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# **GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS**

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**GCSE (NEW)  
FRENCH**

**SUMMER 2019**

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:  
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en>

### **Online Results Analysis**

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

### **Annual Statistical Report**

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2019**  
**UNIT 1: SPEAKING**

**General Comments**

In the second year of the new specification, teacher examiners felt more confident in administering Unit 1. Most candidates were entered for the tier which best suited their ability level and in general questions were pitched at the correct level. However, there were instances where questions for the conversation element were pitched at too high a level for Foundation Tier candidates.

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**Role Play**

More candidates than last year were able to make an attempt at the unseen question. Even when candidates did not fully understand the unseen question, they were able to use parts of the question to form their answer, for example *À ton avis...* and *À mon avis...*. Unseen questions beginning with *Avec qui...?/Comment ?* were sometimes misunderstood. More candidates than last year were able to make an attempt at asking a question and it was evident that centres had prepared their candidates for this element. Candidates who used *et toi/vous ?* to form a question (for example: *Je travaille cinq jours, et toi ?*) were unable to access the full three marks as they showed limited knowledge of grammatical structures.

For Foundation Tier role play Set 7 prompt 4, some candidates found it difficult to say a skill they had.

Some candidates at Higher Tier found role play Set 3 challenging whilst others dealt well with the scenario.

Those who performed best in the role play kept answers short and clear, while many candidates who extended their answers tended to self-penalise by making unnecessary errors. Although short answers are ideal in the role play, centres should advise candidates to ensure that they use a verb in their answers. This was particularly noticeable on the following questions on the Foundation Tier:

- C'est pour combien de nuits ? *Deux nuits*. Et c'est pour quelle date ? *Le cinq janvier*. (F1)
- Qui fait le recyclage chez toi ? *Ma mère*. (F3)
- Normalement, avec qui vas-tu aux concerts ? *Avec mes copains*. (F4)
- Avec qui vas-tu au magasin ? *Avec ma sœur*. (F6)

Candidates should also be advised that only one piece of information is required when the prompt includes a choice. Candidates often gave double the information needed, for example, in answering Higher Tier Set 7 'Say what there would/wouldn't be in your ideal school' candidates gave some lengthy answers providing both and often ended up self-penalising.

### Photo Card Discussion

On the whole, timings were adhered to. Some centres were particularly effective in ensuring that candidates spoke for the recommended time on the Higher Tier photo card. In a minority of centres some candidates were unable to speak for the required 2 or 3 minutes.

The length of candidates' responses varied and as a result a number of additional questions were asked in order to encourage candidates to fill the appropriate time. Teacher examiners should be advised to follow the guidance by WJEC as set out in the specification, should they need to prompt candidates to extend their answers.

- Q.1** Many candidates were able to give a relevant description of the photo which included details of what people were doing/wearing. A number of candidates spent a lot of time describing the clothes they saw in the photograph. Although this content is not irrelevant, it often meant that candidates were simply listing items of clothing rather than extending their sentences.
- Q.2** Almost all candidates were able to make an attempt at this question. It was pleasing at Higher Tier to hear some candidates independently introducing past or future tenses in their responses.
- Q.3** In general candidates provided shorter responses to the unseen questions but the better candidates did give detailed responses.
- Q.4** Many candidates at both tiers were able to use the required tense.

Those who performed best in the photo card, expressed and justified opinions frequently throughout the four questions.

It seems that some candidates lacked confidence to talk about particular themes, for example, social issues.

Some candidates found the photo card in Set 6 (Foundation and Higher) challenging.

Some candidates misunderstand *choix de matières idéales*, answering initially about their *métier idéal*.

Some candidates found the unseen question in Higher Tier Set 3 a little challenging and misunderstood *les heures de travail*.

### Conversation

At Foundation Tier the timing for the majority of conversations was correct but at Higher Tier a significant number of centres overran. It is important that centres ensure that they adhere to the timings as set out in the specification, as it is often the case that overlong conversations tend to contain more linguistic errors.

It is pleasing to report that this year the majority of teacher examiners allowed a similar amount of time for each part of the conversation.

Most centres are giving candidates the opportunity to initiate the conversation and this is conducted in a variety of ways.

Centres should ensure that candidates are given enough opportunity to extend their answers by asking open questions. Some candidates didn't perform well as they were asked too many closed questions.

In a minority of centres the conversations are still mini presentations rather than real dialogues. When this is the case, candidates do not meet the top band criteria for interaction. Once again, those who performed best consistently expressed and justified opinions in detail.

It was pleasing to hear candidates using vocabulary and structures such as:

- *Je me passionne pour....*
- *Si j'avais le choix, je....*
- *Je dirais que...*
- *Pour ceux qui aime l'histoire...*
- *Il y a une gamme d'activités dans ma ville...*
- *Après avoir/être + past participle.*

### Themes

In some centres the same sorts of questions were asked for school/college life and school/college studies. These are separate themes and should be treated as such. In a few centres, candidates who had chosen local and regional features and characteristics of France and French-speaking countries were asked about their own region although this happened less often than last year.

