

GCE A Level Examiners' Report

French
A Level
Summer 2025

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Introduction

Our Principal examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner Eduqas

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Executive Summary

Overall, candidates were well prepared for the 2025 suite of examinations.

For Component 1, it was pleasing to see how well candidates engaged with examiners in their tests and how thoroughly centres had prepared their candidates, particularly for the presentation in Task 1. The Independent Research Project (IRP) forms an integral part of the speaking assessment. The IRP allows candidates to choose an area of personal interest for independent study. There was an extremely wide and eclectic range of IRP titles this series. Centres are reminded that they are able to contact Eduqas if they are unsure of the suitability of an IRP title.

Centres should remind candidates that this section of the speaking exam is intended to be a discussion between the examiner and the candidate and not solely based on the list of bullet points supplied by the candidate on the IRP form. Centres should remind candidates that it is also best practice to not give all their information and ideas during the presentation but instead, to hint at facts, ideas and theories so that they can be further explored later on.

This series, interaction with the examiner during the card discussion was generally very good, however a significant number of candidates did not refer to the whole of the stimulus text. It was felt that candidates this series had a better grasp of AO4, but some sub-themes proved to be more problematic.

With Components 2 and 3, candidates generally performed well. However, accuracy has been cited as a common area requiring improvement by the Principal Examiners of Components 2 and 3, paying particular attention to control of tenses, agreements of subject and verb, nouns and adjectives, possessive adjectives, verbal structures and prepositions.

In Component 2, the rubric clearly states that candidates negating/un-negating a statement is not sufficient.

In Component 3 there is an urgent need to address the increasing and detrimental intrusion from English/anglicised sentence structures. Candidates would benefit from learning the vocabulary specific to their text/film and to the expression of the themes and issues within it.

FRENCH
GCE A level
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COMPONENT 1

Overview of the Component

The NEA speaking assessment at A Level consists of two tasks. The first task is in two parts: a presentation on the independent research project (IRP) lasting 2 minutes followed by a discussion based on the IRP, lasting between 9 to 10 minutes. The second task is a discussion based on a stimulus card on one of the themes studied at A Level, lasting 5 to 6 minutes. Candidates are offered a choice of two cards and have 5 minutes to prepare. There are two compulsory questions, one being unseen. In turn, the candidate must ask the examiner two questions. In total the NEA lasts between 21-23 minutes, including preparation time. This component is marked out of 60 and represents 30% of the marks available at A Level. In this component, all four assessment objectives (AO) are tested.

- AO1** Understand and respond in speech to spoken language including face-to-face interaction. It is assessed during the IRP discussion in task 1 for 5 marks and during task 2, also for 5 marks, totalling 10 marks.
- AO2** Understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources. 5 marks are awarded for task 1 during the presentation and represents the wider reading and research undertaken by the candidate. It is assessed again during task 2 and up to 5 marks are awarded for referring to the stimulus text on the card.
- AO3** Manipulate the spoken language accurately using a range of lexis and structures. It is assessed in task 1 for 15 marks and task 2 for 5 marks, a total of 20 marks overall and represents a third of the marks for this component.
- AO4** Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically to, different aspects of the culture and society of France and/or the French-speaking world. 15 marks are available in task 1 (5 for the presentation and 10 for the IRP discussion) and an additional 5 marks in task 2. Like AO3, this represents a third of the marks for this component.

Task 1:

The IRP forms an important part of the speaking assessment. It provides candidates with the opportunity to choose an area of personal interest for independent study. This component allows candidates to select an aspect of study that interests them, which is related to the countries or communities where French is spoken. The IRP encourages candidates to develop research skills in French, demonstrate the ability to initiate and conduct individual research on a subject of personal interest, identify a key question or subject of interest, select relevant information in French from a range of authentic sources including the internet, use information to illustrate knowledge and understanding of the research subject, analyse research findings and elaborate on key points of interest during the presentation and discussion.

