



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In French (1FR0)

Paper 4F: Writing

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Introduction

On this paper, candidates were assessed on their ability to communicate effectively through writing in French.

They were expected to write effectively for a variety of purposes across a range of specified contexts and to show competency in several areas:

Communication for different purposes and in different settings to interest, inform and convince:

- to describe and narrate in short and more extended texts in a clear and coherent way to convey meaning, give information, present facts, key points, express and justify ideas and opinions
- translate short sentences

Language:

- write simple sentences in familiar language and use a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures with some complexity accurately and fluently
- use present, past and future tenses
- use appropriate style and register

The Paper

- the assessment time was one hour and ten minutes
- the use of dictionaries was not permitted
- the instructions to candidates were all in French

The Questions

- there were three open questions and five translation sentences
- candidates had to answer all questions with two questions presenting two options.
- recommended word counts were specified for each open question
- each question was set in a context drawn from the themes and topics
- tasks featured general content that was familiar and accessible to all candidates
- the length required for each response and the complexity of language increased across the paper

Assessment

- the paper was out of 60 marks

Candidates' ability was assessed accordingly:

- question 1: describe and give an opinion.
- question 2: note down key points and convey information. Candidates had to use the formal register
- question 3: convey information, narrate, express opinions, interest and convince. Candidates had to use the informal register. This question was common to the Higher Tier
- question 4: translate five sentences from English to French. The sentences were ordered in increasing level of difficulty

Candidates were not penalised for exceeding or falling short of the word limit or for going beyond the mandatory bullet points.

Question 1

This question was set in the context of the theme of Identity and Culture and the topic of family.

Candidates were presented with a photo of a family at home sitting on a settee looking at something on a mobile phone. They were asked to describe the photo and give their opinion on family in about 20 – 30 words. The question could be answered using the present tense only, but candidates were not penalised for using other tenses.

Most candidates fulfilled both parts of the question, which was very pleasing and has been the trend for the past few years. Candidates who did really well were able to describe the people, the action, the location, and the mood with the PALM acronym. There were a lot of accurate responses. Descriptions were well done and in a straightforward and simple way. Some candidates may have lacked basic household vocab for sofa and kitchen. There were two ways of understanding 'opinion about family' - what they thought about family in general or the family in the photo eg how they thought the family looked like (i.e. content).

Most candidates described the family and gave their opinion. Set phrases to describe what they saw were frequently used such as 'au premier plan, on peut voir' etc. Usual present tense phrases eg 'il y a, c'est' etc were used frequently and there were some other verbs, but these were not overly accurate at times leading to anglicisms such as 'ils sont regarder'. There were some nice phrases such as 'ils semblent contents/ils ont l'air content' or 'ils sont en train de'.

Question 2a

This question addressed the theme of Local area, holidays and travel and topic of travel. The candidates were presented with four bullet points within the context of a booking a holiday with a travel agent. They were asked to write 40 - 50 words using the present and future tenses.

Candidates had to mention:

- 1 personal details
- 2 what sort of accommodation they wanted
3. what activities they like doing
4. when they are going to arrive in France.

Most candidates fulfilled the first bullet point well, giving a couple of personal details, usually name and age or where they live. The bullet point about accommodation varied from candidates writing about where they wanted to stay to the type of accommodation they wanted, and some included extra information about facilities they wanted. This was also the case for the fourth bullet point. As long as it was clear that it was a future time frame, it was accepted. Some candidates gave a past time frame, which was confusing and did not therefore fulfil the bullet point. Bullet point two was answered quite successfully with most candidates understanding 'logement' well and giving hotel for the most part with some different accommodation such as castle, hostel or a camping site. Bullet point three was also: generally well answered, some writing about what they generally like to do whilst others wrote about what they want to do whilst in France – both

were acceptable.

Overall, the language used was solid with typical mistakes including 'je suis' + age and 'je suis aller'.

