

Moderators' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCSE French (5FR02) Paper 2A

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## Introduction

The first full cohort sat the unit this summer with over 1000 centres undertaking unit 2 speaking.

Although there was an increasing number of centres submitting open interactions tasks these were greatly in the minority compared with the other two task types. These were mainly based on those supplied by Edexcel rather than centres using their own design. Centres producing their own tasks are encouraged to have them checked first for suitability using the 'Ask the Expert' service since quite a number were not suitable and tended to be question and answer sessions that did not allow candidates the opportunity to be stretched, take the initiative or show any spontaneity in order to reach the higher mark bands.

Often the lack of bullet points in the stimulus proved difficult for less able candidates who were unable to fulfil the criteria to develop interaction within the task.

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. Centres designing their own interaction task must ensure that this requirement is in the stimulus.

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.

During picture-based discussions this was more often the case where teacher-examiners used the picture for the majority of the time allotted rather than use it for a short amount of time, then asked unrelated questions thus confusing the candidate.

Less successful tasks were often those where there was a lack of individuality of topic and response. This was often the case where centres gave the same photo or picture to candidates, or candidates were given the same presentation topic. Questions were often too similar and unfortunately, all too often, so too were the responses of candidates.

This is against the spirit of the controlled assessment and the specification and often put candidates at a disadvantage. There were instances of insufficient challenge for some candidates or questions that 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. These often became a question and answer session as opposed to natural interaction where the teacher-examiner responded appropriately to the responses of the candidates.

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. Presentations under one minute in length incur a deduction of 2 marks in the Content and Response section of the assessment criteria.

Similarly tasks need to last for between 4 and 6 minutes. At most centres, work submitted was in line with these requirements. However there were too many occasions where tasks were short and sometimes the introductions took nearly 30 seconds, timing of the tasks does not start until the candidate starts the task. It is rarely to the candidates' advantage to let them continue for longer than six minutes. Where submissions are less than 3m 30 there is a deduction of 2 marks for Content and Response.

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 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 the sample, they should include other candidates to make up the sample. Samples must include work from the highest and lowest scoring candidate for paper 2A.

A copy of the task and stimulus for each sampled candidate should accompany the samples together with the most up-to-date mark sheet. These can be found within the **Administrative Support Documents – Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination** which is on the Edexcel website and is generic for all languages.

There is no need for centres to send student checklists or internal mark recording sheet nor should centres send materials for candidates who are not part of the required sample.

Centres are asked not to use more than one method to record assessments. 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.

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.

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 and track listings.

While many centres provided the required documentation correctly, a number failed to do so. Centres are advised that, following feedback from the Summer 2010 series and to reduce the amount of form-filling, 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)** 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/french/Pages/default.aspx>  
 under 'Exam Materials'.

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

|   |      |
|---|------|
| For each candidate in the sample:   | Tick |
| Task/stimulus   |      |
| Form CA2 (Candidate Notes Form)   |      |
| *(Updated)* Candidate Mark Sheet for Unit 2: Speaking - signed by both candidate and centre-assessor.<br>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:  | Tick |
| 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, if not already included in the sample.<br>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)  |      |

**\* The new forms should be used for all future controlled assessment submissions.**

## **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.

**OPTEMS 2A** should be used to record the marks of candidates' work that has been recorded and this will contain at least two different task types (three if the centre has undertaken all three types). The assessment sample for moderation will be requested from OPTEMS 2A. A mark out of 30 for the recorded work must be written on this form.

**OPTEMS 2B** should be used to record the mark of the second task that each candidate has undertaken. A mark out of 30 for the recorded work must be written on this form. The marks for 2A and 2B must not be added to each other.

**Each paper code, 2A and 2B, is marked out of 30. These marks should not be added together.**

### **Marking and Internal Standardisation**

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 where there was a lack of interaction and merely consisted of a question and answer session.

This did not allow the candidate to take the initiative and show spontaneity within the task. In extreme cases there was also evidence of mini-presentations in response to questions which similarly did not allow for good interaction.

Teacher-examiners are encouraged to follow the responses of candidates carefully and respond to candidate's responses in continuing the task rather than follow a pre-determined set of questions in order to allow candidates to reach their potential and the higher mark bands.

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 in these sections as there is not the breadth of language required.

There is a need for tenses other than the present and appropriate use of subordination to be used to reach the 5 mark band for Range of Language and that within the 3 - 4 mark band 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.

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.

Moderators reported that there were some centres where there was inconsistency in marking between the teacher-examiners. However, other issues tended to relate to the overvaluing of candidate performances rather than inconsistent marking. Overvaluing of marks was particularly noticeable in the moderation of different task types.

It is important for centres to understand that they need to standardise not just the performances across a number of teachers within individual task types but also across different task types since moderators look at all the task types undertaken.

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**

Principal Moderator's reports often highlight the difficulties that centres have in adhering to the requirements of the examination and areas for improvement. However, moderators wish to thank centres who submitted work for this series of the 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.

## **Grade Boundaries**

The modern foreign languages specifications share a common design, but the assessments in different languages are not identical. Grade boundaries at unit level reflect these differences in assessments, ensuring that candidate outcomes across these specifications are comparable at specification level.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: <http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

## Marking Guidance

The following general marking principles are offered as guidance on the application of the mark scheme. They were used by moderators this summer and show how the mark scheme should be applied to different scenarios that arise during the conduct of the oral.

### Tests should last between 4 and 6 minutes.

#### Tests which are too short: < less than 3'30" - so 3'29 " is too short

- Automatic deduction of 2 marks on the Content and Response grid.
- There is no adjustment applied to either Range or Accuracy.

#### Test which are too long: > more than 6 minutes

- Once the 6 minutes have passed, stop listening and assessing at the end of the next sentence.

#### Test which are a monologue and have no interaction

- Candidates cannot score more than 7 marks for Content and Response.
- This does not affect the marks for either Range or Accuracy.

#### Open interaction tasks only

- If a candidate asks only one question in a task that requires 2 or more – deduct 1 mark from the Content and Response.
- Candidate asks no questions during the task – deduct 2 marks from the Content and Response.

The other two assessment criteria will not be affected. There is an expectation in this task type that the candidate will ask the TE questions since it is a transactional task type. Although interaction is important in all three task types, **there is no requirement for candidates to ask questions in the Presentation and discussion or in the Picture-based discussion task options.**

Marks for content and language are awarded discretely – i.e. if a candidate scores 8-11 for content, there is no imposed ceiling on either of the other assessment boxes for range or accuracy

#### Presentation and Discussion

- The presentation must last between 1 – 3 mins (max). If the presentation is shorter than 1 min deduct 2 marks for Content and Response.

**These are the only adjustments to be applied.**

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