Task 2:

The set of 12 picture stimulus cards covers four themes and there are three cards per theme. Each of the cards covers a different sub-theme. The four themes are: being a young person in French-speaking society, understanding the French-speaking world, diversity & difference and France 1940-50, the occupation and post-war years. To perform effectively at this task, candidates must be well-informed and be able to analyse and evaluate relevant issues on all four of these themes and their associated sub-themes, relating directly to life in France or other French-speaking countries or communities across the world. The candidate is offered a choice of two cards from two different themes.

Administration and centre visits

I would like to thank all our centres this year for their dedication and hard work in preparing their candidates and ensuring once again, the smooth running of speaking tests this series. I would also like to extend my thanks to teachers, heads of department and exam officers for hosting all our visiting examiners and making them feel very welcome at what is a very busy time of year. Examiners appreciate the time and effort that is taken by centres to accommodate them.

Most centres provided appropriate venues for the speaking exams and they were very well organised. Examiners reported that a small handful of centres still use venues which are not suitable for speaking examinations because they are either cramped or excessively noisy. On a couple of occasions examiners reported that the centre seemed unprepared for their arrival or failed to display the correct examination signage.

Thank you also to the many centres that provide invigilators or staff that are on hand to assist. Although not required by WJEC Eduqas, they make a big difference in the smooth running of speaking tests especially when issues arise. Centre staff are also very good at organising their candidates and putting them at ease.

Most centres communicated very well with their examiners but there were still a very few who failed, or were very late, in responding to requests such as confirming dates, supplying IRP forms on time, sending through a copy of the MFL centre form or supplying a timetable. Centres are reminded that all relevant documentation must be sent to the examiner correctly completed at least three weeks prior to the start of the examination and that they should keep examiners informed of any changes or issues, such as ill health, a change in the numbers of candidates or changes to the timetable. Centres are also reminded that within 24 hours of the examiner's departure, the MFL centre form should be uploaded to Surpass using the key code supplied by WJEC Eduqas. Again, thank you to the majority of centres that do this on time each year.

IRP forms

Most IRP forms were completed correctly and submitted on time and most candidates had researched their topics thoroughly with a very wide range of sources but there were still, unfortunately, a few examples this series of candidates quoting research done in English or using English-medium resources, such as the BBC or the Guardian. Candidates should be reminded that all research should be conducted in French (page 18 of the specification). There were, however, for the second year running, far fewer references to Wikipedia. Some IRP forms were not, however, completed correctly and had missing signatures (candidate and/or teacher), missing or incorrect candidate numbers, key points written in French or titles for component 3 missing. Centres are reminded that all forms submitted to visiting examiners should be completed correctly.

Most candidates this series were very well prepared and informed and approached the examination with genuine enthusiasm and interest. Despite some nerves, most were very willing and able to engage and interact freely with the examiner.

Comments on individual questions/sections

The IRP presentation

The speaking test starts with a two-minute presentation and marks are awarded for the quality of the candidate's research (AO2) and their knowledge and understanding of different aspects of the culture and society in French-speaking countries (AO4). Both assessment objectives are worth up to 5 marks each and this represents just over 16% of the marks available for this component.

Candidates are encouraged to provide a list of sources on their IRP form and refer to them during the presentation and subsequent discussion. The 5 marks for AO2 are awarded for the quality of the content of the presentation and could include information, data or statistics on background, future trends and received opinions for example, from as wide as possible range of sources. To access top marks here, candidates must demonstrate a range of knowledge beyond general knowledge or what they have learnt in class. The 5 marks for AO4 are awarded for the candidate's ability to interpret and analyse this information and speak about it with confidence and authority. Most centres supply a copy of the form to their candidates just before the speaking test.

The presentation also allows the candidate to give pointers or hooks to the examiner on where the discussion can go. Centres should remind candidates that it is also best practice to not give all their information and ideas during the presentation but instead, hint at facts, ideas and theories so that they can be teased out later on. The more able candidates this year were very adept at this, and delivered carefully constructed, focused, and well-articulated presentations, which gave sufficient details to the examiners for follow-up questions. Weaker candidates often gave vaguer, unconvincing, and less well-structured presentations with often poorly organised information. These candidates often had issues delivering their presentations such as frequent pauses, lapses or they simply forgot their presentation halfway through and some unfortunately did not have the ability to improvise. This was quite rare and taken as a whole, the quality of presentations this series was extremely high. Many candidates were awarded full marks for this section.

