



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In French (4FR1) Paper 01

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your candidates at: www.pearson.com/uk

November 2024

Publications Code 4FR1_01_2411_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2025

Introduction

November 2024 is the second November session for 4FR1 01, Listening, set in accordance with the specification, International GCSE French 4FR0. This paper was of equal demand, as ever, with the summer papers for this specification. This session, as in last November, is small, with some 115 candidates for this single tier qualification. The marking principles and rubrics for this specification remain consistent with previous sessions, in line with 2019 standards. The total time allocated to this 40 mark paper is 30 minutes plus 5 minutes' reading time. There is no optionality in this paper, and most candidates attempted all seven questions. Five questions do not require productive use of French. Only Questions 3 and 7 require the productive use of French which examiners assess for communication only.

As in previous sessions, examiners assessed performances across the whole range of ability. The questions are all taken from the five specified topic areas and their sub-topics. The six questions are of increasing demand, with early questions targeting Grades 1 and 2, and Q7 seeking to draw out performances up to Grades 8 and 9. In most questions, an example precedes the question, so that the candidates can see how question parts seek details and how candidates should communicate them. Q1 is a visual pairing question on traditions, where up to 4 marks are on offer, and candidates listen to quite short utterances and match them to the appropriate image. Q2, about house and home, is worth 6 marks and requires candidates to indicate details relating to the abodes of the three speakers, from a choice of eight images, including the example. The passage does not mention liking all details or places depicted. Q3, again worth 6 marks, is a more extended passage about films; and candidates have to produce brief target language responses, not necessarily in sentences. In Q4, a non-verbal question to work out whether the six speakers are giving opinions which are positive, negative or both about relationships, offered up to 6 marks. Q5 is a passage discussing school rules. Candidates can earn up to 6 marks by identifying the six correct multiple-choice responses, with three distractors offered in each part. Q6 relates to food and drink. Candidates select six words from a pool of thirteen to complete the sentences in the question, paying attention to both grammatical accuracy and the sense of the speakers in the passage. There are up to 6 marks on offer in this non-verbal question which is aimed at more able candidates. A further 6 marks are available in Q7 for responses in the target language pertaining to volunteering. As in Q3, examiners assess responses for communication only, not for quality of language, save that candidates' responses need to be unambiguous, in the context of this International GCSE specification.

Question 1

As might be expected in the first question of the paper, there was an extremely high level of success with very many candidates gaining all four marks on offer. As this question targets Grades 1 and 2, this is a strong start for very many candidates. Many candidates earned all the marks which were on offer. Vocabulary items such as *gâteau*, *cadeau*, and *mosquée* appeared to be within the vocabulary familiar to the vast majority of candidates.

Question 2

This question was also very successful, but it is worth reminding candidates that only six responses are required, and in this case the question paper depicts (f), le poêle, but the speakers do not mention it. There was some confusion between G la terrasse and B la pelouse, but many candidates were successful in earning very good credit in this question. It was not uncommon for candidates to earn full marks.

A number who earned five marks lost one mark for having offered seven responses in a six part question, where each part is worth one mark.

Regrettably but logically, excess responses attract an automatic pro rata reduction.

Question 3

When it comes to understanding what is written, examiners are as flexible as possible in this question, as it occurs relatively early in the paper, and requires verbal responses. Very succinct responses can earn full credit, and in (a), candidates often spotted the types of films correctly: policiers and d'horreur. Candidates quite frequently misheard d'horreur for d'heureux which could not score. The verb zapper in (b) proved not to be well-known, but responses which communicated despite faulty spelling, were able to earn the mark. In (c), there had to be some reference to films, as in films doublés, and simply to write doublés does not respond fully enough, it is ambiguous. Candidates frequently identified both problems correctly, although mention of cost featured erroneously in quite a large minority of candidates responses. The tickets were not expensive, but the problems related to the need to book, and the earliness of the screening.

Question 4

This question type is well-known to candidates and often well-handled. Descriptions of relatives and characteristics seemed to be generally understood, but sometimes a quite careful listening is necessary to find the correct answer.

