



Pearson
Edexcel

GCSE French (2024)

Unpacking the Writing
Exam



Agenda

- Welcome and introduction
- Overview of the Writing papers (Foundation and Higher)
- Open-ended writing tasks, mark schemes and marking of exemplars
- Resources, support and further training
- Close

Today's goals

- To recap the structure and key features of the Foundation and Higher Tier papers
- To increase familiarity with the open-ended writing tasks
- To understand the application of the mark schemes
- To practise marking exemplar material (language specific)
- To know how to access resources, support and ongoing training





Overview of the Writing paper

Paper 4, Writing

	Foundation Tier	Higher Tier
Assessment time	1 hour 15 minutes	1 hour 20 minutes
Number of questions	4 questions: 3 open response and 1 translation	3 questions: 2 open response and 1 translation
Question 1	Picture task, write 4 sentences 8 marks	Open response, informal context Select one of two options 18 marks (80–90 words)
Question 2	Open response, formal context Select one of two options 14 marks (40–50 words)	Open response, formal context Select one of two options 22 marks (130–150 words)
Question 3	Open response, informal context Select one of two options 18 marks (80–90 words)	Translate a short paragraph from English into French, 50 words minimum
Question 4	Translate 5 sentences from English into French, 35 words minimum	



Open Ended Writing Tasks

A decorative vertical strip on the left side of the slide features a complex geometric pattern. It includes various shapes like triangles and polygons in shades of purple, black, teal, and yellow, creating a vibrant, abstract design.

Foundation Tier Question 2

Foundation Tier – Question 2

Choose either Question 2(a) or Question 2(b)

If you answer Question 2(a), put a cross in the box ☐.

2 (a) Write a review of a café for a website.

You **must** include the following points:

- where the café is
- your opinion of the food
- when you will next visit the café.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 40 and 50 words.

(14)

If you answer Question 2(b), put a cross in the box ☐.

(b) Write a review of your mobile phone for a website.

You **must** include the following points:

- what your phone looks like
- your opinion of your phone
- how you will use it this weekend.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 40 and 50 words.

(14)

- Choice of clear, accessible tasks
- Both tasks have the same format – writing a review, but different subject matter
- Review is a formal context but no requirement to use a formal register
- Three bullet points, which **must** be covered to meet assessment criteria
- Clear requirement to use future reference
- Clear information about length of task
- Assessment – 9 marks for AO2 and 5 marks for AO3

Foundation Tier – Question 2 – Assessment AO2

AO2: Response to stimulus	
Mark	Descriptor
7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All three bullet points addressed• Some development of ideas• Most of the response is comprehensible; some messages may be unclear.
4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two or more bullet points addressed• Limited development of ideas• Some parts of the response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down.
1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One or more bullet point addressed• Little or no development of ideas• Few parts of the response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No rewardable material.

3 key features assessed in the response –
bullet points, development, comprehension

- Clarity re minimum number of bullet points addressed
- Development of ideas – to what extent has the student addressed the bullet point requirement by adding further details?
- Comprehension – do the errors impact on how the examiner comprehends the information written by the student?

Foundation Tier – Question 2 – Assessment AO3

AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some variety of vocabulary and phrases• Simple grammatical structures with some variety, some linking of sentences with conjunctions• Some accurate language, mostly minor errors.
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited variety of vocabulary and phrases• Simple grammatical structures with limited attempt at variety, limited linking of sentences with conjunctions• Limited accurate language; errors occur, some of which may be major.
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimal variety of vocabulary and/or phrases in isolation• Minimal use of simple grammatical structures, likely to be repetitive• Minimal accuracy in the language, frequent errors both major and minor.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No rewardable material.

3 key features assessed in the response – variety of language, grammatical structures, accuracy.

- Variety of vocabulary and phrases.
- Use & variety of grammatical structures, including use of conjunctions to write longer sentences.
- Accuracy with focus on minor & major errors.

AO3 Errors

Errors (AO3 grids: all questions)

A **minor error** may or may not hinder clarity, i.e. the message may take time to understand but is understood (see tables below).

