

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2011

GCSE

GCSE French (5FR02) Paper 2A and 2B

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GCSE French 5FR02 Speaking - Principal Moderator's Report January 2011

General Comments

There was a small cohort that sat the unit this January.

There were an increasing number of open interactions tasks submitted. These were mainly based on those supplied by Edexcel rather than centres using their own. Candidates had varying degrees of success as unfortunately, many failed to take the initiative during the task and relied on the teacher-examiner to sustain the interaction. Teacher-examiners should encourage candidates to ask questions at appropriate times throughout the task, to encourage spontaneity, rather than as an add-on at the end. Centres are reminded that failure by candidates to ask questions will result in a deduction of marks within the Content and Response section of the assessment criteria.

The most successful performances were presentations or picture based discussions, where each individual candidate presented a topic of their own choice, in their own way. These were often enhanced by skilful and appropriate questioning from the teacher-examiner who allowed the candidates the opportunities to fulfil their potential in line with the examination criteria and score high marks.

Less successful tasks were often those where there was a lack of individuality of topic and response. Questions were often too similar and unfortunately, all too often, so too was the responses of candidates. This is against the spirit of the specification and often put candidates at a disadvantage. There were instances of insufficient challenge for some candidates or the questions were over ambitious for others. In both cases, where this did occur, there was a lack of spontaneity and insufficient interaction between the teacher-examiner and the candidate.

In order for candidates to score highly centres are reminded that there should be a variety of questions asked within the task types and these should be in response to candidates' replies, rather than a set list of questions. This will elicit good interaction and spontaneity within the tasks.

Tasks need to last for between 4 and 6 minutes. At most centres, work submitted was in line with these requirements. It is rarely to the candidates' advantage to let them continue for longer than this. Where submissions are less than 3m 30 there is a deduction of 2 marks for Content and Response.

Presentations should last for at least 1 minute but candidates should be advised not to spend too long on the presentation as this may mean that there is less time for the more interactive part of the task.

It is not in the spirit of the examination if all candidates try to give a similar presentation as these often result in poor intonation which penalises the candidate as they are at times difficult to understand.

Centres are reminded that each candidate must attempt two different task types. Although centres are not obliged to record all tasks, centres are encouraged to record enough of each task type so that they have samples of in order to satisfy the requirements of the specification.

Many centres have decided to record all candidates in order to make sure that they can satisfy the requirements of providing samples for moderation. If a centre has

used three different task types the sample must include each of these types and include extra candidates within the sample if necessary.

Where centres have withdrawn candidates indicated in sample they should include other candidates to make up the sample. Samples must include work from the highest and lowest scoring candidate.

A copy of task or stimulus for each sampled candidate should accompany samples. There is no need for centres to send student checklists or mark recording sheet.

Centres are asked not to use more than one method to record assessments. Many centres who opted to record performances on cassette suffered from poor recording clarity due to the cassette tapes being re-used from previous examination series. This can affect the moderation of candidates where it is difficult to hear what is being said. Centres are encouraged to use CD or USB memory sticks for recording samples. These should be recorded as mp3 files or audio CDs so they may be played on CD players as well as computers. There are many free programs that can be used to do this.

All CDs or cassette tapes and their boxes should be appropriately labelled and have inserts with candidate information and the order of recordings. USB sticks should be accompanied by candidate information.

Administration

While many centres provided the required documentation correctly, a number failed to do so. Centres are advised that, following feedback from Summer 2010 and to reduce the amount of form-filling for you, a new combined mark sheet/authentication form* (Candidate Mark Sheet for Unit 2: Speaking) for the speaking unit has been produced that differs to the one produced in the specification.

The Administrative Support Guide (Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination and Controlled Assessments) 2011 has details of what centres are required to send their moderator and the copies of the new forms to be used are held within the appendices. The Administrative Support Guide is available on our website at <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/mfl/spanish/Pages/default.aspx> under 'Exam Materials'.