School/college life, Holidays and tourism and Technology and social media proved very popular topics among candidates while very few chose to speak about Skills and personal qualities and Employment. A very small number of candidates chose to discuss France and French-speaking countries. Conversations on this topic were very interesting and varied.

### Pronunciation issues

Many pronunciation errors are still the same as last year:

- Many candidates pronounced the “-ent” in third person plural verbs in the present tense
- Some candidates had difficulty with pronouncing *étudier* and *études*
- A number of candidates mispronounced cognates, influenced by the English pronunciation for example: *parents*, *inconvenient* (inconvenience), *sports*, *avantages* (advantages), *biologie*, *idéal*
- Many candidates pronounced final consonant letters in words such as *gens*, *et*, *trop*, *femmes*.

Words that were frequently poorly pronounced included:

*trop*, *temps*, *choses*, *famille*, *fille*, *femme*, *soeur*, *beau*, *aussi*, *légumes*, *plat*, *chimie*, *été*, *pauvreté*, *choisi*, *dehors*, *à l'étranger*, *environnement*, *deux*.

### Common errors

A number of candidates misused *utile* and *utiliser*, using the verb when the adjective was needed and vice versa.

The false friends *travail-travaille/voyage-voyager* also proved problematic for a number of candidates.

Numerous candidates used *journée* when their intended meaning was *voyage*.

Some candidates used *beaucoup* when they meant *très*.

### Common grammatical errors included:

- misusing *c'est/il y a* and *je suis/j'ai*
- incorrect position of *ne... pas* in the negative (*c'est ne beau pas*)
- conjugating the second verb when the infinitive is needed (*j'adore joue* and *je voudrais mange* instead of *j'adore jouer* and *je voudrais manger*)
- conjugating verbs in the present tense incorrectly (*il est porter*, *elles sont faire* and *c'est aider* instead of *il porte*, *elles font* and *cela aide*)

- some candidates still struggle to form the present tense correctly. Many candidates use phrases such as *je voyager* and *il est travailler*
- candidates also use *est* when *sont* is required
- some candidates are able to correctly form both past and future tenses but mix up time references e.g. *le weekend dernier je visiterai/l'année prochaine j'ai fait...*
- many candidates use *je* when *j'* is required
- candidates in Welsh-medium centres in particular sometimes used *nous* when they intended to use *ils*, probably having the Welsh word “nhw” in mind
- the use of prepositions such as “in/to/on” posed problems for many candidates Examples of this were *sur le weekend, sur l'avion, dans mon portable*
- frequent errors were heard in the use of *en/au/aux* ahead of countries.

### Technical issues

- Some sound files had not been uploaded fully.
- Sound quality was poor in some instances with the candidate being much quieter than the teacher. Please ensure a clear recording is made.
- Background noise in some centres is still an issue. Please ensure that a quiet venue is used for recording.

### Summary of key points

- Most candidates were entered for the tier which best suited their ability level and in general questions were pitched at the correct level.

### Role Play:

- More candidates than last year were able to attempt the unseen question and ask a question.
- Those who performed best in the role play kept answers short and clear and used a verb in their answers.

### Photo Card Discussion:

- For the most part timings were adhered to.
- Centres are advised to follow the guidance by WJEC as set out in the specification, on what type of questions they can ask to prompt candidates to extend their answers.

### Conversation:

- Foundation Tier timing of conversations was in accordance with the specification. At Higher Tier a significant number of centres overran. A similar amount of time was given for each part of the conversation.
- Candidates should be given enough opportunity to extend their answers.
- Candidates who performed best consistently expressed and justified opinions in detail

**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2019**  
**UNIT 2: LISTENING**

**General Comments**

Candidates at both Foundation and Higher Tier appeared to have found the examination accessible and most were entered at the correct tier for their ability level. In both tiers, the majority of candidates attempted every question.

Spelling errors were frequent but, in most cases, the answer was unambiguous and therefore credited. Handwriting occasionally made the answer difficult to decipher.

As seen in former examinations, most candidates respected the rubric and answered in English/Welsh as required. Most understood that the number of answers required depended on the marks bracketed next to each question and the lines provided for their answers. In written responses, candidates occasionally gave too many alternative answers or added some incorrect, superfluous information.

**Welsh-medium**

There was no appreciable difference in answers in the Welsh-medium scripts to those in the English-medium.

Higher Tier Q3(c), there were some good suggestions for 'exhaust gases' - 'allyriadau o geir', 'nwy gwastraff o geir'.

Higher Tier Q7 section 2, the correct form of sunbathing is 'torheulo' not 'torheulio', which was commonly given.

Higher Tier Q9(ch), the neologism "helpgar" was accepted for "helpful".

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**Foundation Tier**

**Q.1 Section 1**

- (a) The majority of candidates recognised *pommes* and answered correctly.
- (b) Almost all candidates recognised *trois* and answered correctly.
- (c) Almost all candidates recognised *cousin* and answered correctly.

