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Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2024

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level in
French (WFR02) Paper 01

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Introduction

WFR02/01 is a unit from the current IAL French specification which does not supersede a previous one.

External assessment: written examination

Availability: January and June

First assessment: June 2017

Total marks: 90

Weighting: 69.2% of the total IAS raw marks

34.6% of the total IAL marks

Examination time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Assessment across Unit WFR02/01 relates to the following General Topic Areas:

| General Topic Area | Subtopics |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Youth matters | Family relationships and friendships Peer pressure and role models Music and fashion Technology and communication |
| Lifestyle, health and fitness | Food and diet Sport and exercise Health issues Urban and rural life |
| Environment and travel | Tourism, travel and transport Natural disasters and weather Climate change and its impact Energy, pollution and recycling |
| Education and employment | Education systems and types of schooling Pupil/student life Volunteering and internships Jobs and unemployment |

Assessment

The assessment for this unit has three sections.

Section A: Listening (20 marks)

Candidates will be required to listen to a range of authentic recorded TL material and to retrieve and convey information given in the recording by responding to a range of TL questions.

Candidates will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and short answers in the target language.

Section B: Reading and Grammar (30 marks)

Candidates will be required to read authentic TL printed materials and to retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of test types in the target language. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and TL answers.

Questions are linked to a range of reading comprehension exercises.

Candidates will also need to understand and manipulate grammatical structures in the TL by selecting the most appropriate word form to fit a gap.

Section C: Essay (40 marks)

Candidates will write a 240-280 word essay in the TL, in response to a short TL stimulus and four related bullet points. The assessment rewards candidates for communicating relevant information effectively as well as for the quality of the language produced.

Comments relating to individual questions from the 24 01 series:

Section A: Listening

Question 1. Multiple Choice Candidates were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 1 was taken from the subtopic of Food and diet. Examples of candidate performance:

Q1(a) The majority of candidates succeeded in ruling out all three plausible distractors relating to mealtime routines. A few candidates seemed unfamiliar with the terms: *horaire* and *endroit*.

Q1(c) Most candidates were able to establish a link between *différentes saveurs* in the recording and the response option *variés*.

Q1(d) In order to succeed here, candidates needed to make the potential link between *aller jouer* and *faire autre chose*. Candidates who were unable to do this may have chosen to rule out all three distractors, as an alternative method.

Question 2. Multiple Choice Candidates were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 2 was taken from the subtopic of energy, pollution and recycling. Examples of candidate performance:

Q2(a) In order to rule out all three very plausible distractors, candidates needed to take account of *principalement* in the question. This is a good example of why candidates need to focus their attention on three sources of information: the recording, the question and the response options.

Q2(b) In order for the correct response *l'argent* to be chosen, candidates were required to note the chronology of events. Paying heed to the use of *d'abord* in the question was essential.

Question 3. Summary completion Candidates were required to complete a summary, choosing from a list of eight words. There was a mixture of word types. Question 3 was taken from the subtopic of Family relationships and friendships. Examples of candidate performance:

Q3(a) On this occasion, there were only two potential responses. Most candidates were able to rule out *beaucoup*, as the recording referred to *presque rien à voir avec le mien*.

Q3(b) Although most candidates discriminated successfully between *pleurs* and *querelles*, some seemed unfamiliar with at least one of the two. Additionally, in the recording, candidates needed to be aware of the reference to *sans nous disputer*.

Q3(d) From the two very plausible responses available, candidates were usually able to distinguish between *louer* and *acheter*. They were able to do this by establishing the link between *partager la location* and *louer*.

Question 4. Short Answer Questions This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 4 was taken from the subtopic of pupil/student life. Examples of candidate performance:

Q4(a) Although most candidates understood that Rachid would be taking the *bac* this year, many did not pick up *pas question de...* Some therefore offered the opposite of the correct response.

Q4(b) Most candidates responded correctly to at least one element, identifying the reason why Rachid was less stressed this year. It was important that this reduction in stress related to Rachid, rather than his classmates.

Q4(c) *la veille* proved rather challenging to less confident candidates who were either unsure as to what it meant or were unable to spell it. Other candidates found it difficult to avoid ambiguity in their response, due to errors in utilising pronouns. In place of *la veille de la rentrée*, some candidates referred to *le jour de la rentrée* - this could not be credited.

Q4(d) Many candidates offered a short, albeit correct response such as: *la nouvelle routine*. Candidates sometimes offered a lengthy response, including additional material that vitiated what would have been an otherwise correct response.