Question 2b

This question addressed the theme of Future aspirations, study and work and the topic of work. The candidates were presented with four bullet points within the context of a booking a holiday with a travel agent. They were asked to write 40 - 50 words using the present and future tenses.

Candidates had to mention:

- 1) sort of work preferred
- 2) personal qualities
- 3) when they want to work
- 4) how they will travel to France

Most candidates were able to express the job they prefer and their personal qualities though these were not necessarily relevant to the workplace, but were still acceptable. Some candidates misunderstood 'travail' and thought it meant travel. Some candidates also gave a place they wanted to and, in a few cases, where they have worked before. Similarly for bullet point four the question word was misinterpreted and some candidates mentioned when they are going to France not how they are travelling.

Question 3a

This question had the theme of School, and the topic of what school is like. Candidates were given four bullet points within the context of an email to a friend. The question had to be answered using present, past and future time frames.

Candidates had to mention:

- 1) favourite subjects at school
- 2) what they did at school recently
- 3) why studying French is important
- 4) what they will do next year

This was a popular question, and a good number of students attempted all bullet points with some development. Bullet point one presented no problem with candidates giving very good reasons for liking their subjects, though some candidates gave overly lengthy answers including subjects they didn't like and those their friends like. Most candidates answered the second bullet point fine giving good development. Some wrote about what they did but didn't relate it to school. There were some very good answers to bullet point three. Bullet point four was very well done with most candidates answering it in the spirit of the topic area ie what they are going to do at school.

Question 3b

This question had the theme of Identity and Culture and the topic of shopping. Candidates were given four bullet points within the context of an email to a friend. The question had to be answered using present, past and future time frames.

Candidates had to mention:

- 1) what they like to buy
- 2) the last time they shopped online

- 3) the advantages of going to large supermarkets
- 4) a shopping centre they will go to in the future

Candidates struggled with this question. Bullet point one was answered well. Most candidates were able to give a description of what they like to buy. However for bullet point two, many candidates wrote about their last shopping experience rather than an online, perhaps due to 'en ligne' not being known and one or two gave an opinion of shopping online. Candidates generally understood bullet point three well and mostly wrote about the bigger choice. There were some good answers for bullet point four, especially when a real love of shopping came through, as candidates clearly had a particular shopping centre in mind that they wanted to go to. There were some nice cultural references such as 'Galeries Lafayette' and Paris in general due to the choice of fashion. There were similar issues with language formation in answers to both of these questions in terms of the shaky formation of the perfect tense mostly due to the incorrect auxiliary being used. There was also little complexity. Sometimes incorrect time frames were given, so 'l'année dernière' instead of 'l'année prochaine' was given.

Some candidates used too many idioms in their answers, which made the piece stilted and if misused detracted from the clarity. The most common ones were 'ma tasse de thé, quelle horreur, autant que je sache'.

Question 4

This question addressed the theme of International and global dimensions and the topic of music events. Candidates had to translate five sentences from English to French.

- Most candidates got full marks on this with a few cases of misspelling music, mostly giving the English spelling.
- Many candidates were at ease with je vais. A significant number of candidates struggled with souvent and gave the singular for festivals.
- Most candidates produced 'j'écoute', but a significant number did not know 'tous les jours' and many struggled with "my favourite band"
- This question proved to be the most challenging, as, apart from the correct translation of brother and prefer (albeit with the accents in the wrong place including spelling it as a past participle), very few candidates gave the infinitive 'regarder' and prepositions were inaccurate in front of 'télévision'.
- Many candidates gained full marks on this question; Candidates seemed well drilled in the perfect tense, the time frame and the vocabulary was accessible.

General advice to candidates

Candidates are advised to make sure their knowledge of tenses is secure and that they attempt complex constructions in order to access the higher bands on the Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy mark grid. Basic vocabulary items are essential in order to be able to answer all questions and for the answer to be clear. As far as possible, the words count should be adhered to, as, in some cases, it was clear that the lengthier answers contained more mistakes.

