



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**EDUQAS FRENCH
GCSE**

SUMMER 2019

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<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en>

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Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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FRENCH

GCSE

Summer 2019

COMPONENT 1: SPEAKING

General Comments

We would like to thank all teachers who conducted the tests and uploaded the recordings. This is a considerable undertaking that was undertaken professionally and appropriately.

Most centres were aware that Eduqas allocates the specific set of questions for each candidate and adhered to the downloaded list.

On page 3 of the Teacher Examiner's copy of the tests there is the convention for introducing candidates at the start of their test. Please adhere to this to ensure clear identification of the candidate, as centres have different ways of labelling files.

Centres make their own arrangements for the conduct of the tests and it is accepted that centres have variable facilities for carrying out the tests. Unfortunately, there continue to be issues with recordings, though fewer this year, and this causes difficulties for examiners. One issue is with noise: either from outside the recording room, or from the examiner shuffling papers, or writing during the test, all of which are a distraction to the candidate. The second issue is the quality of recording. Issues here include: the quiet candidate, the candidate speaking indistinctly or the volume contrast between examiner and candidate. The positioning of the recorder must always favour the candidate.

Timings play a crucial part in the administration of the tests to ensure all candidates have the same opportunity. These timings are laid out in the Teacher Examiner's booklet. The role plays take as long as they take to complete but the photo card and conversation have defined durations and there is a fixed overall length. Candidates taking less than the recommended time for a section may be unable to access the full range of marks, while material beyond the stated overall duration of the test is not assessed. Even within a centre there could be wide variations in the duration of tests.

At the end of the tests, centres were responsible for uploading the recordings and scanned copies of the candidates' declaration. Again, this was carried out reliably in most centres.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Role Play

Candidates have time to prepare the role play beforehand and to think about what they are going to say. To help them do this they must read carefully both the setting and the cues to ensure they have understood the potential nature of the task, for example in Higher role play 2 the sub-theme is stated as "Home and Locality" so references to Paris are irrelevant. Candidates must remember they are playing a role. Cues on the candidate's card are intended to give indicative content only and candidates must listen very carefully to the teacher examiner's cue each time. Candidates focused regularly on a specific word/phrase in the cue, a time expression, for example, and used a pre-learnt sentence that was good French but not appropriate for the context.

Amongst the role plays those on Global Sustainability seemed to cause problems with content and certain vocabulary items were not widely known e.g. *déménager*. In Higher role play 7 candidates rarely realised that the *fête* they chose in cue 1 was the subject of cues 2 and 3.

This year teacher examiners seemed more conscious of the speed at which they read the cues, especially the unseen question and at Foundation Tier.

The introduction to the teacher examiner's script states clearly that the French cues must not be rephrased but read as printed, except when an appropriate response is requested. It is not acceptable for teacher examiners to give undue emphasis to particular words or to reiterate specific question words on their own once they have read the cue.

Across the role plays some issues kept recurring. The following advice is offered to help improve candidate achievement.

As regards the candidate:

- a) Candidates must listen carefully to what the teacher examiner says to determine exactly what is being asked for in order to answer appropriately, examples being Foundation role play 1 cue 3 which mentioned receiving messages instead of sending them or Higher role play 8 cue 2 where the tense was important.
- b) Linked to the point above was the very poor knowledge of question words, notably *quand* and *combien*. Similarly, *depuis* challenged candidates. Again, some good French missed the point entirely. This is an area candidates need to practise more.
- c) Candidates continued to give more detail than was necessary for the task. In the context of the role play a "complete response" means a sentence rather than a phrase. Answers need to be precise and need provide only the information requested to achieve full marks. For example, Foundation role play 2 cue 3 only required a time expression; how and with whom were not necessary. In particular, there is no need to offer an opinion every time, only when specified. Please see the sample assessment materials.
- d) Candidates continued to have specific difficulties when required to ask a question. Some seemed unaware the cue meant them to ask a question at that point. Some thought any random question would do. Candidates often seemed unfamiliar with the various interrogative expressions and how to structure the question. To fulfil this task candidates are expected to form a sentence using an appropriate interrogative word and will probably need to repeat a key word from the cue.

As regards the examiner:

- a) There were instances of the teacher examiner misreading or omitting cues, leaving the candidate confused, thus leading to a wrong, or no, response.
- b) It disrupts the flow of the dialogue when the examiner comments on each response and causes confusion when extra questions are asked.

Photo Card Discussion

The photo card has two questions that candidates can prepare before the test and two unseen ones. Therefore, candidates should be preparing extended descriptions of the picture and wider content for the other prepared questions.

All too often candidates continued to provide a limited description and one or two points for the other questions. The published mark scheme clearly refers to “detail” so in the test candidates must be prepared to expand beyond a single sentence, unlike in the role play. Sometimes candidates were encouraged to develop answers by the teacher examiner reiterating the other parts of the question *Pourquoi ?*, *Justifie ton opinion*, while others inserted extra questions from the same sub-theme to elicit further information. On the other hand, there was a tendency in some centres for the teacher to remain silent when the candidate stopped speaking and not move on. Without guidance the candidate tried to expand and often got into difficulties.

The other strand in the mark scheme is “relevance” and candidates need to remain focused on the question. Therefore, candidates using the first question to give personal information (e.g. on their own holidays or family), or to give a personal opinion of the photo, are not giving relevant information. Similarly, though the additional Foundation Tier questions give scope for personal responses, Higher Tier questions lend themselves more to a generic, third person discussion. Questions that ask for *aspects négatifs* or *aspects positifs* require a focus on the one aspect not on a mixture.

Amongst the photo images, there were matters arising with two of them. In set 7 candidates often focused on recycling rather than litter picking/pollution and in set 8 candidates often referred to homework/schoolwork when the sub-theme clearly stated “Jobs and Future Plans”.

Particular questions led to problems for some candidates. In Higher set 2 *emploi du temps* was not well known and *emploi* became the focus. In Higher set 6 candidates often did not focus on *Jouer d'un instrument de musique* but on *musique*. In the next question candidates usually omitted the *sorte* element from *sorte de concert* and ignored the conditional tense, instead describing a concert they had been to. In Higher set 7, in question 2 the emphasis on pollution where they lived, *chez toi*, was overlooked and in set 9 question 3 *pendant les fêtes* was often ignored when discussing the importance of food.