Q4(e) Whereas many candidates were successful here, some gave the opposite of the correct answer when they wrote *Il connaissait déjà la plupart des professeurs*.

Section B: Reading and Grammar

Question 5. Multiple Choice Questions Candidates were provided with four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 5 was taken from the subtopic of Health issues. Examples of candidate performance:

Q5(a) It was necessary for candidates to focus on the idea of *à part fumer* which appeared in the question. Equally, it was important to distinguish between the two opposites available within the response options: *saine* and *malsaine*.

Q5(b) As reasons for stopping smoking are well documented in the media, this question served as useful example of the need for candidates to base responses solely on evidence found within the text.

Q5(e) Here, candidates had to focus solely on David's attitude towards smokers, rather than other people's attitudes to them.

Question 6. Short Answer Questions This question required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 6 was taken from the subtopic of Music and Fashion.

When responding to this question, most candidates were usually mindful to avoid using untargeted lifts from the text. Candidates are asked to express responses in their own words, where possible.

Untargeted lifts:

An untargeted lift is an answer where a candidate copies out a chunk of the text indiscriminately, with no manipulation of the text. Questions are normally phrased so that candidates cannot offer an untargeted lift and still give the correct answer.

Example:

Q6(a) Quelle est l'opinion de Nabila sur la routine matinale de ses copines ?

Part of the text reads:

... je n'ai pas envie de me stresser comme elles le font....

An untargeted lift such as *je n'ai pas envie de me stresser comme elles le font....* does not answer the question.

However, candidates can manipulate language from the text to make a correct answer (a targeted lift) e.g. *C'est stressant*

Other examples of candidate performance:

Q6(c) Whereas many candidates were successful here, some constructions used in responses led to ambiguity. For example: *la mère de Nabila s'achetait/ne s'achetait plus/* could not be credited since it is not clear that the clothes the mother bought are for her daughter, not for herself.

One candidate offered: *Elle a arretee d'acheter des habbits a la mode pour Nabila.* This is a useful example of where a response is credited, even though the response contains grammatical and lexical errors. Marks for Question 6 are awarded solely on the basis of responses being comprehensible. This is also the case for Question 4 and Question 7.

Q6(d) Most candidates offered a concise and correct response, often using their own words. However, candidates who conveyed the notion of *élégante* without linking it to Nabila's hair did not score.

Question 7. Short Answer Questions This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 7 was taken from the subtopic of jobs and unemployment. Examples of candidate performance:

Q7(b) In certain instances, the selection of incorrect pronouns led to ambiguity. For example: *son travail ne s'apportait/ne leur apportait plus la même satisfaction* could not be credited.

Q7(c) Although most candidates seemed to have understood that Samuel's colleagues were not surprised, some found it difficult to express this clearly within their response. For example: *ils ne se surpris pas, ils n'ont pas surpris Samuel*.

A typical correct response to the second element was: *Ils l'ont pris au sérieux*. However, a noticeable number of candidates offered the opposite answer: *Ils ne l'ont pas pris au sérieux*. Very careful reading of the text was needed here.

Q7(d) Most candidates were successful here, though ambiguity was sometimes caused by incorrect use of pronouns. For example: *Son professeur s'est inspiré*.

Q7(e) Careful reading was needed to find the correct answer relating to difficulties Samuel encountered. Some candidates did not read much further than *Il m'a fallu peu de temps...* and did not pick up on the detail relating to actual *difficultés*, as required within the question.

Q7(f) Whereas most candidates were successful, conveying the idea of *un autre travail* or *un travail à temps partiel* presented occasional difficulties. On some occasions, the response lacked an essential detail. For example: *Il n'a pas besoin de travailler* could not be credited.

Question 8. Sentence Transformations Candidates were required to write out the correct form of each targeted word. Question 8 was taken from the subtopic of jobs and unemployment. Examples of candidate performance:

Q8(a) Most candidates were familiar with *suis arrivé*, though a significant number omitted the accent or offered an incorrect accent.

Q8(b) Many candidates were unable to offer the correct present participle: *ayant*.

Q8(c) The vast majority of candidates offered the correct infinitive form: *pouvoir*.

Q8(d) Many candidates were aware that *chic* is invariable. However, *chique* was often offered as a response.

Q8(e) In order to secure the mark, the accent used in *me lève* needed to be the correct one.

Q8(f) Most candidates were familiar with the feminine singular agreement used in *gentille*.

Q8(g) The conditional form *serait* was known by many candidates. A few did however offer *sera, serai, serais*.