There was an extremely wide and eclectic range of IRP titles this series, covering topics such as Concorde, les langues régionales, la réforme de la langue française, les prisons en France, Simone de Beauvoir, la devise française, Macron comme président, L'Inégalité hommes-femmes, Miss France, Jeanne d'Arc, La Révolution française, les Jeux Olympiques and la violence policière.

It was clear that most candidates had thoroughly practised their presentations and were genuinely interested in their chosen topics, which they were able to convey with enthusiasm to the examiner. There were many instances of excellent presentations. However, some excellent presentations were not necessarily followed up by in-depth analysis during the discussion and it appeared that some candidates placed all their efforts on the presentation and neglected to prepare sufficiently for the discussion afterwards.

The majority of the presentations were extremely well prepared, with a clear structure as well as relevant and pertinent points that could be discussed later. Examiners awarded more 10 out of 10 for the presentation this series than in previous years, which is very encouraging. There was, however, a small minority of presentations which were quite short (1' 30") and tended to lack sufficient AO2 and AO4 to score top marks. Most presentations were, however, very well-researched, prepared and skilfully delivered. Timings were mostly good with very few exceeding two minutes. It was difficult on occasions to fully understand some candidates, due to the excessive speed of delivery. Candidates should be encouraged to time their presentations carefully and allow for nerves on the day. On a very few occasions it was obvious that the presentation was not drawn from a wide range of sources and that they sounded more anecdotal than properly researched, so these tended to score poorly at AO2.

The IRP discussion

The second part of the IRP is the discussion, which can take from 9 to 10 minutes. During this time, the examiner will aim to further explore the candidate's chosen topic. Five marks are awarded for interaction (AO1), 15 marks for quality of language (AO3) and a further 10 marks for knowledge and understanding of Francophone culture and society (AO4). This assessment objective also requires the candidate to be able to analyse and evaluate any relevant issues and provide appropriate examples and evidence to back up their points of view.

Most candidates knew their chosen topic very well and were able to discuss and convey their ideas and points of view with confidence and spontaneity. There were many interesting topics with some candidates using knowledge from other subjects, such as History or Geography. Many candidates knew their subject thoroughly and were able to respond fully and confidently to all types of questions. Most candidates dealt very well with the line of questioning and responded equally well to expected and more unpredictable questions. Pronunciation and intonation were very often better during the discussion than in the presentation because of the more natural context of the discussion. Occasionally, some obvious facts were not known but this tended to have little to no impact on the overall performance. Most candidates engaged readily with the examiner, using an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and on many occasions, very detailed AO4. Candidates who did not score highly at AO4 often failed to give enough in-depth analysis or were unable to give relevant examples to back up their claims.

Many candidates scored in the top two bands for AO1 as they were able to interact readily and naturally with the examiner. Many of these candidates were able to lead the discussion, give detailed or very detailed responses and were generally at ease with the natural flow of the conversation. There were of course more pauses and a more laboured delivery from weaker candidates, who were less able to think on their feet and felt more secure delivering pre-learned phrases even if they did not actually answer the question asked. These candidates also required more prompting from the examiner, did not always finish their sentences or repeated themselves overusing the phrase *comme j'ai déjà dit*.

There were many instances of excellent use of accurate language, vocabulary and structures. Many candidates were able to manipulate grammatical structures and lexis with ease and accuracy. There were many examples of complex structures being used accurately and in context and there was a wide range of both technical and idiomatic vocabulary. Examiners were impressed by the quality, variety and fluency of the French used by many candidates. These candidates were able to use to good effect complex tense sequences, connectives, subordinate clauses, the subjunctive, manipulating the passive and *on* constructions, a variety of negatives, pronouns and conjunctions.