A **major error** prevents meaning being communicated, i.e. the message cannot be understood (see tables below).

Minor errors – may or may not hinder clarity			
Errors that do not hinder clarity		Errors that hinder clarity	
Adjective agreement	La mer est vert. Mon frère est intelligente.	Verb agreement	L'année dernière, ma tante acheté une voiture.
Spelling (slight)	J'aime le frommage.	Spelling (significant)	J'aime manger du poolet.
Gender	Dans le ville il y a un piscine.	Relative pronouns	Mon frère, que aime le foot, joue tous les samedis.
Accents (missing)	Mon anniversaire est le deux fevrier.	Accents (incorrect)	Ou est la garé ?
Contractions	Ma maison est près de le parc.	Vocabulary	Mon équipe a joué très mauvais. Mon ami est dans France.
Word order (incorrect)	Je n'ai mangé pas à midi.	Constructions	Je n'entends pas avec ma sœur. En France il y a chaud en été.
Mother-tongue interference	Mon père est un professeur.	Mother-tongue interference	C'est mon anniversaire, je suis 16 ans.
		Tenses (inappropriate)	Je vais parti en vacances.

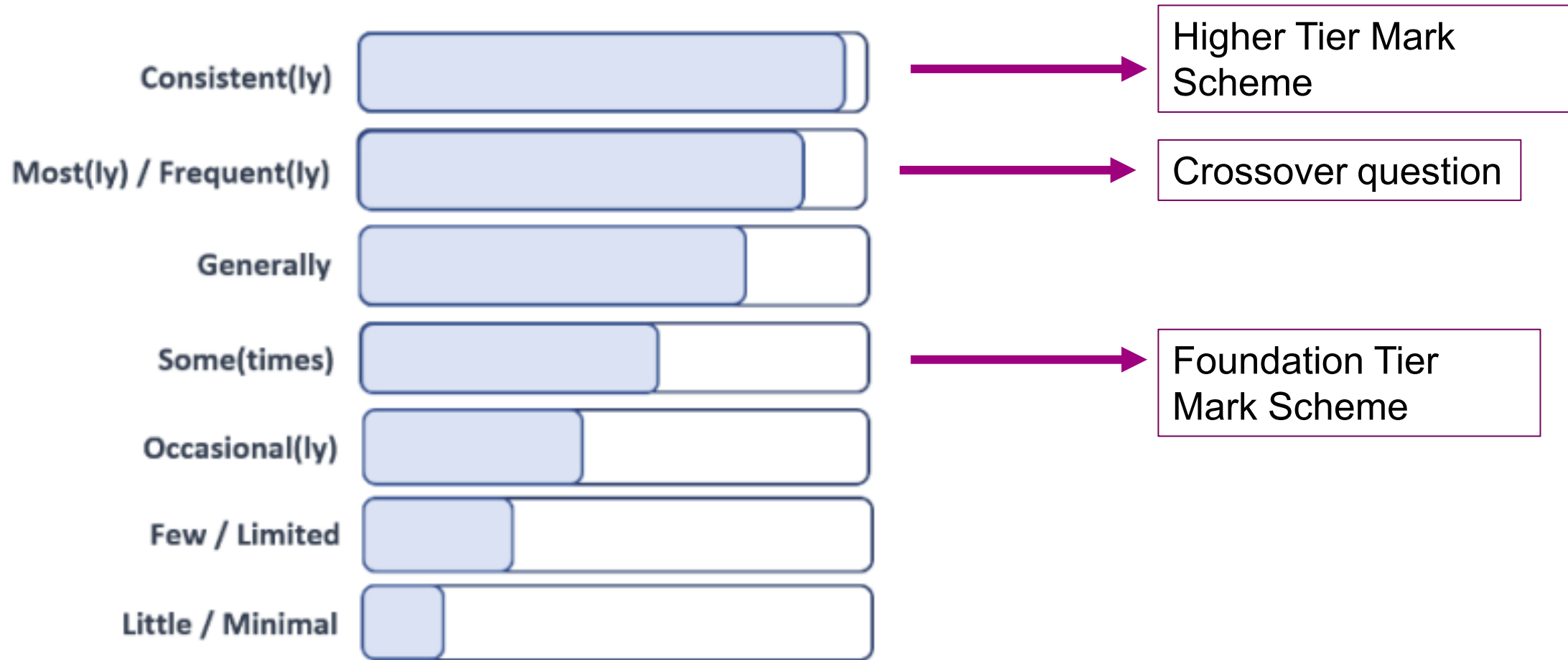
AO3 Errors

Major errors – prevents meaning being conveyed	
Verb agreement	Est-ce que nous allez au cinéma ce soir?
Spelling (misleading)	J'aime la nation et le tennis.
Tenses (incorrect)	Demain il est allé au collège en bus.
Incorrect verb formation	J'alle au marché. Je recève des cadeaux.
Vocabulary	Ma mère est courante.
Use of infinitive instead of conjugated verb	Lucie avoir un accident de voiture.
Mismatch of subject and possessive adjectives	Je veux s'amuser.
Mother-tongue interference	Mon père travaille dans un office. Il y a un museum en ville.

Hints and tips

- Consider the answer as a whole.
- Look at the Assessment Objectives separately.
- After deciding which descriptors most closely match the answer and place it in that band.
- Be positive! Look to reward rather than penalise.
- Concentrate on the overall quality.
- Avoid focusing disproportionately on small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest.
- Use a best fit approach for defining the band.
- Once decided on a band, decide on a mark within the band.
- Award marks towards the top/bottom of the band depending on how the answer evidences the descriptors.

Differentiation terms within the mark scheme



Applying the mark scheme

(b) Write a review of your mobile phone for a website.

You **must** include the following points:

- what your phone looks like
- your opinion of your phone
- how you will use it this weekend.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 40 and 50 words.

(14)

L'inconvénient^{est} c'est très cher. (14)
Mon portable il est ~~de~~ grande, vert et il y a trop
apps. Pour commencer, je crois que tout compte
fait il est très intéressant et important pour moi.