The longest responses are not automatically those which are positive and negative. In (f), there is a negative construction, but this does not automatically mean that the sentiment is negative. Candidates who have good control of adjectives to describe character and opinions seem to have scored well. bavarde and paresseuse were among the lesser known lexemes.

Question 5

The use of the reading time is key in this question where quite a lot of reading is required in each listening response, and the options are sometimes quite finally variegated.

School rules are an area with which many candidates appear to be familiar, and as far as possible intent listening was important rather than responses from general knowledge about the school system. Thus for instance in (c), any of the responses might be a plausible solution to dealing

with plump incomprehension. Mention of school uniform is another frequent area of this topic and candidates scored well. This was the focus of the latter part of the passage.

Question 6

As examiners have commented in a number of sessions, grammatical knowledge assists candidates to find the right response. Although there was always more than one correct response, other incorrect possibilities can be ruled out by grammatical awareness. For example in part (a), a plural noun is necessary, and therefore the responses can only plausibly be B parents or H frères. In part (b), a feminine singular noun which does not begin with a vowel is the only possible response, and therefore boucherie and pâtisserie being places in town are logical possibilities, while soupe and viande are grammatically possible.

Beyond these four options, if a candidate chooses something else, it shows that they could better appreciate the grammar involved in the sentence. This was the case in all of the parts and while some candidates earned some credit, many who did not, also offered grammatically impossible solutions. Thus choosing grammatically appropriate words from a pool is definitely worthy of further practice.

Question 7

This question, although more demanding in terms of gradual incline of difficulty, is sometimes more straightforward to candidates as a question type than Q6, as examiners are looking for free responses, not gap-filling. Although answers are in the target language and do not have the support of sentence cues, as examiners do not require full sentences or grammatical precision, simply communicating minimal and somewhat flawed responses could earn credit.

The negative aspects needed to identify the fact that the tourists were étrangers, thus not French-speaking, and that this meant Élise was unable to gain une nouvelle expérience, for she had done the job previously. Many candidates accessed the one mark in (d), mentioning that all information was provided, or that Élise was accepted, importantly, immediately. A third route to the mark, stating that no forms needed to be completed, was less easy to access because of the verb remplir being harder to render sufficiently accurately. Many candidates alighted correctly on the fact of having to pay for the tickets, but focusing on the fact that tickets were expensive did not score as this is not borne out by the passage. In Q7, short note-form responses were able to earn good credit, and language was not the reason for credit not to be earned. Volunteering is perhaps a less familiar part of the topic area, but considering that this is the most demanding question of the paper, it was encouraging that many candidates responded to the passage felicitously, and a goodly number gained significant marks.

Advice

The following guidance is based on the November 2024 performance, the sixth full session of this Specification. It was a small candidature. There are 28 marks on offer for non-verbal questions, and there is a gradual ramping up of demand, as the questions target performances at gradually higher grades.

1. Candidates should refer to the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs) and especially to the many past papers which are now available. This will give some sense of the question types and rubrics of this paper, which are consistently set to the same guidance.
2. Q2 carries 6 marks. If candidates offer more than six responses, 1 mark is forfeited for every response in excess of six. Candidates should heed the rubric, which requests six responses, not one per line.
3. Q3 and Q7 require candidates to answer in French. While communication is key, faulty grammar can push the response beyond comprehensibility, so some care is needed with grammar.
4. Reading time should be used judiciously. For example, there is quite a lot of reading to distinguish between multiple choice options and the pool of words, so attention to Q5 and Q6 in the reading time could be especially valuable.
5. Consolidation using a variety of types of listening is very useful preparation, including in non-verbal exercises. Fairly long passages appear early in the paper, and practice of note-taking in French under time limitation is valuable Q3 preparation.
6. In Q7, candidates should pay attention to whether their answers are in the correct column, positive or negative. Correct information written in the incorrect column cannot score.
7. It is worth looking at the example. Not only does this show how to approach a given question, but particularly in Q7, it avoids candidates offering the same material in their own responses, where examiners cannot credit it.
8. We encourage candidates and teachers to consult the Specification, including the programme of grammar study, specified topics and sub-topics and minimum core vocabulary, as this may help to focus preparation most effectively. Time spent on learning the minimum core vocabulary is very profitable when approached thematically, even for the purposes of the receptive Listening skill.