Many candidates were equally competent with the basics such as numbers, dates, correct use of genders, voiced agreements and regular and irregular forms of both the present and perfect tenses. Many of these candidates were also able to self-correct and use a variety of synonyms and avoidance techniques. Not all candidates performed as well at AO3, however, and on occasions errors of grammar and pronunciation impacted negatively on marks for language and occasionally, at AO4. Some candidates also struggled expressing (basic) numbers and dates, especially *quatre-vingt*. There were equally some inconsistencies at times on the pronunciation of adjective endings, such as *français/aise*, for example, as well as incorrect verb endings, even in the present tense. This was particularly the case with verb endings in the third person plural, with such verbs as *vendre, prendre, venir, finir, dire*, etc. There was equally some confusion over the pronunciation of certain words, which led to some lapses or delays in communication, such as *pays/paye, l'amour/la mort, roman/romain, ville/vie, étranger/étrange, an/un*. There were also some issues with voiced and unvoiced final consonants with words such as *sport, plus, déclin, tous, tout, état, famille*. It was good to note, however, that overused phrases from past series such as *pour autant que je sache* or *le revers de la médaille*, were very rarely used this series.

Centres should remind candidates that this section of the speaking exam is intended to be a free discussion between the examiner and the candidate. The examiner will ask questions based on what the candidate says in their presentation, the answers they give and the information on the IRP form. Candidates must not expect examiners to slavishly work their way down the list of bullet points supplied by the candidate on the IRP form. Examiners will often refer to bullet points provided by the candidate at some point during the discussion but only when the discussion warrants it or if the discussion naturally leads on to a bullet point provided by the candidate. Equally, centres should reassure candidates that an examiner may well ask a question about an aspect of the topic under discussion that the candidate may not have directly researched so cannot answer. This is not an issue. The candidate just has to reply that they have not researched this particular aspect and the discussion can move on. Not being able to answer a specific question will not in itself impact negatively on the marks awarded overall. Candidates are not expected to know absolutely everything about their chosen topic.

The card discussion

Candidates are given a choice of two topic-related cards containing a short stimulus text of about 30 words in French and an image. Candidates then have five minutes to make notes on a separate piece of paper and prepare the card with the examiner present. Up to five marks are available for all four assessment objectives, making the card worth 20 marks out of a possible 60 marks. The discussion lasts between five to six minutes during which, the candidate has to ask the examiner two relevant questions. The examiner is allowed to prompt the candidate, but this does not affect the marks the examiner can award. The candidate must in turn answer two compulsory questions, one of which is unseen. The first question, which is printed on the card, cannot be rephrased. The second, unseen question can be rephrased if need be. Both questions can be repeated.

The examiner will ask the two compulsory questions before developing the discussion further with follow-on questions. Some centres encourage their candidates to ask their first question at the end of their initial response to the examiner's first question and this is not an issue. However, in this case, the examiner will not ask any follow-on questions until the candidate has responded in full to the unseen question. Candidates should also be reminded that very often, the examiner will flip one or both questions they ask the examiner. It is, therefore, a good idea to practise this technique in class so that candidates are not surprised when the examiner asks them their own questions.

This series, interaction with the examiner was generally very good and many candidates scored top marks at AO1. This was less so at AO2, as still a significant number of candidates do not refer to the whole of the stimulus text in their answers or are reluctant in answering direct questions referencing the text, despite prompts from the examiner. To gain top marks at AO2, candidates must demonstrate a full understanding of the stimulus material. Taken as a whole, it was felt that candidates this series had a generally better grasp of AO4 but despite that, it was obvious that certain sub-themes proved to be more problematic (The Occupation and post-war years is an obvious example). Several examiners commented that they felt that in some centres, candidates had obviously spent significantly more time and effort preparing for the IRP than they had for the card discussion and this was reflected in the marks awarded. Some candidates performed significantly better at AO3 and AO4 in the IRP discussion than they did during the card discussion, which was also the case last series. There were often too many inconsistencies with verbs and tenses, the usual errors on adjectives and some use of English during the card discussions, which meant that proportionally fewer candidates achieved the top band at AO4 compared to the IRP discussion.

To improve performance at AO4, candidates need to know more facts and ideas such as for example, names of politicians and political parties, Francophone musicians and films, names of festivals in French-speaking countries (other than *la fête du citron* and *le festival de Cannes*), famous monuments other than the most obvious ones, wartime actors, producers, films and plays, names of French charities, associations or NGOs, social and economic changes post second world war, etc. A lot of this information is contained in the texts, transcripts and exam walk throughs of past papers for component 2 and in knowledge organisers on the Eduqas website (under the *resources* tab on the A/AS Level French home page).