Candidates should be aware of the need to use tenses as required by the mark scheme. Question 4 is the focus of this thread and candidates should try to expand answers to show more than one example of tense usage. The open nature of this question, using questions like *Quel* or *Comment*, invites a detailed description, for example, in Foundation set 3, *le weekend dernier* allows for several activities over two days!

One language issue stood out this year. This was the widespread attempt to use a sort of present continuous tense, for example *il est jouer* or *elle est porter*.

Conversation

The conversation accounts for half of the marks for the test and allows candidates greater control of the content discussed. The conversation must discuss two distinct broad themes and should cover four sub-themes. Issues arising were:

- A clear introduction by the candidate is most helpful showing it is the candidates own choice of topic. It also shows the progression from the photo card to the conversation.

- Most centres followed the correct procedure for choosing the part 2 theme, but not all which means part of the conversation was not relevant.
- The two sub-themes were not given equal time.

Popular sub-topics with candidates were self and family and school, topics familiar to candidates. They seemed to realise that parts 1 and 2 need equal treatment to gain high marks. Unfortunately, performance in the conversation was at times in noticeable contrast to the previous two sections.

In the main teacher examiners conducted the test in a way that brought out the best in their candidates, choosing aspects of the themes that interested the candidate and tailoring questions to the appropriate level of ability. However, it would be expected that different candidates would be asked different questions on the same sub-theme.

In this section of the test there were many excellent, high calibre discussions in both tiers that showed a high standard of French throughout the test. Many candidates were able to cover a great deal of material, sometimes speaking with confidence. In the main, and particularly at the Higher Tier, candidates answered the teacher examiner's questions in full detail while demonstrating a good understanding of the present, past, future and conditional tenses. The use of the past tenses (perfect and imperfect) was particularly impressive in this part of the test. This was facilitated by the wider use of open questions.

The most successful conversations were interactive and spontaneous while some included idioms such as *Quelle barbe!*, *Ce n'est pas mon truc*, or *Ça coule les yeux de la tête* along with examples of the subjunctive.

Interaction is an assessment criterion and as such expects teacher examiners to develop a theme with a candidate, to ask follow-up questions based on what the candidate has just said rather than ask a series of disconnected questions or allow candidates to present long pieces of pre-learnt material.

Summary of key points

Communication

Though only specifically assessed in the conversation, pronunciation affects the clarity of communication throughout. Still an issue were *gens/jeunes* and *ados/adultes* but verb endings were often mispronounced as were words common to both languages.

Language, Knowledge and Application

Candidates should always attempt to use full sentences and this was generally evident. The ability to use time references is also important, most obviously with tenses. However, candidates should have the opportunity to provide a number of examples to confirm their ability. Something less widespread was the use of "complex structures", whether grammar items like *celui, le quel, après avoir*, or complex sentence patterns; however, *bien que* with a subjunctive was a welcome inclusion. The use of idiomatic French was also rare and confined to certain expressions in certain centres. The lack of complexity and idiom in their French often let down students giving an otherwise excellent account of themselves and many did give a good account.

FRENCH
GCSE
Summer 2019
COMPONENT 2: LISTENING

General Comments

Although some candidates at both Foundation and Higher tiers found aspects of the examination quite challenging, most candidates attempted every question and the majority were entered for the correct tier for their ability level.

A small number did not follow the rubrics correctly and answered in English instead of French (Foundation Tier Question 7 (b)/Higher Tier Question 1 (b) and Higher Question 6 Section 1 and Section 2).

There were some spelling errors in both English and French e.g. Foundation Question 5 (d) “tiring” and Foundation Question 9 (a)/ Higher 3 (a) “apprenticeship”, Question 6 Section 1 *nettoyer, ordures, prix*. On a few occasions, the candidates’ poor handwriting made their answers difficult to read.

As there were fewer numbers included in this year’s examination, they rarely caused a problem. A small number of candidates did not understand *Quand tu auras dix-huit ans* (Higher Tier Question 8) and offered answers with a time, e.g. “grounded for 18 hours” or “cannot go out after 6pm”.

Most candidates were well prepared for the questions requiring one or two answers, carrying 1 or 2 marks. However, some candidates are still giving too many alternative answers, thus losing marks unnecessarily, e.g. Foundation Question 8(e)/Higher Question 2(e) “she is hard working” - many added incorrect answers such as “and considerate or hopeful”.

Some candidates may not be familiar with the negative expressions found in the transcript to answer Foundation Tier Question 6 (*défendu, interdit*), Foundation Tier Question 8/Higher Tier Question 2 (*pas encore*) and Higher Tier Question 9 (*ne pas aller*).

As in former years, there was evidence of good examination practice and candidates had obviously been prepared thoroughly for the examination by their teachers. Many candidates had made good use of the allocated reading time by highlighting and underlining rubrics and mark allocations and noting key vocabulary under pictures and questions. Others had written ‘IN FRENCH’ below the questions that required answers in French.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1 This is a multiple-choice question requiring candidates to identify key points from a short passage. The extracts are short, simple and straightforward and contain common and familiar vocabulary. As is to be expected, candidates answered this question very well.

- Q.2 (a)** This question requires candidates to identify the overall message from a short, spoken text containing common and familiar vocabulary. This question was not answered correctly by a considerable number of candidates. Although the required answer was global in nature, i.e. “her leisure time”, the most common answer given was “reality TV” which was not granted a mark.
- (i)** This question requires candidates to provide one word/short answer responses. Many candidates heard “*Danse avec les stars*” and gave answers such as “watching dance shows on TV”, “watching *Strictly come dancing*” or “*Dance with the stars*” which were granted a mark. Some candidates gave the incorrect answer “dance” or “dancing”.
- (ii)** This question requires candidates to provide one word/short answer responses. “reads” and “draws” were the required answers for 2 marks but 1 mark was granted for “watching cooking shows” since she may have watched it to decide she did not like the programme. Some candidates answered incorrectly “cooking or doing a quiz” (and *quizzing* for *cuisine*). Although the correct answer “she reads” was often given, not many candidates understood *dessiner*, with some thinking Pauline was watching *dessins animés* – cartoons on TV.
- (iii)** This question requires candidates to provide one word/short answer responses. The required answer was “goes out/going out with friends”. Some candidates may have known the infinitive of the verb *sortir* but not the present tense, first person *je sors*, so offered incorrect guesses such as “watch TV with friends”, “be with/sees/meet friends”. A few candidates mistakenly thought they had heard *sœur* (*sors*) and offered the incorrect answer “hanging out with her friends and her sister”.
- Q.3** This is a multiple-choice question requiring candidates to identify key points from a short passage. The sentences are slightly longer but with straightforward and familiar vocabulary and some opinions. Candidates answered this question with ease.
- Q.4** This is a multiple-choice question requiring candidates to identify key points from a longer spoken passage. The structures are more complex and some vocabulary is less common. Candidates found this question a little more challenging and did not understand *valise*.
- Q.5** This question consists of a longer spoken passage requiring one-word answers in English. Some deduction is required e.g. (b) which proved a stretch for many candidates who did not understand the negative *je ne sortais pas*.

