the phrase. Also, the gender and spelling of technologies caused difficulty. The agreement of nouvelles with technologies and the word order of the adjective and noun also caused problems. There were a significant number of errors in the spelling of étudiants.
- (b) The majority of candidates got at least two marks in this section. However, there were some misspellings of avis and dégoûtant.
- (c) Les vieux caused difficulty. A significant number failed to use the passive, choosing ont oublié. A number also used ses enfants instead of leurs enfants.
- (d) A pleasing number of candidates managed to spell viennent correctly. However, en Irlande du Nord was frequently misspelt. The en also caused problems.
- (e) A pleasing number of candidates used venir de followed by an infinitive correctly. This was, however, a discriminator. Others erroneously used juste with the perfect tense.

## Assessment Unit AS 3      Extended Writing

### Overall Performance

Candidates have shown great enthusiasm in their responses to the films and texts. Their knowledge was often impressive. Teachers are to be commended, as should students, as there is much evidence in the scripts that the students are coping very well with this type of writing. There were very few less able answers.

It was evident that candidates were familiar with the requirement to address all three bullet points in turn and to develop each one with sub-points.

It would be helpful for candidates to clearly write at the top of the page which question they had chosen to answer. Some less able candidates who were storytelling rather than keeping to the points in the question did not do this and as their essay was of a general nature it was unclear at first which question they were answering.

In terms of length of answer, the shorter essays failed to fully develop points and longer answers tended to include irrelevant or repetitive material. Longer essays are also at risk under AO3.

The handwriting and general presentation of some of the work was disappointing. It is in the interest of candidates to write clear, legible answers.

It is not necessary for candidates to double space lines as this can often mean that the answer is spread over too many pages, with the use of one or two additional booklets. It is, however, advisable to leave a space between paragraphs as it helps the examiner to see the structure of the essay.

Candidates are assessed for AO2, AO4 and AO3. For further clarification of the requirements of this question, refer to the Mark Scheme grids for the three assessment objectives, the Suggested Lines of Development and Resources in Appendix 3 of the Scheme of Work and the relevant Fact Files on the CCEA French microsite.

## A02: Understanding

Candidates are expected to demonstrate their understanding of the requirements of the question by following the three bullet points given in the question. The majority of pupils had been prepared well for this component and adhered to the format of the exam by following the prescribed bullet points in the given order.

An introduction and conclusion help to give coherence to the essay but they should both be short. There is no need to repeat the exact wording of the three bullet-points in the introduction or to repeat the main points of the essay in the conclusion.

Candidates should be encouraged to aim for three sub-points for each bullet point and for a good balance between the three bullet points. They should also be encouraged to plan their answers before they start writing to avoid unbalanced answers and/or repetition. Lack of planning also leads to some messy answers.

Each sub-point should have good development but material has to relate well to the task. Candidates need to focus on key aspects of the question and avoid over-narration of plots. Storytelling which does not address the question directly will not give access to the top two bands.

## A04: Knowledge

Most candidates scored well in AO4 and were able to get into the top two Bands. Knowledge needs to focus on the specific question and be relevant. Quotations are desirable but not essential. A few appropriate quotations will enhance a response, but they need to be both relevant and accurate. Candidates need to refer to specific events in the film/text to gain access to the top two bands.

## A03: Target Language

The range of language used by the candidates was hugely varied, meaning that the weaker candidates are finding this exercise challenging. There were also examples of nearly flawless language, which was very impressive at this level. Some candidates successfully included essay-type language which gave their essay a coherent dimension and a sense of progression.

Some essays were too long and candidates penalised themselves under AO3 by failing to correct basic mistakes. Frequent grammar mistakes included lack of agreements, mixing up genders and incorrectly conjugating verbs. Some candidates resorted to using anglicisms or English words.

### Q1 Berri: Manon des sources

This is a very popular option. Many candidates, however, tend to include irrelevant material in an effort to display their knowledge of the film. Some candidates spent too much time writing about Jean de Florette and what had happened previous to the events in this film. A number of candidates were determined to write about the theme of destiny in the film. Others thought the theme of water was very important.

**(a)** This was by far the more popular question on this film. While there were some good answers, many essays suffered from not addressing the bullet points closely enough. There was also a tendency to re-tell the story and this led to candidates discussing material that was not relevant to the question.

Candidates need to bear in mind that the information they include has to relate to the bullet points.