Card 1

Interestingly in this series, this card was a popular choice among some centres and completely avoided by others. When it was chosen, however, many answers often lacked detail and showed scant political or civic knowledge. Volunteering was often quoted by candidates during the discussion, but some candidates struggled to expand on the idea or give concrete examples. Many candidates when referencing the stimulus text completely ignored the second sentence.

Card 2

This card was universally very popular but performance was very mixed. Not all candidates were able to connect mastery of new technologies and social background, but most were able to discuss use of these tools and their advantages and drawbacks. Many candidates needed prompting about the second part of the text on family attitudes and influence. Many did not know about the banning of mobile phones in French schools, for example, and some answers were too generic, without specific reference to any French-speaking country or region.

Card 3

Discussions developed on the topic of vocational and academic qualifications and how appropriate they are to prepare the young people for the world of work. Some candidates knew about the French government's initiatives to provide opportunities for young people to acquire experience, but many did not and therefore, the discussion went round in circles. More informed candidates did well on this card and had a varied discussion dealing with reasons, suitable education, ill effects of unemployment as well as proposing suitable solutions to the problem of youth unemployment in France. Most candidates referenced the first part of the text but the second part, the comparison to Europe, was often ignored despite prompting.

Card 4

Not all candidates who opted for this card were able to discuss the themes of traditions and celebrations in full. Some did not know how to say Belgium or confused *Belgique* and *belge*. Often candidates were unable to talk about specific festivals and traditions and why they are or are not important. A high proportion of candidates did not score highly on AO2 or AO4 on this card.

Card 5

This was another popular card with interesting discussions about music, the *loi Toubon*, festivals, Francophonie and how to promote the French language. Many candidates were aware of the language situation in Quebec. Some had a good knowledge of French music and government initiatives to protect the French language and culture. The *Académie Française* was occasionally referenced, but although the *loi Toubon* was often quoted not all candidates knew what it is or how it effects the use of the French language, especially regarding music. However, many candidates were knowledgeable about Francophone music and were able to quote artists, past and present.

Card 6

This was another popular card. Most candidates were able to discuss cinema and why it is less popular versus watching a film at home, the ways of encouraging young people to go to the cinema and the importance of cinema for French society. Most candidates blamed the lack of interest in going to the cinema on new technologies and ticket cost. Very few, however, knew of the government scheme, *le pass Culture*, introduced to encourage young French people to access cultural events at a reduced price.

Card 7

This card was generally well answered and candidates often had coherent ideas and convincing points of view. Few candidates, however, thought it odd that French born children of immigrants had more problems than their parents. Many candidates referred to newly arrived migrants, who had language difficulties, while others blamed it on the fact that migrants' children tended to gravitate towards each other, away from '*les Français de souche*'. Marine Le Pen and Jordan Borella were frequently blamed for exacerbating the problem. Some candidates did not reference the last part of the text, which referred to lack of academic success at school.

Card 8

This was another popular choice and on the whole, was very well discussed by many candidates choosing this card. Most candidates were able to give concrete examples and some were also able to quote official figures and statistics from Insee.

Card 9

The theme of discrimination was very well discussed by most candidates who chose this card. Many candidates mentioned *SOS Racisme* and referred to *Touche pas à mon pote*. The theme was very well tackled, and many candidates had lots of interesting ideas as well as specific examples they could quote such as the shooting of Nahel Mazouk, for example.

Cards 10, 11 and 12

The following three cards were generally the least popular, just like last series. There is a definite trend in many centres, that when a card from the theme of France 1940-1950: The Occupation and the post-war years appears, the other card, whatever the sub-theme, is selected instead. Of course, some candidates are very successful but for the most part, they are avoided and if chosen, are often not well done.

Some candidates were able to successfully discuss the role of *la Résistance* on Card 10 and were able to talk about Pétain and the Vichy government. Some mentioned Jean Moulin and even Germaine Tillon and what types of activities were carried out by the French resistance as well as discussing passive and active resistance during the Occupation.