Section 1

- (a)** Although a considerable number of candidates answered correctly with early “start”, many lost the mark by adding “of the journey” (false friend: *la journée*). A few answered *the early* “morning” (singular) which could not be granted a mark whilst “the *early... mornings*” (plural) was accepted for one mark.

- (b) Many candidates thought the answer required a time, so answers such as “noon” “12 o’clock” and “1 pm” were often given. A high number answered “the café”. Very few candidates answered this question correctly with “school”. Some pupils may be more familiar with stating they eat their lunch “in school” rather than “at school”.

Section 2

- (c) This question was answered correctly with “homework” by most candidates, although many just answered “work” which could not be granted a mark.
- (d) This was generally answered correctly, although some candidates gave the answer “tired” which is grammatically incorrect in English.
- (e) This was generally well answered although some lost the mark by adding another epithet such as “considerate/helpful”. This was an alternative incorrect answer resulting in the correct answer being debited with a minus 1.

- Q.6** This multiple-choice question consists of a longer spoken passage with various tenses. Some of the vocabulary is more complex although it is a contemporary theme which is quite familiar to candidates. The difficulty here proved to be the negative expressions *défendu*, *mais pas* and *interdit*. Some candidates did not understand these negative expressions which explains the number incorrect answers “plastic packaging” and “books”.

Section 1

“Cardboard”, (ii) “glass bottles” and (iv) “plastic bottles” were ticked correctly by a high number of candidates. However, many selected (ii) “plastic packaging” instead of (iv), not understanding the negative *défendu* and sometimes (v) “tin cans” was selected instead of (ii) “glass bottles”: the candidates may not have heard or understood the negative form *mais pas*...

Section 2

This was answered well by most candidates. Again, the box next to books was ticked when candidates may not have understood *nous interdit*...

Q.7 F.T/Q.1 H.T

This question is a longer spoken passage which in the first instance requires the candidate to recognise the overall message. This type of answer is proving difficult for many candidates at both levels who are unable to deduce the global message of the passage.

Often, candidates gave the correct answers but allocated them to the incorrect person i.e. Bernadette was not allowed out.

- (a) This question requires the candidate to identify the overall message which many failed to do. A considerable number of candidates answered “their weekends/going out this weekend/their weekend plans” without making any reference to “(issues with) parents”.
- (b) Louis – issue: this was generally answered correctly but a high number of candidates answered “he cannot go out” which could not be granted a mark as they did not explain the reason why, e.g. “his parents not allowing him to”.

Louis – solution: many answered “clean his room” instead of “tidy his bedroom” which was accepted for 1 mark.

Bernadette – issue: many answered “she cannot buy the clothes she likes” or “her parents won’t let her buy the clothes she likes”, both incorrect answers. Some candidates did not answer anything in that box and some candidates entered their answer, sometimes correct, in the wrong box, vertically instead of horizontally.

Bernadette – solution: this proved challenging to many candidates; *propres* was often translated as “clean/to clean” “proper” and “to own”, so many answers included “buy clean clothes”, “get her clothes cleaned”, “buy proper clothes” and “own new clothes”. Un *petit boulot* was sometimes translated as “a small job” which was not accepted for part-time work.

Q.8 F.T/Q.2 H.T

This question proved difficult for many candidates. The spoken passage is extended and contains less common vocabulary. A certain amount of deduction is required for section 1(a).

Section 1

- (a) “Replying to an ad” or “about a job advert” was often answered correctly although at times, candidates gave too many alternative answers and lost the mark. Common incorrect answers included “about her new job in France” “looking for a babysitter for her children” “teaching languages to children” or just “talking about children”.
- (b) This was well answered by many candidates when an accurate answer to the question was offered, such as “to be polite” or “politeness”. It is worth noting that the word given as an answer MUST make sense grammatically, hence the adjective “polite” on its own did not gain a mark. Many candidates answered incorrectly “discipline” or “be disciplined” or lost the mark when they offered 2 answers “politeness” (correct +1) and “discipline” (incorrect -1).

Section 2

- (c) Negative expressions again prove a difficult structure in this question. Very few candidates answered “not (yet) bilingual” accurately. Many candidates did not hear or understand the negative form *pas encore*. This was often answered with a level number – level 1 to level 8 or anything from “good” to “bad” to “pretty good”, “not bad”, “fluent” and “bilingual”.
- (d) This question was answered correctly by a good number of Higher Tier candidates although many did not mention “speak very well” and answered “speak better in French” or “will be very good at French” and lost the mark.
- (e) This question was generally answered correctly.

Q.9 F.T/Q.3 H.T

Section 1

- (a) Many candidates did not understand or hear the negative form of *ne pas aller en fac*. Some did not know what *fac* meant and thought it was a business/company name or a festival. Some interpreted the message as “dropping out of university”.

The candidates who answered correctly that Céline was “going to do an apprenticeship” found spelling the word difficult – apprenticle, apprentishop, apprenteship, aprentaship, appretenship and even apprentice ship in two words. A few candidates answered she was going to “be an entrepreneur next year” and “start her own business”.

- (b) This question was answered adequately with convoluted answers sometimes although many just answered that “uni gave more opportunities for the future/educated for future jobs” which was not enough for 1 mark. An amusing answer given was “uni is a good opportunity to be a diplomat/get a diplomacy” (for the French *diplôme*).