For the first bullet point, when discussing César's responsibility, many showed

why he was responsible for Ugolin but did not deal as well with César's responsibility for his suicide by putting too much pressure on him to marry.

The second bullet point was the most successful. In the third bullet point, many candidates referred to César's conversation with Delphine and the revelations concerning Jean's identity, even though this was not relevant to the discussion of the consequences of Ugolin's suicide for César.

- (b) Very few candidates answered this question. The first bullet points was addressed quite successfully. There was good understanding of the division within the village and the fact that they turned to religion in their time of crisis.

The second and third bullet points were disappointing. Candidates referred to the miracle but did not discuss the sermon, Manon's presence in the procession or the attitude of the sceptics.

## Q2 Truffaut: Les 400 coups

This was the least popular option. Candidates answered on both Parts (a) and (b).

- (a) Candidates displayed good knowledge of the film and were able to focus on how René was always ready to help Antoine in a difficult situation, whether it was at school or when Antoine decided to leave home. They also described how René cycled to visit Antoine at the end of the film.
- (b) The first bullet point was disappointing but candidates answered well on M. Doinel's relationship with Antoine and his final rejection of his step-son.

## Q3 Camus: L'Étranger

L'Étranger is still a popular text but some candidates find it most challenging. Some attempt to analyse Meursault instead of describing events and facts.

- (a) Very few candidates chose this question, which was not very well answered. Candidates did not really refer much to key details on Meursault's journée de travail and did not include the obvious details about where he works or the fact that we receive very little detail on what he does. The second bullet point was more successful and candidates were able to discuss the conversation about the towel or Meursault's congé. The third bullet point was usually well done and candidates discussed well the issue of Meursault's promotion and his attitude towards it.
- (b) Most candidates chose this question. Some candidates addressed the question very succinctly and focused well on the bullet points of the question. However, some did not fully understand that the question was focused on Meursault's trial and recycled pre-learnt and irrelevant material. For the first bullet point, there was quite a lot of irrelevant storytelling. For the second point, some included Meursault's attitude towards love and marriage. Others retold the story too much, focusing on the shooting of the Arab in their discussion of Raymond in the third bullet point, with details that were not relevant to the question posed.

## Q4 Vigan: No et moi

This is a very popular option which produced some excellent answers. It is clear that candidates relate well to this text and find it accessible in terms of ideas and language.

- (a) Relatively few candidates chose this question. Some found the first bullet point difficult and failed to address it fully. They coped better with the second bullet point and were able to give details on No's relationship with Lou's mother, describing how No was a positive influence, how well they got on, their shared activities. They dealt less well with the last point. Some candidates got sidetracked and discussed aspects of No's relationship with Lou in general.

- (b) The majority of candidates who had studied this text answered this question. In general, the answers were better than for the other options. Even where candidates had difficulty expressing themselves accurately in French, they were able to convey the key points that were relevant to the question. The vast majority of candidates displayed impressive knowledge on all three bullet points. However, some candidates strayed off the point and discussed the relationships between Lou and Lucas or Lou and No, instead of concentrating on the young peoples' relationships with their parents.

## Assessment Unit A2 1 Speaking

### Overall Performance

Candidates' performances showed much improvement. Excellent work is being undertaken both by teachers and language assistants in many centres. Those centres that have followed the advice given in this annual report have clearly benefited.

### Conditions in Schools

Examiners were, as usual, warmly welcomed and well treated by teachers, who showed their usual courtesy and hospitality, with arrangements for tea/coffee and lunch breaks much appreciated. Schools were usually helpful in providing timetables for candidates, and e-mail communication facilitated the speed and efficiency of the administration of the test.

However in some instances, examiners found it extremely difficult to arrange visits because of clashes. It should be understood that it is only a clash with another language examination or oral which is sufficient grounds for refusing a visit on a given date.

In all schools, examination conditions were very good to excellent and created positive conditions for the examiners and candidates. Teachers continue to be helpful in letting examiners know of any difficult cases or sensitive issues among the pupils being examined. Special arrangements were made for some candidates, which went smoothly.

Schools should also be aware that, for moderation, training and supervision purposes, the Principal Examiner, as has also been the case, may visit the oral examiner for their school in the examination room. This is a longstanding practice, commended by Ofqual. These visits are essential for quality control, the maintenance of high standards, and the smooth running of the examination. All steps are taken to ensure that the candidate(s) being examined can concentrate on their interview with the Visiting Examiner.