Card 11 was probably the least popular of all the cards and performance was very mixed. Successful candidates were able to discuss the cinema at the time and were very knowledgeable about French films and directors, others knew very little and talked about the cinema in general or issues facing the French during the war.

Card 12 was generally not well answered. Candidates tended to talk in vague terms about postwar reconstruction but very few knew about any social changes. Some quoted *le plan Marshall* but were unable to say much more. Very few could give any specific examples of reconstruction, economic or social changes at all. With a very few exceptions, candidates did not have enough AO4 to answer this card successfully.

FRENCH
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COMPONENT 2

Overview of the Component

This component comprises 3 sections and carries a total of 100 marks:

Section A - Listening (30 marks)	AO1
Section B - Reading (30 marks)	AO2
Section C - Translation (40 marks)	AO3

Detailed answers to questions 1-8 are provided in the published mark scheme as well as possible correct alternative answers.

There is a variety of question styles in Sections A and B designed to elicit verbal and non-verbal responses from the candidates. These are designed to test understanding of spoken and written French. A variety of registers (including formal and informal) and styles are used in the spoken passages and written texts, including 1st and 3rd person passages.

Questions 7 and 8 are short texts of approximately 100 words to be translated into English/French and each question carries 20 marks.

Across the 8 questions, each theme is covered twice but targeting different subthemes; this means the whole specification is tested and it provides validity for the assessment.

Most candidates were able to attempt all the questions on the paper and very few questions were left unanswered. The paper was accessible to candidates across the ability range and differentiated well across all the grades.

In sections A and B, candidates scored well overall in questions requiring a non-verbal response or a short answer. Candidates are familiar with the content of the themes and sub-themes. Very good knowledge of these was displayed in their responses and a wide range of relevant vocabulary was evident. This revealed a very good level of knowledge and understanding (AO4).

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A – Listening

Questions 1, 2B and 3B required non-verbal responses and multiple-choice answers.

Candidates were required to listen to passages in French and to use their knowledge of both vocabulary and grammar to formulate their answers.

Question 1

Selecting 6 correct statements was generally well done with many scoring full marks.

Question 2A

(Vrai/faux). This was mostly well done but **(a)** *occidental* was not recognised as a synonym for *ouest* and was incorrectly answered as being true.

- (b) An actual dwelling was needed, not *banlieue* in order to correctly answer the question.
- (h) *C'est un droit* was not enough. This had to be supported by the idea of school or education.

There was more evidence this year of candidates negating/un-negating a statement. The rubric clearly states that this is not sufficient.

Question 2B

This was mostly answered well.

Question 3A

Answers are required in French. In some cases, the quality of French was so poor that the answers were incomprehensible. Candidates should be very careful to avoid English spellings e.g. “uniform” = 0.

- (c) *Comment* was not always understood with many answers being incorrectly given as *à 6h du matin* instead of *à moto*.
- (e) Many candidates gave *la pénurie* as the answer. This is just a synonym of “difficulties” and needed a concrete example e.g. *le rationnement*.

Question 3B

This was generally well done. This question required candidates to match two lists.

Question 3C

A summary task. Many candidates scored well but there was a tendency to misconstrue the information heard, not to focus on *les aspects positifs*. The task here is to pick out key points or ideas and express them concisely.

Section B – Reading

Questions 4, 5B and 6B required non-verbal responses and multiple-choice answers.

Candidates were required to read passages in French and to use their knowledge of both vocabulary and grammar to formulate their answers.

Question 4

A gap fill. Candidates should consider that the chosen word makes sense in the context of the passage and not opt for a “best fit”. Candidates should be encouraged to read the text again when all the gaps have been filled to cast a critical eye over the meanings.

Question 5A

This was a summary task. Candidates should look at the statements carefully to see what is required for the answer and use the text to elicit the correct information for their answers. For example *le rôle de la musique*... requires a specific answer.

Question 5B

This question was mostly answered correctly apart from (c) where a synonym for *secrètes* was required.

Question 6A

The question required answers in French. Candidates should take care not to copy whole sections from the text but should use the ideas therein to formulate their answers using minor manipulation. Questions should be read carefully to see what is demanded for the answer.