Section 2

- (c) Candidates found this section quite difficult and were unable to get the message across that studying and working could be done simultaneously. Many candidates mistook *journée de travail* for “journey to work” and responded by “she’ll study on her way to work/her work journey”. Others stated that she would “study at the end of the apprenticeship year” rather than her working day. “Learning whilst working or on the job” was answered by many candidates accurately.

Section 3

- (d) (i) Common incorrect answer of “she will be more responsible” instead of “she will have more responsibility”
- (ii) Common incorrect answer of “she will have more money than him” often given instead of “she will earn more than him”. Some candidates thought they had to give one detail for Céline and one for Daniel so (ii) was often answered with “Daniel will sit his exams”.

HIGHER TIER

- Q.4 Overall, this question was answered well, even when candidates had to deduce from the negative *il n’est pas trop sucré* in (d).

Section 1

- (a) The most common incorrect answer was “she couldn’t resist it” as candidates wrote the first thing they heard. The word *Imagine* was the word which indicated something which surprised her. Few candidates answered this question correctly. *cœur* was often thought to refer to “curd” and other answers included “creamy, very soft, expensive” and when “heart” was understood, answers varied from “good for the heart”, “they put their heart into it”, “touched her heart” to answers about shape such as “weird shape” and “swirly”.
- (b) “He does not like cheese much” answered correctly by many while other answers were pure guess work: “it is too smelly, too dry, too strong, too mouldy”.

Section 2

- (c) This was answered correctly by many although a few answered “from local shops and producers/factories” instead of “farms”.
- (d) Candidates coped well with this question: “too sweet/ too sugary”

Q.5 Overall, candidates coped well with this multiple-choice question indicating that they were able to recognise the correct synonyms for the vocabulary that they heard in the spoken passage. Some candidates answered in writing at the end of each sentence instead of ticking the box next to the word. Many had transcribed a translation next to each French word.

Section 1

- (a) *la beauté* ticked correctly by many candidates.
- (b) *parler* linked to accent in the transcript not often selected by candidates who selected *se comporter* and *penser* possibly because they heard *vous allez... vous y habituer*, getting used to their behaviour and thinking ways.

Section 2

- (c) Candidates generally coped well with this question, knowing the common expression *quel temps fait-il ?* perhaps although some thought *temps* referred to time so ticked randomly any of the other two when they did not hear the expected time detail.
- (d) Most candidates ticked the correct answer.

Q.6 Some candidates answered in English instead of French. There was evidence of good examination practice on some scripts where candidates had highlighted the rubric ‘Complète les informations **en français**’ or written “Answer in French” above each section. Candidates found answering this question challenging. In particular, they were unable to identify/conjugate the verb *nettoyer*.

Section 1

Propre was answered correctly by many candidates while *nettoyer/ils nettoient* was rarely given. The box was sometimes left blank.

Section 2

Ordures was rarely answered correctly by candidates or answered with spelling errors while *compost(e)* was generally answered correctly by a high number of candidates.

The last question was hardly answered correctly. A mark was granted to candidates who gave a plausible alternative such as *compétition du meilleur jardin*.

- Q.7** When listening to the passage, candidates find it difficult to identify the key phrases/triggers which lead to the correct answer. In this instance, candidates need to identify *J'ai peur...* before attempting to give the correct answer. Instead candidates write the first thing they hear which in this case was "big buildings".

Section 1

Candidates found this question difficult. *Bâtiments* was not well known to many who thought David was chatting about bats. Others thought he was frightened of heights and that he had started a new building job. Other candidates heard *père* instead of *perdre* and gave answers such as "frightened of his father" and "does not want to disappoint his father". His other anxiety was not understood as being "school work being very difficult" since many candidates thought he was working in the buildings. Answers were often given as "difficult job/his job is hard".

Section 2

This was generally well answered: "ask for help if you don't understand", even though a number of candidates referred to Spanish apps and using computers, they were not penalised nor were they granted a mark for these details which were not direct advice from Maude.

"*worst in the class*" was not always answered correctly with this common answer offered: "he hates Maths/he prefers languages/Maths is his worst class/he hates the teacher", etc. and an amusing answer: "he is the class clown" (maybe mistaking *pire* for *pitre*).

- Q.8** When responding to this question, candidates often gave answers which were guessed from their own experiences.

Section 1

- (a) (i) "he hates smoking or the fumes" was the most common incorrect answer given, instead of "he hates the smell of [cigarette] smoke".
- (ii) "Smoking is bad for you" or "bad for your health" often given as an answer without the specific "causes heart problems". Many candidates answered incorrectly "it caused heart arrest/attacks".
- (b) Several answers were accepted as correct for this question and many candidates answered well although some gave information they personally knew about e-cigarettes rather than what they heard on the recording.

Section 2

- (c) Many candidates answered this question correctly although as in (b) some added pre-known information about e-cigarettes which were not in the recording.
- (d) Some candidates did not understand that Claudine was not 18 and responded along the lines that “Claudine could smoke if she wanted to since she was 18”. Others thought “she would be grounded for smoking till she was 18” or “grounded for 18 hours” and “not allowed to go out after 6 pm”. One candidate heard *règles* and assumed Claudine’s mother “had slammed a ruler down and stated it was not up for discussion”.

Q.9 Section 1

- (a) “Relaxing” was the most common answer given with the correct answer, “comfortable” a close second. Although a car may be comfortable, passengers may not feel relaxed depending on many factors such as scenery, driving, length of trip, traffic, etc.
- (b)
 - (i) “Traffic” was often given on its own rather than “traffic jams” and was not granted a mark.
 - (ii) Comfort breaks and stopping to buy food and drinks were the most common answers given rather than “stopping to buy petrol”. Candidates were relating to their personal experience of car holiday travel rather than what was said in the recording.

Section 2

- (c) This was well answered generally with “not enough space/not enough room” and “better take the train” being the two most common answers.
- (d) Candidates found this very challenging as is to be expected in this last question. They had to recognise that it was an event which had already happened. Very few candidates responded with “once her suitcase is packed” although a considerable number answered incorrectly “when she is packing her suitcase”. Most gave answers ranging from “when she checks in” to “when the plane takes off” or “when plane lands”, “when she arrives at the resort”. One clever answer offered was “when she closes the lid of her suitcase.” which manages to put the point across correctly. Some candidates thought *valise* referred to “valleys” and answered “when she sees the valleys” presumably from the plane window.