### Briefing Meeting

Examiners are required to foster a positive attitude to assessment and create a pleasant atmosphere for candidates. Extreme nervousness is rare, with most students able to give of their best, so this approach continues to prove its worth. Briefing Meetings were successful in enabling candidates to get to know the examiner in a non-threatening setting, and develop a rapport with them, usually, and more helpfully, without the presence of the teacher. The experience of the AS oral meant that candidates were more at home with this experience.

### Introduction and Discussion

The new specification requires a one-minute introduction from the candidate before engaging in a five-minute discussion on the area chosen. It is not given a separate mark, but becomes part of the overall assessment of this element. It was clear that candidates found this a helpful beginning, allowing them to ease their way into the oral without worrying about the first question.

## **AO4**

The introduction of AO4 has been a great success, with many original and interesting choices of discussion topic. Performances were mostly good to outstanding, with many examples of personal engagement and a critical approach. It was, however, clear that some centres have mastered the preparation for this element better than others, with examples of some centres with all candidates producing largely the same discussion. This is to be discouraged, as it fails to achieve the required level of engagement and originality required for higher bands.

### **Topic Choice**

The choice of topic is, of course, important, and it should be underlined that it needs to be well-focused, but broadly conceived. It would be impossible to list the large variety of interesting and innovative topics that were presented. Topics ranged from a region to politics and culture. The Occupation and the Resistance during the Second World War remain popular.

The Discussion should not be based on a single film or text. For further clarification of the requirements of the Discussion, refer to the following documents available on the CCEA microsite:

- The Specification which states that
- “Students must not choose a topic for their introduction and discussion that relates to the AS 1 topic or the set works studied for AS 3 and A2 3. Teachers must authenticate this on the Summary Sheet” ;
- the A Level French Clarification document ; and
- the December 2017 Circular, which states that
- “The discussion should be on a general theme and should not focus on a single film, text or individual. Set works should not be used in the discussion section at A2. Texts and films can be used to illustrate a cultural aspect but the discussion must have a broader focus. In addition to this, it must contain a cultural aspect not one singular entity.”

### **Discussion Content**

While most candidates understand that the discussion is not a presentation in disguise, and that interaction is the key, not all centres have resisted the temptation to prepare mini speeches which the candidate then seeks to deliver, come what may, in response to a question on that topic. The list of points sent in beforehand merely indicates to the examiner the candidate’s focus, and the parameters of the discussion, Candidates should realise that examiners are trained not to facilitate the use of prepared material recited in order. In any case not all areas indicated may be dealt with within the time allotted.

### **Discussion Performance**

The emphasis is on the candidates’ capacity to respond to questions about their subject clearly, logically and confidently, in reaction to the examiner, and to make judgements on the question asked, not the one that they would like to have been asked and have prepared earlier. Prepared speeches do not gain significant credit. However, the vast majority have taken these points on board and have performed well.

## Conversation

Examiners commented on many outstanding performances. Most candidates were keen to speak in a positive, confident way and were well prepared. There were few weak performances, with most reaching band three of the mark scheme, however this exercise remains a discriminator.

However, once this open-ended exercise begins, some cannot sustain the level they achieved in the discussion, especially as regards grammatical accuracy, the range of idiom and vocabulary and the capacity to move between different tenses. In some cases there is a tendency for candidates to try to drop in quaint French idiomatic phrases which are wholly inappropriate for this exercise and foreign to normal conversational speech.

## Conversation Content

Most candidates realised that they would not be quizzed on the A2 topics, although they might arise naturally, and would be able to talk about themselves, their interests and their plans, moving beyond basic information to talking at a high level, although few took the initiative to lead the conversation. There should be no misunderstanding that candidates can more or less dictate the kind of topic that is mentioned by the examiner and spend the majority of time on that, whereas examiners are instructed to be wide-ranging in their questions and deal with a range of issues.

Those who have not scored highly have merely deployed memorised biographical information delivered in a pedestrian manner, and others were unprepared to reflect on their interests beyond stating what they do. Candidates should be encouraged to evaluate, criticise and react emotionally to the topics raised and to develop their answers. Only complex responses gain the highest marks.

Candidates who had practised with their assistants or stayed with French families did very well. On the other hand there were, as ever, some outstanding performances by students who had never been to France. It was also good to note that many students took French alongside science subjects, often achieving high marks.