Pour le weekend je suis allé utiliser mon portable
~~avec~~ je joue avec mes amis.

What mark did you give?

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All three bullet points addressed Some development of ideas Most of the response is comprehensible; some messages may be unclear. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some variety of vocabulary and phrases Simple grammatical structures with some variety, some linking of sentences with conjunctions Some accurate language, mostly minor errors.
4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or more bullet points addressed Limited development of ideas Some parts of the response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down. 	3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited variety of vocabulary and phrases Simple grammatical structures with limited attempt at variety, limited linking of sentences with conjunctions Limited accurate language; errors occur, some of which may be major.
1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more bullet point addressed Little or no development of ideas Few parts of the response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down. 	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal variety of vocabulary and/or phrases in isolation Minimal use of simple grammatical structures, likely to be repetitive Minimal accuracy in the language, frequent errors both major and minor.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material.

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Foundation Tier Question 3/
Higher Tier Question 1

Foundation Tier Question 3 / Higher Tier Question 1

Choose either Question 3(a) or Question 3(b)

If you answer Question 3(a), put a cross in the box ☐.

- 3 (a) Write to your friend about shopping.

You **must** include the following points:

- types of shops in your area
- your opinion of one shop with reasons
- what you have bought recently
- where you will go for your next shopping trip.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 80 and 90 words.

(18)

If you answer Question 3(b), put a cross in the box ☐.

- (b) Write to your friend about transport.

You **must** include the following points:

- public transport where you live
- your opinion of public transport with reasons
- how you went to school last week
- where you will go this summer.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 80 and 90 words.

(18)

In both options the form requested, 'write to your friend' remains the same, but the 'subject matter' changes to focus students' decision making on their preferred subject.

Four bullet points, with requirement to use an opinion with justification, past and future timeframes clearly indicated. These bullet points always follow this pattern.