Summary of key points

- Candidates need to be more mindful of answering with ONE detail when the question/mark allocated dictates. Too often, candidates are answering correctly only to have the mark taken away by contradicting the correct answer with a second incorrect one. E.g. Foundation Q2 Section b (ii), Q8 (b) and (e) and Higher Q4(b), Q7, Section1.
- Candidates should be trained in identifying an overall message. Questions of this type were often answered incorrectly in both the Higher and Foundation paper. E.g. Foundation Q2 (a) and Foundation and Higher Q7(a)/Q1 (a).

- Candidates had difficulty recognising negatives and words which denote a negative e.g. Foundation Q6 Section 1 *défendu*, Section 2 *interdit*, Q8 (c) *je ne suis pas encore bilingue*. More practice in this area would be helpful.
- Candidates could have their attention drawn to gap-fill questions. Candidates need to be made aware that the words which complete the gap-fill must be grammatically correct. E.g. Foundation Q5 (d). Some gave the answer “tired” which renders the sentence grammatically incorrect. Also in the overlap question Foundation Q8 (b) and Higher Q 2 (b), many candidates answered incorrectly with “polite” instead of “politeness”. This answer does not fit grammatically.
- Sometimes candidates answer with the first thing that they hear in the spoken extract, instead of listening further for “clue” words. Examples of this are Higher Tier Question 4(a) and Question 7 Section 1 – David’s first fear. In question 4(a) The first opinion that Anna gives is *je ne pouvais pas résister au fromage* and many candidates seized on this as the answer. The “clue” word is *Imagine* which introduces what is surprising about the cheese. In Question 7, many candidates gave the incorrect answer of “big buildings”, whereas the “clue” phrase is *j’ai peur* which introduces David’s real fear, which is “getting lost”.

FRENCH (EDUQAS)

GCSE (NEW)

Summer 2019

COMPONENT 3 FOUNDATION READING

General Comments

Foundation/Higher Tier

Candidates seem to have been entered for the appropriate level this year and there was a noticeable difference in performance in the overlap questions which also seems to suggest candidates were entered appropriately. The general accessibility of the paper seemed to be similar to last year although there seemed to be a few more questions left completely blank. This was particularly surprising when the question was a multiple-choice or required given names or letters to be inserted. Questions that required a response in the assessed language did not differ in accessibility to questions set in English. Answers in French were often rendered meaningless by either the exclusion of a verb or the inclusion of text that contained the correct answer somewhere, but the portion selected did not make sense. When answers required candidates to copy the name of a person given from a list, often the name was misspelt, although the mark was credited. This year the legibility of some responses was an issue, making some responses very difficult to mark.

There seemed to be an increase in candidates answering in the wrong language e.g. answered in French to an English question. In some sections of both papers, candidates gave too many responses, often one correct and one incorrect. Candidates should be reminded that if there is only 1 mark to a question or 1 detail required that they should adhere to this. The translation seemed to be completed better this year, but candidates are still losing marks for omitting basic items or altering the tense. Candidates found both literature texts challenging.

In addition, on Higher Tier, on questions which required not all boxes to be completed, generally most candidates stuck to this format, although a significant number completed all boxes, thereby losing marks because of rubric error. It is important for candidates to note the number of marks available if they are unsure how many boxes they should complete. Candidates had a lower performance on the literature questions and the translation.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1 (a) (i) and (ii)

These questions were answered well.

(b) (i) This question was answered well.

(ii) Most candidates were able to convey a response which included "town" e.g. "her town, town centre, city centre".

(c) (i) and (ii)

These questions were answered well.

- Q.2** Generally answered well although many candidates answered E (science) to Clara's statement about history (C).
- Q.3** All sections were generally answered well.
- Q.4** Overall this question seemed accessible and was answered well.
- Q.5**
- (i)** Most candidates gave the correct response. This was the best answered question on this section.
 - (ii)** Some candidates understood "easier".
 - (iii)** A well answered question.
 - (iv)** Answered well. A popular incorrect response was "Club Teli".
 - (v)** This was the question that candidates found the most difficult in this section. *Pays* seemed to be not well done and many incorrectly gave an answer of "good pay". *L'étranger* was also not well known.
- Q.6**
- (a)** Most candidates answered correctly. Some incorrect answers included "nurse".
 - (b)** Generally, this question was answered quite well. Candidates often responded with responses such as "it wasn't a very good first impression/didn't impress them".
 - (c)** Answered well.
 - (d)** It was surprising to see that not many candidates gave "happy" as a response. Some incorrectly said "nervous" as an answer.
 - (e)** Many candidates understood "repair" but then incorrectly followed this with "things" rather than giving a specific response, indicating a lack of knowledge in some vocabulary. *Laver des bouteilles* was also not well known.
 - (f)** This was the most difficult question. Often "bottles" was given on its own as an answer. Some candidates did not understand the vocabulary in this question. A variety of incorrect answers included the notion of a "cave" or a "basement". Many guessed an answer to this question.
- Q.7**
- (a)** Generally, this part was answered well. *Lycée* was not as understood as expected, with many just saying 'when she was a child'. A significant number answered, "when she was a baby", presumably because of the word *baby-foot*.
 - (b)** Most candidates attempted this answer and had the idea of "France" and "female" but not always added to it the word "team", making it an incorrect answer. Many candidates incorrectly gave the answer "Toulouse" despite the question asking who she plays for *now*. Most seemed to have missed *maintenant*.

- (c) Most candidates picked up “six” however only about half gave the full answer of “6 and half hours”. Some candidates said six and a half hours then added in “per day”, rendering the answer incorrect.
- (d) Frequently “leisure sport” was given as an incorrect response. Many seemed to have missed the *pas* between the two words. Other incorrect responses included “loser, lazy sport”. About half the candidates gave a correct response.
- (e) This question was generally answered well.

Q.8 (a) Generally answered well. A popular incorrect answer given was “Manon”.

(b) This was answered well. If an incorrect answer was given, it was often “Théo”.

(c) About half gave a correct response.

(d) This part was not answered well. Candidates clearly did not know the word *règles*.

(e) Answered fairly well.

(f) Answered well.

Q.9 (a) *Mairie* was not well known despite being an extremely obvious “customs and traditions” item of vocabulary covered in textbooks. There were many incorrect answers or the question was left unanswered. Incorrect responses included “hall/restaurant/outside/ marina”.