- (a) a specific answer required from the information about how many people were chosen to **draw up** the list and NOT **appear** on the list.
- (e) required a specific answer *secteur...* not *héros de guerre* (lifted, incorrect).

Question 7

This question requires candidates to translate a passage from French into English. Translation into English has two key elements; it begins with comprehension of the French text and then moves into the expression in English of the messages from the French. Candidates who have well developed comprehension strategies tend to produce more coherent translations. If a candidate does not know certain items of vocabulary in the French text, they need to use deductive skills to try to fill the gaps.

This translation into English was well done and candidates coped well with the theme. Some idiomatic phrases which presented more challenge were not translated correctly e.g. *le grand public*. Candidates should read through the whole translation after completing it to ensure that it reads as good idiomatic English and that all words have been translated.

Vocabulary often not known included:
syndicats, bande dessinée, statut, menace, support.

Question 8

This question requires candidates to translate a passage of English into French. In the translation AO3 – accuracy of language - is assessed.

The performance across all candidates for the translation into French was varied but overall, there was a good performance. The passage differentiated well, and the segmenting of the mark scheme helped all candidates score some marks.

As well as not knowing common items of vocabulary there were also errors with grammatical structure. Common mistakes were made with use of second verb infinitive, basic prepositions, adjectives, incorrect tense and use of passive voice. The incorrect use of common present tense verbs leads to many marks being lost e.g. *nous lisons*.

The vocabulary associated with this theme was well known, but there were some mistranslations:
chiffres, belges/Belges, confusion between *connaître* and *savoir*, also English spellings of cognates = 0 (*la literature*).

Overall, the different tenses were generally well translated and there were some very good examples of language manipulation displaying linguistic flair and accuracy.

Summary of Key Points

- Candidates should listen and read carefully before doing the corresponding tasks. Lack of attention to detail and incorrect task completion leads to loss of marks.
- Marks are lost in comprehension and summary tasks because candidates writing can be rather incomprehensible.
- When translating, candidates need to remember the basic principle that they need to analyse the meaning of what they are putting into another language, be it English or French. The transfer of meaning of idiomatic language is very important for this skill.
- The knowledge of relevant topic-related vocabulary was very pleasing in Question 8. For help with Question 8, candidates should look at the reading texts to see correct verb forms and sentence construction.
- The information in both the listening and reading texts provides authentic material which is invaluable for AO4 in preparation for the cards for Component 1.
- Candidates who had been well prepared for the style of questions and had good knowledge of grammar were able to manipulate the language well using a range of lexis and structure. These candidates successfully avoided lifting sentences from the reading and listening texts which did not answer the question set. Careful and valid manipulation was used to great effect by many candidates in answering these questions.

FRENCH
GCE A level
Summer 2025
COMPONENT 3

Overview of the Component

This paper was well received, and outcomes were comparable to previous series. It offered 6 texts and 6 films for analysis and a choice of two titles per text/film.

The most popular texts were: *No et moi*, *Le Silence de la mer* and *L'Étranger*.

The most popular films were: *Intouchables*, *La Haine*, and *Les Choristes*.

The assessment objectives, AO3 and AO4, carry an equal weighting of 10 marks each. AO3 assesses linguistic accuracy and the quality of the language in relation to the title set. AO4 assesses the knowledge of the text/film studied in the context of the question set. It also evaluates the essay as an evidence based analytical and critical response.

It was very pleasing to see that many candidates met the demands of this Component, often producing two essays of high linguistic quality (AO3) and knowledge (AO4). However, there was sometimes a difference in attainment between the two essays, both linguistically and in their knowledge and understanding of the text/film.

It is not possible to comment on every film and text as not all were attempted.

Comments on individual questions/sections

No et Moi

This text was a very popular choice. Candidates mainly opted for question 2 which accounted for nearly half of the responses. They engaged well with the themes and analysed characters and events to respond to the questions set. Most candidates successfully focused on the theme of change; however, some responses focused solely on Lou and No.

For question 1, successful candidates analysed events and characters to draw pertinent conclusions on the theme of happiness. Some responses focused solely on the unhappiness experienced by various characters.