Below is a checklist of materials to send to your moderator.

For each candidate in the sample:	✓
Task/stimulus	
Form CA2 (Candidate Notes Form)	
(Updated) Candidate Mark Sheet for Unit 2: Speaking - signed by <u>both candidate and centre-assessor</u> . Any candidate unable to provide an authentication statement will receive zero credit for the component.	
Recording of task 2A ONLY. Please do not send any 2B recordings.	
For your centre:	✓
The OPTEMS middle copy (yellow) or printout of marks submitted on Edexcel Online for 2A ONLY.	
The work of the highest scoring candidate and lowest scoring candidate, <u>if not already included in the sample</u> . For any asterisked candidates which are absent or scored zero,	

replacement candidates must be supplied to meet the required number of candidates in the sample.	
A mixture of task types - (ie Open Interactions / Presentations / Picture Based Discussions)	

OPTEMS:

The top copy (white) of the OPTEMS is sent to Edexcel to record the centre marks or printout of marks submitted on Edexcel Online.

The bottom copy (green) is retained by the centre.

*If you have already completed the previous forms for the speaking unit, it is still possible for you to submit these this summer only. **The new forms should be used for all future controlled assessment submissions.**

Marking

There were a number of centres whose marks were out of tolerance and needed adjustment.

In the Content and Response section centres have a tendency to overvalue the performance of lower ability candidates who appear to say quite a lot, but have mostly repeated much of what the teacher-examiner has said through a series of closed questions and total reliance on the teacher-examiner. It must be remembered that the assessment criteria are marked globally and that the ability to interact well with the teacher is necessary to attain above the middle mark bands. All too often this section was overvalued. There was a lack of interaction and the recording merely consisted of a question and answer session. In extreme cases there was also evidence of mini-presentations in response to questions which similarly did not allow for good interaction.

Accuracy and Range of Language are dependent on the amount of French conveyed by the candidate and it is unusual for a candidate who scores in the lower ranges in communication to score highly for in these sections as there is not the breadth of language required.

Centres are reminded that to reach the 5 mark band for Range of Language there is a requirement to produce unambiguous use of different verb tenses and a range of subordination. It is also important when deciding on a mark for Accuracy that the mere absence of error does not mean that the candidate can score highly, there must be an attempt to use more complex language and the candidate's pronunciation and intonation must be generally good.

Within the 3 - 4 mark band for both these sections there is the principle of best fit and that whether it is 3 or 4 will be judged by also looking at the mark band above and below.

The following checklist is given to aid centres in their administration of the unit.

- All candidates must attempt two different task types
- Centres must include examples of each of the task types used within the centre
- Each task is out of 30 and the mark awarded for each should be entered on the appropriate Optems form
- Candidates are only allowed to write up to 30 words on CA2 form
- All CDs etc should be labelled with Centre Name, Candidate Names and Numbers
- All boxes should be labelled as above

- All task titles and associated stimulus material must be included with the sample.
- The conversation section has time limits to be observed. Tasks should last between 4-6 minutes - there are mark deductions for short tasks.
- Introductions of candidates should be effected as briskly as possible in the interests of allowing the candidate to begin speaking.
- Centres should adhere to the time limits for sending materials to examiners and moderators. Delays in sending materials to moderators may lead to results not being issued on time.
- All samples should be appropriately packed with suitable padding and Edexcel polybags used to avoid damage in the post.
- The microphone should favour the candidate rather than the teacher-examiner. Centres should be aware that where automatic recording levels are achieved by some tape recorders candidate details are at times inaudible.

Conclusion

Examiners' Reports often highlight the difficulties that some centres have in adhering to the requirements of the examination and areas for improvement. However, the moderator wishes to thank centres who submitted work for the second series of this examination and proved that this is an exciting unit which allows the candidate to show what they can do in the target language using a variety of tasks which interest them.

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