(b) “Emotional” was often given as a correct answer. Some candidates picked up “in a dream”. Incorrect responses included “modest, appreciative, happy”.

(c) Many candidates picked up the idea of “looking/seeing” but could not quite give the correct answer. Incorrect responses included “seeing each other, emotional, crying”.

(d) This question was answered very well.

(e) Generally answered well but a significant number of candidates answered “happy” or “joyful”.

(f) Most candidates picked up the word “horrible” but didn’t add the idea of “fear/anxiety” resulting in an incorrect answer. *Peur* was not well known at all.

Q.10 Translation

- “I love going out with my friends” was the most successfully translated part.
- Time references such as *souvent* and *de temps en temps* were not well known.
- “Brought shoes” was a regular incorrect response for “bought shoes”.
- *chaussures* was not well known. Incorrect answers included “sweets, glasses, cigarettes, trainers”.
- *magasins* was often incorrectly translated as “magazines”.

- Many mixed up the pronouns of “I” and “we”, resulting in mistranslations.
- Many gave incorrect tenses particularly mixing up the present and perfect.
- The verb *se rencontrer* was not well known.
- Many missed out the verb “to see” but did write “for a new film”.
- Sometimes “new” was omitted.

Summary of key points

- Literature questions need more practice.
- Candidates should not ‘hedge their bets’ and give two details when only one is required as one detail may well cancel out the other.
- Check that all aspects of a sentence have been translated and check which tense has been used.
- Candidates should be aware that if the question is in French then they need to answer in French otherwise they will forfeit marks.
- Poor handwriting is a problem and candidates need to ensure that what they have written is legible.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Higher Tier

Q.1 HT/Q.8 FT

This question was much more successful for Higher Tier candidates, with little confusion over detail. For additional comments see above.

Q.2 HT/ Q.9 FT

(a) “Town hall” was better known in this tier. However, there were still a few that answered incorrectly such as “hall, restaurant”. Generally this whole question was answered better, although some candidates made the same errors as those at Foundation Tier. *Peur* was more widely known but (f) remained the most challenging part of this question. For additional comments see above.

Q.3 Generally answered well but a significant number lost marks for filling in all boxes when only 6 were required. If a candidate enters too many answers, then the mark is reduced depending on how many extra answers were given.

Q.4 This proved to be a challenging text.

- (a) The title of the article was often given as a correct response. The answer needed to have the idea of pesticides in vegetable/carrots.
- (b) Some candidates wrote too much, copying chunks from the passage and not showing understanding. Some gave the correct answer but next to the incorrect sub-heading.
- (c) Most candidates scored at least one point on this section.

- Q.5** The first two sections were generally answered well. The last box often had the response *on peut modifier le look de votre Kubb* which was an answer for a previous question. Some lost marks in the final section for just writing *concevoir* and not enough to answer the question. Some wrote the same answer in more than one box.
- Q.6**
- (a) Answered very well. *L'escrime* was much better known than expected.
 - (b) Answered well with very few incorrect answers.
 - (c) Generally answered well with responses such as “in order to keep up with information on cyclists”.
 - (d) Many candidates answered this correctly with responses such as “at the Tour de France”. Incorrect responses tended to make reference to him actually taking part in the Tour or in a cycling race. A fair number though he had “watched several tapes of the tour” – probably incorrectly picking up the word *étapes*.
 - (e) Many candidates answered this correctly with responses such as “at the Tour de France”. Incorrect responses tended to make reference to him actually taking part in the Tour or in a cycling race. A fair number though he had “watched several tapes of the tour” – probably incorrectly picking up the word *étapes*.
 - (f) Generally answered well.
 - (g) This question was generally answered well.
 - (h) Generally well answered. Some gave an incorrect response along the lines of “he says he would like to stop studying at school and get a career”. Others wrote answers suggesting he had already stopped studying despite him stating he was a *lycéen de 15 ans*.
- Q.7**
- (a) The question asked how the others made him feel but many candidates just seized the word “hostile”, which was not correct. Candidates need to read the whole section and not stop at the first word they think is the answer.
 - (b) Many candidates answered correctly. Incorrect responses included “offer them a newspaper”. Sometimes *journal* was incorrectly given instead of newspaper and possibly with this in mind some candidates went on to approach the subsequent questions incorrectly, making reference to diary entries, posting things etc.
 - (c) This question was not answered well. Many candidates included something about the address but did not give a correct response.
 - (d) This question was not answered well. Many incorrectly thought “he wouldn’t be living there”.
 - (e) This was often not answered well. Many opted for “waiting room” which was incorrect.
 - (f) Candidates generally found this a difficult question. Having read *à la porte* some candidates incorrectly gave a response which included “at the port”.

Other incorrect responses included “they put paper on him.” Again, the idea of *pas* was not well known. *Pas de travail* should be understood at this level.

- (g) Answered very well.
 - (h) Candidates often lost marks because they thought he had been given a job already.
- Q.8**
- (a) Generally, this question was answered well, although some answers gave the idea of working 16 hours straight.
 - (b) Answered well.
 - (c) Answered well generally.
 - (d) Some candidates answered correctly, however many did not. Incorrect answers included the idea of “employers/pay is good”.
 - (e) Generally answered well.
 - (f) This question was answered well.
 - (g) This question proved difficult for many candidates who tried to give an answer regarding the salary, e.g. “they work for no salary”.

Q.9 Translation

- The main errors in the translation were verb and tense errors.
- *Il y a plus* time was rarely recognised, which was surprising.
- Often “far” and “my” were missed out in the first section.
- Some candidates incorrectly gave “factory” for *fac* or translated it as “college”.
- *J’en ai marre* - some candidates picked up on the word *marre* and incorrectly gave “nightmare” as a response. This expression was not well known.
- *J’ai dû attendre* proved difficult to translate.
- *je serai à la fac* was often mistranslated as “I’m going to uni”. Attention to detail is important.

Summary of key points

- Literature questions need more practice.
- Candidates should not ‘hedge their bets’ and give two details when only one is required as one detail may well cancel out the other.
- Candidates should read whole sections and not stop at the first word they think is the answer.
- Check that all aspects of a sentence have been translated and check which tense has been used.
- Candidates should be aware that if the question is in French then they need to answer in French otherwise they will forfeit marks.
- Candidates should check the number of marks available e.g. not give 8 answers when the question has 6 marks. Their total for the question will be reduced by the number of answers over the required amount.
- Poor handwriting is a problem and candidates need to ensure that what they have written is legible.