Antigone

Candidates produced very good answers showcasing high accuracy and excellent knowledge of the play. The majority of candidates opted for question 5 and produced insightful responses on the theme of loyalty. Candidates who opted for question 6 analysed characters and events to draw pertinent conclusions about Créon's cruelty.

L'Étranger

The majority of candidates opted for question 8. Better candidates were successful in analysing the pros and cons of Meursault's condemnation. Responses for question 7 focused on how the characters in Meursault's life are themselves outcasts.

Le Silence de la mer

As in previous years, candidates engaged well with the text and the issues involved. Most candidates opted for question 9. Better candidates used their greater understanding of the period to argue that Werner represents the German ideal. Some responses, narrow in scope, argued that Werner is an ideal German. Responses for question 10 focused on the behaviour of the main protagonists to draw pertinent conclusions on the theme of passive resistance.

Boule de suif

Candidates who opted for this text produced accurate and knowledgeable responses. Question 11 focused on a variety of characters to discuss the theme of suffering. In the same vein, for question 12, candidates focused on different female characters and analysed their importance.

Intouchables

This film accounted for over 40% of responses. In response to question 13, candidates analysed all characters and events to respond to the concept of stereotypes. Some responses were narrow in scope and repetitive. For question 14, responses reflected pertinently on how others treat Philippe.

Les Choristes

Candidates answered both questions set. In question 15, responses focused on Rachin's behaviour to draw relevant conclusions. For question 16, candidates focused on the many aspects of injustice to produce personal and knowledgeable responses.

La Haine

This was a popular choice. Candidates answered both questions, demonstrating good knowledge of the film. Some candidates were able to draw on their wider knowledge of French society to support their argumentation. Others failed to select relevant material, often producing responses lacking in focus.

In question 19, better responses centred closely on the three characters as typical French youngsters. In question 20, better responses analysed the importance and impact of the firearm, showing in-depth understanding.

Au revoir les Enfants

Candidates produced answers for both questions, showing good knowledge of the film. For question 21, responses analysed characters and events to explain Joseph's actions.

For question 22, responses discussed an array of characters to analyse attitudes and opinions during that period in history.

Issues

These are of particular concern but could be addressed relatively easily:

- poor handwriting, illegible at times
- essays exceeding the recommended length, some over 600 words
- lack of basic punctuation/overuse of asterisks and arrows.

All the above will have an impact on the clarity of argumentation.

Misspellings:

- misspelling of characters/places/themes
- use of accents

Misuse of language:

- basic grammar and conjugation
- *ce/celle/cette montre- cela montre que*
- use of the S plus apostrophe: some candidates wrote *s'amitié*
- confusion between *est/et* and *a/à*
- *grâce à*: followed by a negative concept eg: *grâce à la pauvreté...*
- 'le change' for *le changement*
- *comme/comment*
- *dans la façon/ manière* used for *d'une façon...*
- *le romain* for *le roman*
- *le livreur* for *le lecteur*
- 'christian' for *chrétien*
- *réfléchir* for *réfléter*
- *concluire* for *conclure*

Widespread and increasing use of anglicised vocabulary and sentence structures:

- *expérencier/expecter/facer/acter/provider* used as verbs and conjugated accordingly
- sentences ending with *avec/à*
eg: *les inégalités ils font face à.*

Summary of Key points

- Overall, this was a very encouraging series of the examination and for the most part there was evidence of careful planning by candidates. There were examples of very good practice with candidates engaging well with the films and texts. They employed good analytical skills and responded appropriately to the questions set, at times with flair and style.
- Candidates would benefit from learning the vocabulary specific to their text/film and to the expression of the themes and issues within it. The level of general accuracy in this task of sustained writing needs attention. All aspects of grammar are involved: control of tenses, agreements of subject and verb, nouns and adjectives, possessive adjectives, verbal structures and prepositions.

- Most importantly there is an urgent need to address the increasing and detrimental intrusion from English/anglicised sentence structures.
- Fewer errors will improve the mark for the AO3 element and therefore impact AO4. Careful consideration of both assessment objectives could be useful to guide teaching and learning. Candidates who can sustain a balance of both AO3 and AO4 within this task write successful answers.

Supporting you

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