



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In French (4FR1)

Paper 01R: Listening

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Introduction

June 2025 is the fifth full session for 4FR1 01R, Listening, set in accordance with the specification, International GCSE French 4FR0, and is the fourth post-pandemic. This paper was of equal demand, as ever, as the main paper, 4FR1 01. This session, in an increase from last June, there were some 900 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. Just 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 elicit 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 food and drink, where up to 4 marks are on offer, and candidates listen to quite short utterances and match them to the appropriate image. Q2, about school routine, is worth 6 marks and requires candidates to indicate details of the school day of the three speakers, from a choice of eight images, including the example. The passage does not mention all the visuals depicted. Q3, again worth 6 marks, is a more extended passage about family; and candidates have to produce brief target language responses, not necessarily in sentences. In Q4, a non-verbal question on health to work out whether the six speakers are giving opinions which are in past, present or future time frames, offered up to 6 marks. Q5 is a passage discussing childhood. 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 weather. 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 services. As in Q3, examiners assess responses for communication only, not for quality of language, except that candidates' responses need to be unambiguous, in the context of this International GCSE specification.

Question 1

This question is intended as a relatively undemanding question to start the paper on a topic, food and meals, with which candidates across the ability range are likely to be very familiar. The question requires retrieval of single lexical items and in Q1, there are predictably a great number of maximum scores. It is worth consolidating simple vocabulary, because although words such as *saumon* may appear less frequent, they are a straightforward way of earning credit. *J'ai soif* is an expression which usefully guides candidates towards H being a drink: *jus de pomme*.

Question 2

One of the most frequent reasons for the loss of credit is the fact that candidates offer crosses in excess of the 6 crosses required to gain up to 6 marks, for a surfeit of crosses entails the immediate deduction of marks on a *pro rata* basis, and a response to option F, in addition to all the other six parts, leads regrettably to an automatic loss of 1 mark. The context of school routine appears to be familiar to many candidates and while there is no mention of F *chimie*, it seems that some candidates believe that a visual is necessarily attributable to one of the three people. One visual never is.

Question 3

This question provided credit for candidates of all abilities, and there is good discrimination in the parts which offer marks across the spectrum. Generally short responses are sought, so that the demand on written skills is not excessive in a listening comprehension, thus *animaux* and *amies* score fully in (a). There does not need to be any qualification of the number of friends or type of animals to score the mark so, say, *copains* and *animaux* (on their own) suffice for 2 marks. Two adjectives are required in (b) and as the second one requires the inclusion of the notion of *jamais*, examiners are flexible with its spelling as long as it communicates unambiguously; however, some understanding of the sense of *jamais* is necessary. Therefore *égoïste* (on its own) is not true because *jamais égoïste* is the correct answer. (c) requires the notion of *petit* and there is quite frequently confusion about the sister or the aunt of Rachida which show that there has been some untargeted understanding of the *petit* concept. The idea of amusing those to whom the tale is recounted, eluded many candidates: *faire rire* is correct but many people wrongly focused on the fact of being *jeune* and *paresseux*, which of themselves are not humorous facts.

Question 4

In this question, candidates need to use the clues in the utterances to differentiate between the timeframe involved and hints such as time words, *il y a* and *ce matin* may all assist in giving this

indication. There is a mirroring of this type of question type in 4FR1 01 and practice with the many past papers available can be of great benefit. Consolidation of tense formation and morphology is of value, as it helps to avoid simple pitfalls. In (f), the past tense is correct but some candidates erroneously proffer the present tense as an answer, perhaps hearing *J'ai* thinking it is a present tense. In (b), *C'est pourquoi* leads a number of candidates to think that the present tense is correct, when in fact the information about Carlotta clearly signposts a future timeframe.

Question 5

In this multiple-choice listening question, examiners try to reduce the length of the options so that reading demand is not too great in a listening exercise. (a) is a generally successful part because candidates can deduce that the children coming with parents amount to *en famille*. There are more varied responses in (b), where the activities relating to the river need to be targeted and (c) and (e) highlight the need for good revision of vocabulary items which are in the minimum core for vocabulary list, as adjectives and verbs are tested here in Q5 quite frequently. Although all the options are plausible, Tanît has in fact retained her friendships in (f), a part which requires understanding of adverbs to discriminate between the distractors and C, the correct response.

Question 6

In this question as every session, candidates must choose from words in a pool, assisted by grammatical accuracy, to fill in gaps in the sentences below. Grammatical awareness always assists candidates in increasing their scores: for instance, in (b), a feminine singular noun is required and therefore the choice must really be between A, F, E, and M. While this may seem a wide range of adjectives, all other responses are immediately precluded on grammatical grounds. Similarly in (c), a plural noun is needed and any other proffered response is automatically incorrect. The topic area seems to be well within the experience of many candidates and there are a number of good to excellent scores. Many candidates infer successfully that in (f), K: *triste* is synonymous with *pas heureux*.

Question 7

This question elicits a range of responses, with some candidates barely attempting it or gaining 1 or 2 marks, which is already creditable among the lesser candidates in this question, while some of the stronger candidates gain all or nearly all of the marks on offer. (a) and (b) are supported by the fact that three answers could lead to the 2 marks available, although few people focused on the idea of *l'employée vend le bon timbre. aller à la poste à pied* and the employee knowing the family are most frequently offered and many candidates secure 1 mark for the first element of

the first response. In (c), arriving late is sufficiently accurate to earn the mark, and as *en retard* is accepted in a number of faulty but recognisable renditions, quite a lot of candidates are successful. Furthermore and laconically, *nouveau bureau de change* is enough to score in (d), but if candidates chose to mention exchanging money, the response is incomplete unless *sans aller en ville* and is included in the answer. Again in (e) and (f), three possible answers can contribute to scoring the 2 marks: insufficient space and waiting a lot are the most popular routes to earning these marks. The notion of the overworked employee is less frequently proposed but the other two responses: *pas de place* and *beaucoup attendre* represent quite straightforward ways to earning marks at this level. Candidates attempt this question relatively well, requiring as it does, quite limited writing in a demanding listening question which is targeting the most able candidates.

Advice

The following guidance is based on the June 2025 performance. As ever, there are 28 marks on offer for non-verbal questions, and there is a gradual incline 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. Offering more than six crosses results in an automatic *pro rata* deduction of marks, so doing so is strongly discouraged.
3. Q3 and Q7 require candidates to answer in French. Communication is key, but linguistic accuracy needs to be sufficient to facilitate creditworthy unambiguous communication.
4. Reading time before the recording starts should be used actively, especially for questions where there is quite a lot of reading requirement, such as Q5.
5. Q5 and Q6 particularly would benefit from consolidation of minimum core vocabulary items, for instance, adverbs, as these are frequently important discriminators between correct responses and distractors.
6. In Q7, candidates should check that they are offering information in the correct parts. Correct information written in answer to an incorrect part 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 replicating this material fruitlessly in their own responses.
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 gainfully.