## Assessment Unit A2 2      Listening and Reading

### Section A – Listening

#### Question 1

This question proved accessible to the majority of candidates. There were, however, some problems when candidates simply transcribed sounds without understanding the meaning.

- (a) This question was very successful for most candidates although several candidates had difficulty in spelling *compagnon* or got the gender wrong.
- (b) This question was generally very successful with most candidates getting the two marks despite the poor spelling of *loyer*.
- (c) This question had mixed results because the candidates could not spell *ouvrier*, often transcribed as *touvrier*. *Infirmière* also caused difficulty for many.
- (d) Many candidates were successful in getting two marks for this question. A number of candidates began with *tu* and some did not recognise *t’habiller*, transcribing it as *tabier*.
- (e) This question was very successful and most candidates got the two marks. Most got *les enfants s’amusent* despite some poor spelling of the verb and nearly all mentioned *le jardin et la piscine*.

- (f) This question proved to be quite a good discriminator at the end. There was a lot of transcribing of the text before getting the answer and some candidates failed to get to the point.

## Question 2

This question was generally well done, although many candidates wrote very long answers, transcribing most of what they heard. Although candidates will not be penalised for superfluous material, they need to address the question posed.

- (a) This question proved more challenging than expected as many candidates did not include about before 20 days.
- (b) The vast majority of candidates managed to get the two marks for this question. A number did miss the figure 92 and some missed the word average in front of salary, putting minimum instead.
- (c) This question proved challenging. Most candidates got the idea of no access to the internet, some got the idea of them being cut off from the world but few recognised colonies de vacances.
- (d) This question was generally successful in that many candidates got the idea of the children having to walk a long distance to school. However, many candidates failed to include the one quarter before the children who are not educated.
- (e) Most candidates were able to say that they have to build a school in a limited amount of time but some failed to understand that they were helped by local workers.
- (f) This question was generally well done.
- (g) This question proved to be challenging for some candidates as they just said he talked to the local people but did not include the idea of him enjoying the talking. Others did not get the idea of them understanding each other, simply saying that he or they were easy to understand.
- (h) This final question of the paper was generally well done by most candidates.

## Section B – Reading

This section was accessible to candidates of varying abilities who were able to respond positively to all questions. It was successful in discriminating between candidates and there was a wide range of marks.

### Question 1

The full range of marks was used. Some candidates still have difficulty in recognising the grammatically correct option that needs to be used to fill the gap.

- (a) This was generally well done.
- (b) The words for Parts (b) and (c) were sometimes given the wrong way round.
- (c) This was generally well done.
- (d) This was generally well done.
- (e) Réussite was sometimes used instead of santé.
- (f) This was generally well done.
- (g) Réussite was sometimes used instead of attrait.
- (h) This was generally well done although some candidates used the word santé.

- (i) This was usually well done.
- (j) This was generally well done although some candidates used *comparer* instead of *respecter*.

## Question 2

Candidates responded well to this question and marks were generally quite high. Some candidates still think it is similar to the old AS paper and tried to change the vocabulary and sometimes failed to get the true meaning.

Candidates should be reminded that their response needs to be an answer to the question posed. While phrases from the stimulus may be used, they have to answer the question appropriately. No credit can be given if the lifting from the text does not answer the question. Marks were lost when candidates lifted from the text without tailoring their response to the question.

- (a) This question was generally very successful with most candidates getting one or two marks, usually for *ils se sentent étrangers* and *ils se retrouvent sans travail*.
- (b) This question was generally very successful for the first mark, *ils veulent faire de l'action humanitaire*. However, some candidates failed to mention *les nouveaux masters dans la solidarité*.
- (c) This question was well done. Most candidates managed to get the two marks.
- (d) This question was generally successful.
- (e) This question proved more challenging. There was a lot of lifting without selection, which failed to answer the question. Some candidates simply repeated the answer to Part (d).
- (f) This question was very successful overall although some candidates left out the idea of being badly paid.
- (g) Most candidates got the two marks for this question.
- (h) This final question was quite successful and most candidates got the mark for the idea of doing a course to help them find work.

## Question 3

This was the first year of this exercise and examiners were pleased to report a very positive response to this new question. Teachers had obviously followed the advice given on the CCEA microsite and had trained their candidates to answer appropriately.