FRENCH

GCSE

Summer 2019

COMPONENT 4: WRITING

General Comments

In accordance with the specification, each broad theme was covered. Questions 1 – 3 were each based on a different theme; at Foundation Tier, question 4 (translation) returned to a different sub-theme of theme two. Thus, candidates who had covered the specification should have been equipped to deal with the thematic content of each question.

There was a progression of difficulty through both Foundation and Higher papers. In the Foundation Tier paper, the first question, requiring short answers, had the highest facility factor. This was predictably followed by question 2, the 60-word answer using the present tense. Question 3 was a challenge with a lower facility factor while the translation was the greatest challenge of all.

At the Higher Tier, question 1, the crossover question, was the most accessible, as would be expected. This was followed by question 2, the long essay, while the most difficult question was the translation. It was pleasing to note that the general level of attainment was an improvement on last year in all areas and at both tiers.

The three broad themes were all represented in the examination.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1 This was based on the theme of Local, national, international and global areas of interest, sub-theme: home and locality. A short answer was sufficient to gain the maximum of two marks in each section, provided that the sentence contained a verb. The main reason candidates failed to gain the full 2 marks in each of the six sections was the absence of a correct verb.

- **Ta ville /ton village.** A short answer with a correct verb was sufficient to gain the full 2 marks e.g. *Mon village est petit*. Almost all candidates made a reasonable attempt at this. Some candidates attempted much more detailed answers which contained many more linguistic errors and as a result, they failed to gain the full two marks. There was some confusion with pronouns with many students repeating *ton/ta* in their response, leading to a reduction in the number of marks allocated.
- **Magasins.** A common failing was to omit a verb and simply to list different types of shops.
- **Installations de loisirs.** A simple answer, e.g. *il y a une piscine*, gained 2 marks. Some candidates did not understand this prompt.
- **Une attraction touristique.** Some candidates failed to gain marks because they overlooked the fact that the question asked them for *informations sur ta region*. La Tour Eiffel or the Statue of Liberty did not fulfil this requirement.

- **Ce que tu aimes beaucoup dans ta région.** This was almost universally understood and most candidates produced a comprehensible and correct or near correct answer.
- **Un problème dans ta région.** The majority of candidates were able to state a local problem, pollution being a favourite, but incorrect spelling and absence of a verb frequently cost marks.

Characteristics of a successful response

- A simple, direct answer which does not contain unnecessary detail will maximise chances of scoring 2 points.
- The prompt phrase has been read carefully to ensure that the answer is relevant.
- Each answer contains a correct verb: the present tense alone is required in this question.
- Pronouns are correct. Many candidates repeat the *tu, ta, ton, tes* in the prompt which makes nonsense of the answer.
- When prompted, candidates should state their opinion e.g. *j'aime ma région*.

Areas for improvement in Question 1

- Pronouns.
- Spelling: common words, e.g. *ennuyeux*, were frequently misspelled.
- Length. Candidates should be discouraged from writing long answers in this question.
- Inattention to detail: requirements of prompt are sometimes not met.

- Q.2** This was based on the theme of Current and future study and employment, sub-theme: School/college life. Candidates were required to write a letter of approximately 60 words about their school, **incorporating the information contained in the three bullet points**. The use of the present tense throughout was acceptable. The rubric asked for *des informations et des opinions*.

Characteristics of successful responses

- **Les bâtiments.** Some candidates did not seem to understand *bâtiments* but many candidates fulfilled the requirement simply by saying *mon école est grande*.
- **La cantine.** The majority of candidates were able to talk about their school canteen and what they liked to eat.
- **Les professeurs.** Almost all candidates were able to say something relevant about a teacher.
- Verbs were correct in the present tense.

On the whole, candidates gained a reasonable mark in this question for Content and Communication, but frequently lost marks for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

Areas for improvement in Question 2

Candidates should:

On the whole, candidates gained a reasonable mark in this question for Content and Communication, but frequently lost marks for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

Q.3 FT / Q.1 HT

This was the crossover question between Foundation and Higher, and as such, the linguistic demands were greater in that the present tense alone was not sufficient. The question covered the broad theme Identity and Culture, sub-theme Festivals and celebrations.

At Higher Tier, the level of performance and attainment was in general significantly better than in the same question at Foundation Tier, but similar weaknesses could be observed: misinterpretation of question, omission of bullet points and failure to use tenses as required. As such, the observations made with regard to Foundation Tier are relevant here.

Candidates were asked to write a page for a blog on the topic of festivals. They were free to choose any festival they wished and the range was wide from the predictable musical festivals, through food festivals, tree planting festivals to Christmas and birthdays. Almost all candidates were familiar with the topic and most approached the question with a degree of confidence. **It was important to read each bullet point carefully to identify the tenses required.** Many good candidates lost marks by failing to address this requirement.

It was clear that too many candidates were unaware of what they had to do and addressed the reader using *vous* rather than writing about themselves. Many candidates used idioms which were repeated, sometimes inappropriately, making the response ambiguous.

Quand et avec qui vous êtes allé (e) à un festival

Nearly all candidates were able to mention a particular festival but some overlooked the requirement to say whom they went with, and often the tense used was incorrect or the verb incorrectly formed.

Vos opinions sur l'importance des festivals

The present tense was adequate here. On the whole, candidates expressed the idea of having fun or relaxing with friends satisfactorily.

Un autre festival où vous aimeriez aller

The main requirement of this bullet point was the use of the conditional tense. Answers which used the future tense successfully were allowed.

Characteristics of a successful response

- All three bullet points were addressed.
- Tenses used were appropriate, as required by the prompts.
- The length recommendation was adhered to.

Areas for improvement in Foundation Tier Question 3/Higher Tier Question 1

- As the rubric states, additional information may be given in response to the bullet points but the information requested in the bullet point **must** be provided to satisfy the requirements of the question under Content and Communication.
- Each bullet point must be studied to identify and recognise **the tense required**.
- Again, it is important to take note of the recommended word count. As mentioned above, additional material is acceptable but **not at the expense of the specified content**. Some candidates wrote answers of significant length and while they were not penalised for this alone, the additional errors and the lack of focus usually had a detrimental effect upon their mark.
- Idioms can add flavour and interest to the answer but should not be overused, especially if their appropriateness is unclear.