13 marks for AO2 and 5 marks for AO3.

Foundation Tier Q3 / Higher Tier Q1 Assessment

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All four bullet points addressed Frequent development of ideas Response is comprehensible; an occasional message may be unclear. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, some extended sentences; occasional complex language Generally successful use of three timeframes Generally accurate language; some minor errors, there may be an occasional major error.
8-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three or more bullet points addressed Some development of ideas Response is generally comprehensible; some messages may be unclear/difficult to understand immediately. 	3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; occasionally extended sentences Some successful use of at least two timeframes Some accurate language; mostly minor errors with some major errors.
5-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or more bullet points addressed Occasional, brief development of ideas Some parts of response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down. 	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; short, simple sentences Limited success with timeframes Limited accuracy in the language; frequent errors both major and minor.
1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more bullet point addressed Little or no extra detail added to ideas Limited parts of response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material. 		

Applying the mark scheme

Salut mon ami, J'adore faire du shopping !
Le Centre Commercial est à côté de
chez moi donc j'y vais fréquemment.
~~Espe~~ A mon avis Je pense que faire
du shopping est une façon de se
déstresser. Récemment, j'ai acheté des
vêtements pour une soirée avec ma
famille. il existe différents types de
magasins dans ma région, par exemple
des magasins de vêtements comme
Primark et Next. Pour ma prochaine
virée shopping, Je vais dans un
magasin de chaussures pour pouvoir
acheter de nouvelles baskets, je suis
tellement excitée.

3 (a) Write to your friend about shopping.

You **must** include the following points:

- types of shops in your area
- your opinion of one shop with reasons
- what you have bought recently
- where you will go for your next shopping trip.

What mark did you give?

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All four bullet points addressed Frequent development of ideas Response is comprehensible; an occasional message may be unclear. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, some extended sentences; occasional complex language Generally successful use of three timeframes Generally accurate language; some minor errors, there may be an occasional major error.
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1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more bullet point addressed Little or no extra detail added to ideas Limited parts of response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material.
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Higher Tier Question 2

Higher Tier Question 2

- In both options the form requested, 'write for an online magazine' remains the same, but the 'subject matter' changes. An online magazine is a formal setting but no requirement to use formal register.
- Four bullet points, with requirement to use an opinion, past and future timeframes clearly indicated.
- Increased demand – from an 'opinion' to expressing 'pros and cons'
- Increased number of words 130–150
- 17 marks for AO2 & 5 marks for AO3

Choose either Question 2(a) or 2(b).

If you answer Question 2(a), put a cross in the box ☐.

- 2 (a) Write about healthy living for an online magazine.

You **must** include the following points:

- what makes a healthy diet
- the pros and cons of eating out
- what healthy activities you did last week
- how you will stay healthy this weekend.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 130 and 150 words.

(22)

If you answer Question 2(b), put a cross in the box ☐.

- (b) Write about schools for an online magazine.

You **must** include the following points:

- what makes a good school
- the pros and cons of single-sex schools
- what happened at your school recently
- your education plans for next year.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 130 and 150 words.

(22)

Higher Tier Question 2 Assessment

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
14-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All four bullet points addressed Consistent development of ideas Response is easily comprehensible; it is rare that the message is not immediately clear. 	4-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, frequent extended sentences; frequent complex language Consistently successful use of three timeframes Consistently accurate language: any errors are minor.
11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All four bullet points addressed Frequent development of ideas Response is comprehensible; the occasional message may be unclear. 	2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, some extended sentences; some complex language Generally successful use of at least two timeframes Generally accurate language; mostly minor errors, occasional major errors.
8-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three or more bullet points addressed Some development of ideas Response is generally comprehensible; some messages may be unclear/ difficult to understand immediately. 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; occasionally extended sentences; there may be occasional use of complex language Occasional success with timeframes Some accurate language; frequent errors, some of them major.
5-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or more bullet points addressed Occasional, brief development of ideas Some parts of the response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material.
1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more bullet point addressed Limited development of ideas, any extra detail is likely to be very brief Limited parts of the response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down. 		
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material. 		