Q8(h) The correct response *ennuyees* was offered by many candidates. Some offered *ennuyeux* or *ennuyees*.

Q8(i) The cedilla used in *reçois* was required in order to gain the mark.

Q8(j) Only *laisserai* and *vais laisser* were accepted here. Several candidates offered *laissera, laisserais*.

Section C Writing

Question 9. Essay This section requires candidates to write an essay based on a short, target language stimulus and four related bullet points. The recommended length for the essay is 240-280 words, though examiners mark all the work written by candidates; they do not count the words when marking the essay. It is, however, quite possible for an essay of 240-280 words to gain full marks and candidates should avoid writing essays which are over-long. Question 9 was taken from the subtopic of tourism, travel and transport.

There was clear evidence that candidates had studied the appropriate subtopic. Overall, candidates were mindful to avoid digression and irrelevant content.

Clarity of language remained a key issue for a minority of candidates and incorrect language did sometimes impede the message they were attempting to convey. A number of essays included very basic grammatical and lexical errors. For example:

ce, ces, ses, cette used in place of *c'est*.

je alle used in place of *je vais*.

sa used in place of *ça*.

ai used in place of *est*.

Incorrect use of reflexive pronouns, direct object pronouns and indirect object pronouns.

Spelling of common lexical items: *beacoup, heuresement*.

Influence from languages other than French – *comfortable, environment, encontrar*.

Use of incorrect tenses.

Subject not matching the verb.

The majority of candidates were however mindful to avoid using over-ambitious structures, thus responding at their own optimal level. The range of lexis was usually wide and specific to the subject.

Bullet point 1 – A significant majority of candidates began by disagreeing with Mathilde’s opinion regarding free public transport, then proceeded to justify their own stance. They did so in a coherent and purposeful way, avoiding digression. In some instances, candidates indicated absolute agreement with Mathilde, supporting such views with a wide range of justifications, such as the need to increase taxation, even for those not using public transport. There were however several instances where candidates agreed with Mathilde, only to then contradict this point of view.

Bullet point 2 – Most candidates were able to convey a range of experiences relating to public transport, reporting positive experiences. Some candidates began by noting that they had only limited experience of public transport and they continued by reflecting on the experiences of other family members. This was an innovative way of ensuring that they developed the bullet point. Other candidates referred to negative experiences, mainly involving overcrowding and poor security.

Bullet point 3 – Many candidates made an initial reference to the future of public transport, such as: *Quant à l’avenir des transports en commun, ...* This may have helped them to maintain the focus on the question. This was in contrast to some other candidates who, throughout their response, made no reference to the future of public transport. Typically, candidates made reference to technology and its benefit for the planet, thus providing a link to the fourth bullet point.

Bullet point 4 – As for discouraging travelling by plane, candidates had very different views. Some considered that issues of pollution were sufficient justification for banning most air travel. Many condemned the use of private planes used by celebrities. Others considered this means of travelling essential.

Even less confident candidates were successful in introducing their response to this bullet point, slightly manipulating the language used on the question paper. For example: *À mon avis, il faut décourager les voyages en avion parce que c’est ...* This demonstrated that they had at least begun to address the bullet point. There were however numerous candidates who largely overlooked the task set within the bullet point, referring only to the advantages and disadvantages of air travel.

Candidates may wish to pause very briefly whilst addressing each bullet point, just to check that they are still responding to the actual task. If one bullet point is not addressed, the overall mark for “Content and Communication” cannot exceed 16/20. Some basic planning before writing the essay may also be helpful.

Q9 What candidates did well:

- All four bullet points were addressed
- Responses were typically of between 240 and 280 words
- Candidates developed all bullet points

- Exemplification of bullet points, based upon personal experience
- Restricted the response to just relevant material
- Many essays offered a significant range of complex structures and targeted lexis

Q9 How some candidates could improve upon performance:

- Be sure to expand upon all four bullet points
- Be aware that an essay of 240 words can attract full marks
- Read each bullet point carefully
- Avoid digression from the required content
- Remember that irrelevance is more commonplace in very long responses
- Avoid the use of over-ambitious structures

General summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates should:

- Ensure that handwriting is clearly legible
- Avoid the use of untargeted lifts from texts when answering questions in Section B
- Base all comprehension responses solely upon evidence from the text/recording
- Use their own words, where possible, when answering questions in Section B
- Be familiar with grammatical structures associated with this specification
- Address all elements of each question, especially Question 9