Q.4 Foundation Tier

The translation question returned to broad theme 2, Local, national, international and global areas of interest, sub-theme: holidays and tourism.

The translation question was a challenge to most candidates. Predictably, vocabulary and verbs were the main stumbling blocks.

- (a) **I am going to France with my parents.** An astonishing number of candidates could not say *en France*. Many used the word *Français*.
- (b) **My brother and sister are coming with us.** The majority of candidates could not spell *soeur* correctly, which was surprising. The verb caused problems: either the present or the *future proche* was acceptable. Nobody was able to write *viennent*.
- (c) **We usually go camping.** The main stumbling block here was 'usually' and *camping* was frequently expressed *campagne*.
- (d) **We're going to swim in the sea every day.** *Aller* +infinitive caused the most difficulty in this sentence. The verb *nager* was frequently not known but *tous les jours* was, though it was frequently incorrectly written.
- (e) **Last year we went to Brittany.** The majority of candidates did not know *la Bretagne*, but again, the main problem was the verb in the *passé composé*. *L'année dernière* was almost universally misspelt.

Characteristics of a successful response

- All elements of text were translated.
- Tenses were correct.
- There were no gaps.

Areas for improvement in Question 4

Candidates should:

- Look carefully at each individual sentence. Identify the tense required.
- Look for potential difficulties before attempting to translate, for example *nous allons nager* in sentence (d).
- Look for possible agreements, as in *l'année dernière, nous sommes allés*.
- Make sure that the translation contains all the information in the original.
- Make an attempt rather than leave a gap.
- Be alert to words with difficult spellings, e.g. Bretagne.
- Finally, check again that everything has been included in the translation and that it is clear and legible!

Q.2 Higher Tier

This question addressed broad theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest, sub-theme Global sustainability. There was a refreshing spontaneity about the quality of work from the best candidates and there were some excellent accounts. Facts and opinions were frequently well expressed and justified.

1. Les problèmes sociaux

Of the two options, this one was less well done. Candidates were successful in clearly identifying social problems, such as homelessness and unemployment, but many fell down on the second bullet point which required them to use the conditional tense to discuss possible remedial action.

2. L'environnement

This was well done on the whole in terms of Content and Communication. There was some excellent treatment of environmental issues for which they had evidently been very well prepared by their teacher. Sadly, however, marks were lost by some because errors and ambiguities reduced the clarity of their answers. The general concern for the environment and the desire to do something to alleviate problems was extremely well expressed by many in a very heart-warming manner. An issue affecting both question 1 and question 2 on this paper was excessive length. Some candidates wrote vastly in excess of the recommended word count and lost focus and accuracy.

Characteristics of a successful response

- Candidates had read the bullet points carefully to produce answers which addressed the question in all its parts.
- Candidates had used the appropriate tenses as required by the bullet points.
- Candidates had adhered to the recommended word count.
- Candidates had justified their opinions.

Areas for improvement in Question 2

Candidates should:

- Read the **rubric** carefully and identify the tense required in each bullet point.
- Pay attention to the word count: it is there to help focus on the answer and maintain relevance.
- Remember to **justify** ideas and points of view.
- Take care to write the number of the question which is being addressed. In a very few cases, answers were not numbered and it was difficult to identify which essay had been chosen, especially if environmental issues were treated as social problems.

Q.3 Higher Tier: Translation

This addressed the theme of Current study.
Totally correct or almost correct answers were rare.

What is your favourite school subject? (2 marks).

Very few candidates were able to use *quel* and write it in its correct form. Most used *qu'est-ce qu ...*. There was also much confusion between *matière* and *métier*, and *préférée* and *préfère*.

I am going to study history at university. (2 marks).

This sentence was probably the best done out of the five, with many candidates scoring two marks despite frequent misspellings of *histoire*, *université* and *étudier*. On the whole, candidates produced a version which was understandable, if not wholly correct.

Later on, I would like to teach in a sixth form college. (2 marks).

'Later on' was omitted by some, but other acceptable alternatives were used by many (e.g. *plus tard*, *après*). The conditional tense was a problem for some. *Enseigner* was not generally well-known but many candidates used *être un professeur* which was credited.

I think it is important to understand the past in order to stop wars. (3 marks)

The main stumbling block in this sentence was vocabulary. 'Conflicts' was frequently used instead of *guerres* but as the spelling was English, it could not be credited. It was surprising how many candidates did not know or could not spell *comprendre*.

Do you know yet what you are going to do in the future? (3 marks)

Again, vocabulary caused difficulties. Many omitted to translate 'yet' and *connaître* was often used instead of *savoir*. The English form 'future' was often used.

Characteristics of a successful response

- All elements of translation were present.
- Tenses were correct.
- If a word or phrase was not known, an acceptable alternative was used.

Areas for improvement in Question 3

- Tenses must be correctly identified at outset.
- Vocabulary, and possible grammatical pitfalls should be identified before translation begins. If a word is not known an alternative should be sought.
- Care should be taken with spelling, especially with cognates.
- Every element of the original must be included in the translation. Paraphrases are perfectly acceptable if they convey the meaning.
- No gaps should be left.
-

Summary of key points

Conclusion

There are two ways in which candidates can immediately increase their chances of a good mark in the exam overall:

1. Rubric

Candidates must be trained to read the rubric carefully to ensure that their answer satisfies the requirement of the question. **This applies to content and in particular to tenses.** They should look for the tense used in each bullet point.

2. Spelling and in particular, confusion with English words.

There were several examples in this exam of words which have very close English equivalents (for example, *environnement*, *conflit*, *futur*). Students should be alert to cognates which occur in the themes and familiarise themselves with the French spelling. In addition:

3. Excessive length

As mentioned above, too many candidates wrote excessively and this did not add to the quality of their answer. They should be trained to accept that **the word count is there to guide them in the planning of their answers, and sticking to the word count will assist them in producing a relevant answer.** Excessive length invariably results in straying from the point into irrelevance and additional errors.

It should be impressed upon candidates that at this level, they are not expected to do more than that which is stated in the rubric, in terms of content and word count.



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