Applying the mark scheme

(b) Write about schools for an online magazine.

You **must** include the following points:

- what makes a good school
- the pros and cons of single-sex schools
- what happened at your school recently
- your education plans for next year.

A mon avis, un bon école est un école avec les profs et les élèves contents. J'imaginerai un école avec les technologiques modernes beaucoup des endroits verts et ^{des} grand des grandes salles de classe.

J'étudie ^{dans un} collège pour uniquement les filles ^{depuis quatre ans}. D'avantage, ^{vous ne voyez pas} les garçons, qui peuvent très égoïstes. Mais il y a beaucoup de compétition - ~~c'est~~ ce n'est pas bon pour la mentale - c'est très stressant!

La semaine dernière, j'ai ^{faire une} ~~mis~~ ^{excursion} avec mes amies et ^{mes} ~~mes~~ profs. Nous sommes allés au théâtre. Où on a vu un pièce, qui s'appelle "Cinderella."

^{après avoir finis mes GCSEs} A l'avenir, j'espère continuer avec mes études dans la lycée. Ce serait ^{un} ~~un~~ peu difficile, mais je travaillerai dur. Cependant, c'est un peu inquiète que c'est l'année prochaine!

What total mark did you give?

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
14-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All four bullet points addressed Consistent development of ideas Response is easily comprehensible; it is rare that the message is not immediately clear. 	4-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, frequent extended sentences; frequent complex language Consistently successful use of three timeframes Consistently accurate language: any errors are minor.
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0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewardable material. 		