The vast majority of candidates respected the word limit and the sequencing of the five paragraphs. The majority also wrote separate paragraphs, although there were a few who wrote one continuous piece. Candidates should be encouraged to reproduce the layout of the original stimulus and skip a line between paragraphs.

The quality of English was very satisfactory overall despite a few spelling mistakes and most candidates understood the passage.

On the whole, the topic specific A-Level vocabulary (*bidonvilles*) was better known than basic GCSE vocabulary (*le fils aîné*).

## Section 1

This was generally well done, with candidates understanding the Algerian roots of the Bey family, although a few thought that they were on the way back to France.

## Section 2

This was generally well done, although some candidates thought the war had lasted 90 years or that Bouteflika had brought reconciliation after the war.

## Section 3

This section proved more difficult and several candidates did not get the idea of the wealth brought about by oil. Poverty was sometimes referred to as precarity, uncertainty or fear.

## Section 4

This section was quite well done although not everyone got the idea of prices going up. Some thought prices went up in France.

## Section 5

This section was generally well done despite a few candidates mentioning Mohamed's daughter and not his son. Some also thought that Mohamed himself would come back and start a business.

## Question 4

The prose is an excellent discriminator and was generally well done. There were some very high marks. There was evidence students had been well prepared to cope with the more complex idioms and structures. However, it was again the basic vocabulary that caused difficulty for many candidates.

Some candidates omitted sentences, not because they could not do them, but because they hadn't read the text properly or checked it. Reading the whole text before starting to translate is an important examination technique, as is checking it afterwards.

## Section 1

A successful section overall. Many candidates did not get cadette but made up for it with ma petite sœur. Common errors included the wrong tense, the structure of demande, the spelling of chien, and ans for année.

## Section 2

This section was very successful. A couple of candidates used the vous form and some had problems with the spelling of tu es.

## Section 3

This section was more challenging. Forming a question with qui proved problematic for some. Several candidates had difficulty with Ne t'inquiète pas! Promener also caused difficulty, with several candidates using marcher. Some did not attempt to use a pronoun and simply repeated le chien. A number of candidates attempted the subjunctive when translating before getting the bus.

## Section 4

This section was quite successful in parts. Many did get Je promets de or they used Je promets que je le ferai. The vast majority of candidates managed même en hiver. However, As-tu pensé aux vacances ? caused problems as candidates used des vacances instead of aux. A number missed en Espagne, using à l'Espagne or even espagnol.

## Section 5

This section was generally very well done. Some candidates did not translate we can't take and simply wrote nous ne prenons pas. The most common mistakes were the translation when we go as quand nous allons and the spelling of à l'étranger.

## Section 6

This section proved quite challenging. Very few candidates managed a eu, writing await instead. A number went for une chatte but forgot about the agreements in the rest of the passage. Many had difficulty with notre voisin and struggled to translate to feed her. There were errors with pendant notre absence and some candidates rephrased it as quand nous ne sommes pas ici.

## Section 7

This section was generally well done. Examiners were pleased to report that many candidates got qu'il le ferait correct. Some got the word order wrong for Julie a vite décidé and qu'elle a voulu was frequently used instead of qu'elle voulait. Several candidates used vitement for vite. The word shelter proved the most challenging.

## Assessment Unit A2 3 Extended Writing

### Overall Performance

Examiners were impressed by the quality of the responses in this paper. There were some excellent essays and fewer very poor performances.

Candidates' performances had, on the whole, improved in all assessment objectives, perhaps due to the reintroduction of literature at AS. It seems that the new AS prepares candidates better for the requirements of A2 literature and the progress made from AS to A2 was evident. Candidates were more confident writing literature essays, more aware of the importance of structuring their essay and more at ease using quotes and other contextual references.

It is not necessary for candidates to double space lines as this can often mean that the answer is spread over too many pages, with the use of one or two additional booklets. It is, however, advisable to leave a space between paragraphs as it helps the examiner to see the structure of the essay.

Candidates are assessed for AO2, AO4 and AO3. For further clarification of the requirements of this question, refer to the Mark Scheme grids for the three assessment objectives, the Suggested Lines of Development and Resources in Appendix 6 of the Scheme of Work and the relevant Fact Files on the CCEA French microsite.

### A02: Understanding

There was a pleasing improvement in this aspect of the question. Most essays showed a clear structure, with minimum repetition and no irrelevant material. However, candidates should be reminded that pre-learnt answers which do not answer the question directly will not gain access to the top two bands.

