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Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In French (WFR04) Paper 1

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Candidates were familiar with the topic areas covered and most candidates were able to attempt all parts of the paper. Whilst many fared well with the comprehension questions in Sections A and B, especially the multiple-choice questions, the open questions and question 8, Section C provided us with a good range of interesting and well-informed essays.

Section A – Listening

Questions 1 and 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).

It is vital that candidates do not rush into committing themselves to an answer. At this level, they should listen for the gist of the whole passage; a word which is mentioned in the recording does not necessarily lead them to the answer in the question paper.

For instance: In question 1b, the answer was **A**

La marque est vendue ... (1)

A plus en ligne qu'en magasin. **B** autant en ligne qu'en magasin.

C exclusivement sur Internet. **D** surtout en magasin.

(Transcript) *Au revoir les magasins! Cette marque est presque 100% en ligne*

Presque 100% was key to answer the questions referring to amounts in the text.

*C was not mentioned in the text, B & D are not correct because it says **presque 100% en ligne**.*

Advice to candidates: A careful and detailed analysis of the question is 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.

This question was generally well answered, with **3d** providing the most challenge for candidates. It is vital that candidates do not rush into committing themselves to an answer but listen out for clues. **Ce n'est pas** referred to *plusieurs facteurs, comme la petite enfance, les écoles et l'immigration*.

Question 4: Short Answer in French.

This question required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks.

Here, as in Section B, targeted lifts are sometimes possible. It is important for candidates to know that they can re-use the language they hear but at this level, direct lifts will usually not enable candidates to score. Candidates need to manipulate the language they hear. Candidates should try to use their own words as much as possible to render the meaning. However, while it is possible to convey the meaning by using their own words, when the information is very technical or specific, candidates should manipulate the language they hear instead of writing incoherent circumlocutions.

In this section, as in section B, listening skills and reading skills are assessed, which means that sentences that contain grammatical and spelling errors can score, as long as the error does not lead to ambiguity. Responses to Questions 4, 6 and 7 are only marked on the basis of communication, rather than accuracy of language. There were many instances however where candidates were not awarded the marks as the inaccuracy of their written French hindered communication. Some candidates were tempted to transcribe what they heard which, on all occasions, proved to be unsuccessful for two main reasons: (1) the candidates were not able to render the correct words (2) the candidates tended to write everything and did not select the important information, sometimes offering contradictory information.

For instance: Question 4a: *Quand est-ce que Julie et Stéphane ont créé l'entreprise « Qui peut » ?*
Some candidates answered: *après nous mariés [sic]*

The use of incorrect or ambiguous pronouns or possessive articles invalidates the answer; the use of “**nous**” is ambiguous because we do not know who we are referring to.

Advice to candidates:

When using possessive articles or pronouns, it is essential that they are referring to something or someone in the question.

Reference to the published mark scheme will show the essence of each answer. Longer answers can often miss the point or may start with a wrong detail before eventually giving the correct answer which is therefore negated by what has come first.

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 6: Short Answer in French

Here, targeted lifts are sometimes possible. It is important for candidates to know that they can re-use the language they read but at this level direct lifts will usually not enable candidates to score. Candidates need to manipulate the language they read. Candidates should try to use their own words as much as possible to render the meaning.

It is also important that they read the question and the answer together to make sure that the answer is clear and answers the question.

For instance: 6a: *À part dans la République du Congo, qu'apprenons-nous sur le système éducatif dans d'autres pays francophones ?* Candidates need to make explicit reference to the fact that other educational systems are not in constant flux. They need to make sure that we know that this is contrast to the Congolese system, which does evolve constantly.

Question 7: Short Answer in French

Specific understanding of the text was necessary to gain the marks. Some candidates lost marks as they were tempted to copy a complete passage verbatim from the text without any attempt to process the information or failed to infer meaning to answer some of the questions.

For instance: 7g: *Que permet la technologie NFC ?*

If a candidate answers with customers *n'auront plus à insérer leur ticket en carton dans les bornes d'entrée*, they won't score as the answer was customers can now *valider leur titre de transport directement en présentant leur portable sur les bornes*.

Question 8: Sentence transformations:

Question 8 proved to be a challenge, even for competent linguists.

Candidates were required to manipulate the sentences given to them using the information in brackets.

Advice to candidates:

It is essential that candidates refer to the texts from which the language has been taken as the manipulated sentences need to make sense and be grammatically correct in their original context.

The most challenging questions seemed to be:

8a: candidates were required to use the **future tense** to keep to the original time-frame.

*...une fois retirées... (Quand elles **seront** retirées)*

8e: candidates were required to use the **imperfect tense**

*... à chacun de leurs voyages... (à chaque fois qu'ils **voyageaient**)*

8h: candidates were required to use the **subjunctive voice**.

*... il vous faudra compter... (il faudra que vous **comptiez**).*

Candidates struggled to spell correctly the subjunctive form of the verb.

Remember that marks are awarded when the targeted grammatical point is produced correctly. Any other grammatical and spelling mistakes within the reformulated sentence will be ignored.

Section C

This series, the most popular titles were by far *Kiffe kiffe demain* and *Monsieur Lazhar*.

It is crucial that candidates understand the nature of what is expected in the final essay. Since marks are awarded for Content and Communication (out of 15) and Critical analysis, Organisation and Development (out of 20) as well as for Quality of Language (out of 5), it is crucial that some examination time is spent planning the response to the specific question asked.

It is essential that candidates select carefully what information they are going to use to answer the question. Not everything they know will be needed to answer the question.

Most importantly, candidates should realise that **the thrust of the questions set is mostly in the second part**. To access the higher mark bands, they must engage in an analysis of the issues. Essays which relied too much on description and less on evaluation scored poorly.

Centres must also be reminded that the geographical area and the historic period must be in **a French-speaking country**. In line with GCE and with other languages at International A Level, such essays could not be credited with any marks and unfortunately scored 0.

Advice to candidates:

Candidates must carefully select the information they are going to use to answer the question. Not everything they know will be needed to answer the question.

Candidates should realise that the thrust of the questions set is mostly in the second part of the question, inviting them to produce an analytical response. History and Geography essays must be rooted in the French-speaking world.

Advice to candidates:

The best essays were in clear paragraph form with a main sentence to introduce the paragraph, followed by several examples. A final evaluative sentence then often referred back to the essay title in some way.