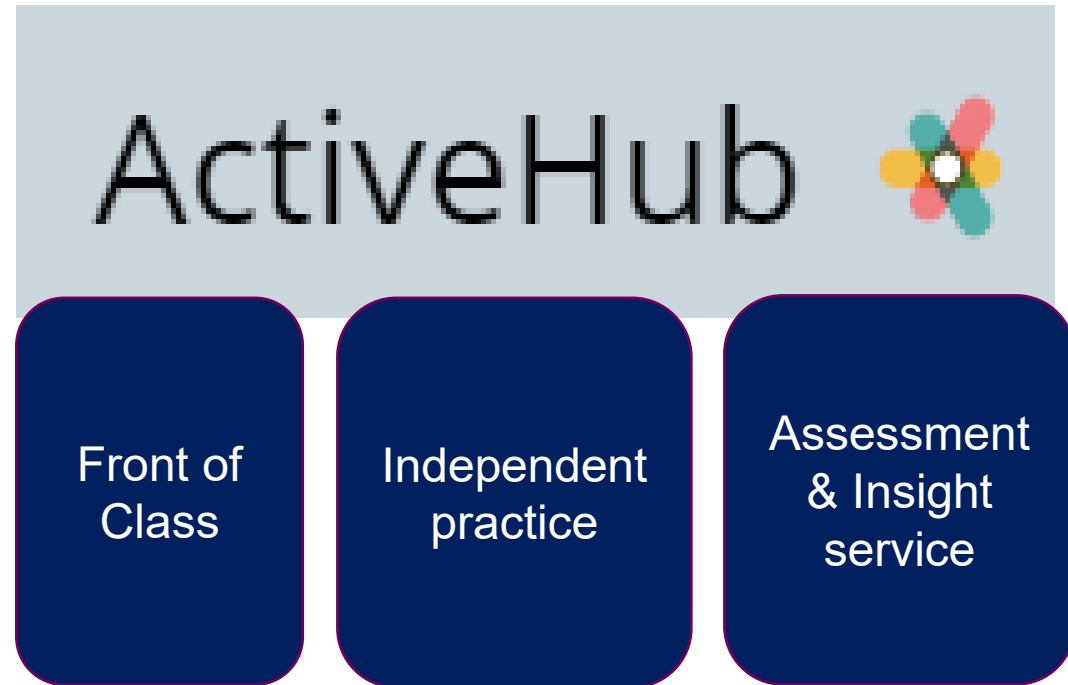
Resources and support

GCSE resources from Pearson



Higher
Tier
Student
Book

Foundation
Tier
Student
Book



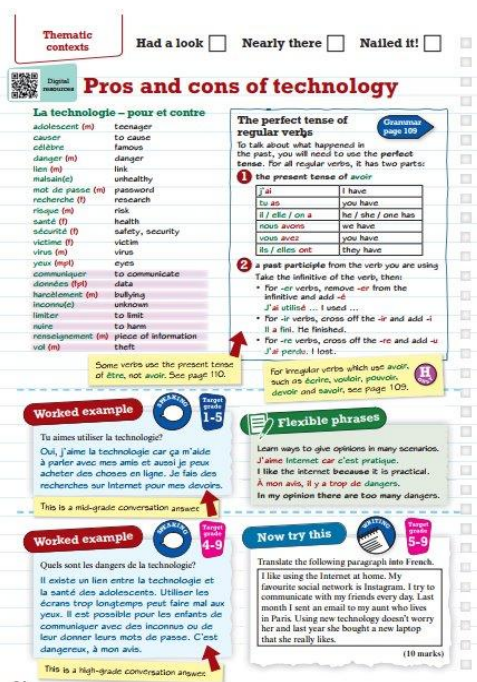
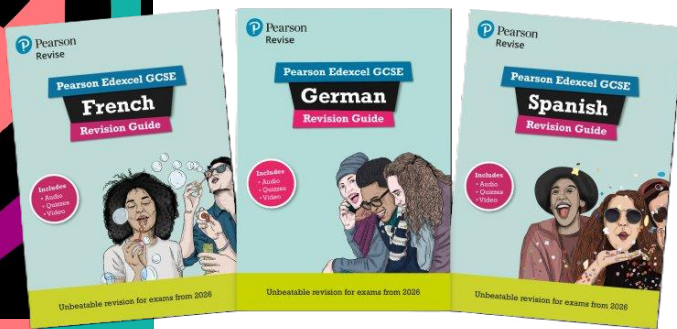
Front of
Class

Independent
practice

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Pearson scheme of work

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- **Videos** on key assessment points and grammar
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The screenshot displays the Pearson Edexcel GCSE Spanish Exam 2026 interface. It features a 'Photo description writing task (Foundation only)' with a photo of four students sitting on steps. The task asks the user to describe the photo in four short sentences in Spanish. The interface shows the user's answer, the corrected answer, and detailed feedback for two sentences. The feedback for Sentence B indicates that the verb form should be 'lleve' instead of 'llevas' and that the adjective 'rojo' should be 'roja' to match the feminine noun 'camisa'. The feedback for Sentence C indicates that the sentence correctly uses the verb 'tienen'.

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Further training and resources