### A04: Knowledge

Most candidates scored well in AO4 and were able to get into the top two Bands. Knowledge needs to focus on the specific question and be relevant. Quotations are

desirable but not essential. A few appropriate quotations will enhance a response, but they need to be both relevant and accurate. However, because of the nature of the option studied, quotations are an inherent part of a response on poetry or the response will be of a general nature.

### **A03: Target Language**

Overall, the standard was good, with very few candidates placed below Band 3. There were some impressive answers, with candidates displaying an excellent command of language, with frequent examples of idiomatic language and complex structures.

Some essays were too long and candidates penalised themselves under A03 by failing to correct basic mistakes.

#### **Q1 Mauriac: Thérèse Desqueyroux**

Both questions were chosen equally. Overall, candidates displayed a very good knowledge of the text and were able to focus on certain key aspects of their chosen question. There were some very pleasing, well structured, balanced essays which suggested the candidates had really engaged with what many perceive to be a challenging novel.

- (a) Candidates wrote at length about their childhood, their different upbringings and interests. Thérèse's reactions to Anne's letters and her wish to destroy Anne's happiness were also very well done. However, some candidates then resorted to simple storytelling in presenting their attitudes towards Marie, describing Thérèse's lack of maternal feelings but failing to explain Anne's condemnation of this indifference. Some candidates simply focused on the differences between the two characters.
- (b) This was less successful. Some candidates just focused on the differences between the two families and barely mentioned what they had in common, other than they were both bourgeois. Others lost the focus of the question and simply described differences between various members of the families. The better candidates were able to explore their common fear of scandal and their attitude towards Thérèse after her crime.

#### **Q2 Pagnol: La Gloire de mon père**

This is a popular text but it can lend itself to storytelling if candidates are not careful.

- (a) This was the more popular of the two questions. Candidates described Joseph's role in teaching Marcel essential life skills, Marcel's admiration for his father but surprisingly, some did not go on to describe the change in Marcel's view of his father before and after the hunt.
- (b) This question was quite successful, with candidates explaining the differences between Jules and the Pagnol family and the role played by Jules in Marcel's discovery of the weaknesses of adults in general and of his father in particular.

#### **Q3 Prévert: A selection of poems**

This was the most successful text, with the majority of candidates displaying an impressive, detailed knowledge. Some candidates were able to present the themes in general terms but did not illustrate them sufficiently from their chosen poems.

A number of candidates did not structure their answers around the theme they were asked to consider, simply listing three poems in their introduction and dealing with each one in a separate paragraph. Inevitably, this meant that their answers included much repetition and irrelevance, as they were presenting the same themes in two or three of the poems. It also caused them to lose focus of the question,

simply regurgitating pre-learnt material, which included irrelevant material on style. Candidates should be encouraged to focus on the question and use their knowledge of the poems to illustrate the themes they wish to develop. The point should be made first then illustrated from the poems and developed, using the PEE approach to essay writing.

- (a) Candidates focused on *Page d'écriture*, *Le Cancre* and *En sortant de l'école*. They were able to focus on Prévert's sympathy for the children and his dislike of authority as represented by the teachers.
- (b) This was the most successful question, with some candidates displaying a remarkable level of knowledge and understanding. Many were able to draw from more than three poems and answers were illustrated by quotations from *Sur le champ*, *Le Discours sur la paix*, *Tout s'en allait*, *Barbara* and *L'Ordre nouveau*. Prévert's sympathy for the victims, his descriptions of the destruction caused by bombs, his attitude towards the soldiers and his condemnation of politicians and profit-making warmongers were all presented with a high degree of coherence.

#### **Q4 Sartre: Les Mains sales**

- (a) Candidates focused appropriately on Hoederer's negotiations with Le Prince and Karsky and the question of the ends and the means, contrasting Hoederer's pragmatic attitude and Hugo's idealistic and simplistic views on the questions of telling lies and using violent means. However, some lost the focus on their political ideas and dwelt on their different personalities.
- (b) This was generally less successful. Some candidates focused on the differences between Jessica and Olga. Others wrote on her relationship with Hugo and very little else. The better answers explored her role in throwing the bomb in an attempt to save Hugo's reputation and thus preventing him from accomplishing his task and her role at the end of the play when she had to reveal the Party's new political line, which led to his disillusionment and suicide.

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