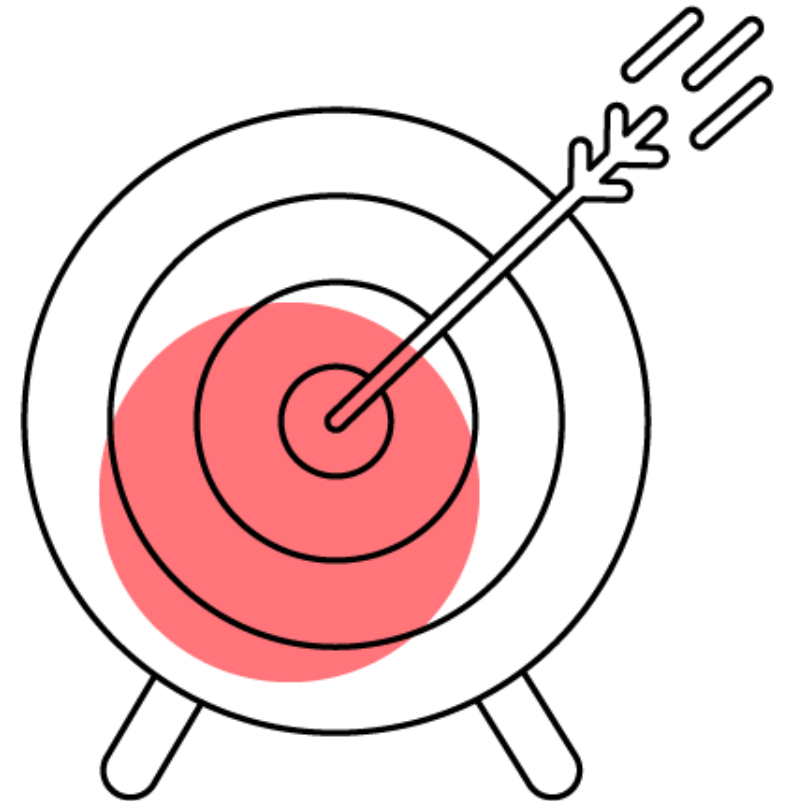
- Training currently available on the [PD Academy](#):
 - GCSE 2024 '[How to conduct the speaking exam](#)' live and pre-record training
 - Drop-in clinics
 - New to Pearson Edexcel (which replaces our GRTT training)
 - Unpacking the Speaking Exam / Unpacking the Writing Exam
 - Effective Phonics Teaching for the Read Aloud and Dictation Tasks
 - Mastering Dictation
 - [YouTube playlist](#) of event recordings, including Spotlight on Writing, Paper 4
- Training coming soon:
 - Self-paced training of Unpacking the Speaking and Unpacking the Writing courses
- Writing Guide [Paper 4, Writing – Teacher Guide](#) (guides available for all papers)
- Further exemplar material [Pearson Edexcel GCSE French \(2024\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

A large, solid purple circle is centered on a white background. Inside the circle, the text "Any questions?" is written in a white, sans-serif font.

Any questions?

Review of today's goals

- To recap the structure and key features of the Foundation and Higher Tier papers
- To increase familiarity with the open-ended writing tasks
- To understand the application of the mark schemes
- To practise marking exemplar material (language specific)
- To know how to access resources, support and ongoing training



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Languages

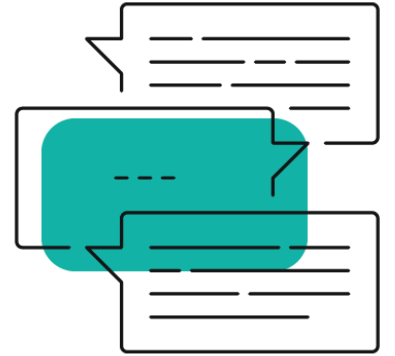
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Phone: +44 (0) 344 463 2535
(Mon–Fri, 9.00–17.00)

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Rebecca Waker
Languages



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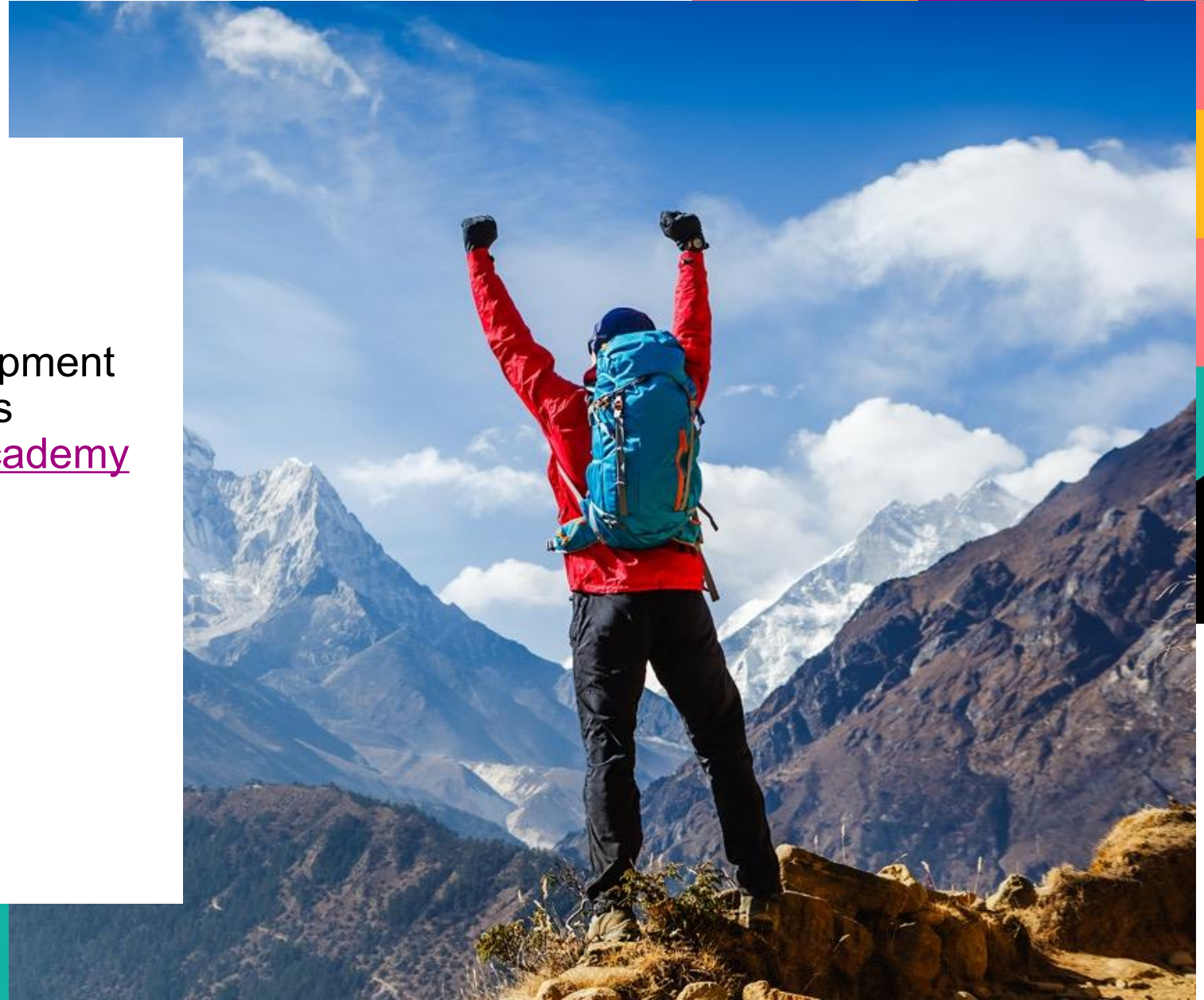
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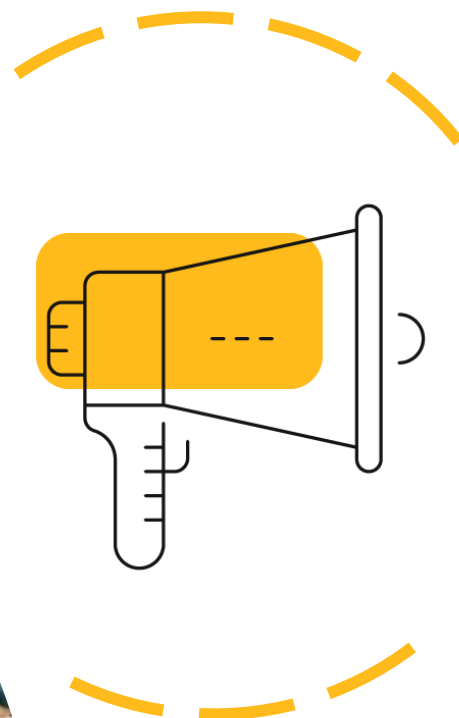
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Your Feedback Matters

Following this event, you will receive an invitation to share your thoughts about the session. Your feedback is invaluable to us, as it helps us tailor our professional development materials to better meet your needs. Please don't hesitate to let us know what you'd like to see more of and what areas you think could be improved.



Pearson