**Section 2**

- (d) Almost all candidates recognised *poisson* and answered correctly.
- (e) The majority of candidates recognised *promenade* and answered correctly.

**Q.2 Section 1**

- (a) Almost all candidates recognised *travailleur* and answered correctly.
- (b) Approximately half of the candidates did not recognise *contente* and answered incorrectly.

**Section 2**

- (c) Most candidates recognised *timide* and answered correctly.
- (d) Almost all candidates recognised *parler avec tes amis* and answered correctly.
- (e) Just over half of the candidates recognised *pas sympas* and answered correctly.

**Q.3 Section 1**

- (a) Less than half of candidates recognised *quinze jours* as a synonym for *deux semaines* and chose the incorrect answer.
- (b) Just over half of the candidates recognised *Noël* as being Christmas and therefore celebrated *en décembre*.

**Section 2**

- (c) Less than half of the candidates recognised a *VTT* as a type of *vélo*.
- (d) Most candidates successfully made the link between *il pleuvait* and *pluvieux*.

**Q.4 Section 1**

- (a) Many candidates recognised *chanteurs* and answered correctly.
- (b) Most candidates recognised *adolescents* and answered correctly.

**Section 2**

- (c) Most candidates recognised *me marier* and answered correctly.
- (d) Most candidates answered correctly, however some candidates did not recognise *cheval*.

**Q.5 Section 1**

- (a) This question was answered successfully by most candidates.
- (b) Most candidates gave two correct answers.



## Section 2

- (c) Most candidates understood the notion that being paid was an advantage. Some candidates gave 'low/poor pay' which is obviously a contradiction of the correct answer. Not many candidates understood the idea of having a better chance of finding a job.
- (d) Most candidates answered correctly, although answers ranged from 18 to 80.

**Q.6** Whilst very few candidates scored zero, not many got all the answers correct. Candidates missed the fact that Colmar is the capital of the *vins*. Some candidates possibly mistook *couvert* for *ouvert*, thus chose 'open-air market' as an answer. Likewise, presumably, *jouet* was mistaken as *jouer*, and a 'sport museum' was incorrectly selected by some candidates.

## Overlap Questions

### Q.7 FT / Q.1 HT

#### Section 1

- (a) Some incorrect answers were given, such as 5/14/40. Some candidates gave an answer in pounds, rather than euros, which was incorrect.
- (b) Most candidates answered correctly. The important thing was to get the idea of an increase in people 'going to the cinema' or the suggestion of it, by the use of 'spectators/watchers'.
- (c) 3 million, by itself, was insufficient as it might refer to money, which was explicitly mentioned by some candidates, e.g. '3 million pounds was made'. Neither was 'tripled' by itself accepted.

#### Section 2

- (d) Many got the two details required, the answers being evenly divided between the three possibilities.

**Q.8 FT / Q.2 HT** This question focused on the skills of evaluating and drawing conclusions.

#### Section 1

- (a) Most candidates answered correctly.
- (b) The comparative 'cheaper' or 'less expensive' was required here and several candidates answered correctly.
- (c) The concept of not having to 'buy many/different/other/extra clothes' eluded many.

#### Section 2

- (d) Very few candidates managed to get 'not *his* style'. 'Uncomfortable' was a frequent suggestion.

- (e) Candidates found this difficult; there were very few correct answers. They did not seem to understand *notes* in a school context. The notion of him getting 'good marks/being successful/doing well' needed to be conveyed.

**Q.9 FT / Q.3 HT** This question focused on the skills of deducing meaning, evaluating and drawing conclusions.

#### Section 1

- (a) Most candidates answered correctly.
- (b) This question was not answered well; 'the reduction in the noise levels/in traffic' was not recognised by many candidates.
- (c) This question caused problems for many candidates.

#### Section 2

- (d) Most candidates successfully recognised *satisfait*.
- (e) Most candidates found this question challenging. Several, having heard the word *profiter* went on to speculate about 'making money' and 'profit'. Others imagined a 'visit by the mayor' (*meilleure*). One enterprising candidate suggested that they 'could see the Eiffel Tower'! As in 8(b) the comparative better/cleaner/fresher air was required to gain the mark.

### Higher Tier

#### Q.4 Section 1

- (a) Several candidates recognised that Max has a problem but went on to say that he 'hasn't any friends', thus negating the mark.
- (b) 'Shy' or 'reserved' seems to have been well recognised.

#### Section 2

- (c) Many candidates did understand that Anne was going to organise a party, but some indicated that it was going to be at her place.
- (d) This was answered correctly by most candidates.

**Q.5** Very few candidates scored zero; a few got all four marks. There seemed to be no set pattern to the incorrect answers.

#### Q.6 Section 1

- (a) Most candidates recognised the synonyms and chose the correct answer.
- (b) Only about half of candidates recognised a *revue* as a synonym for 'magazine'.

#### Section 2

- (c) Many candidates answered correctly.

(d) Most candidates answered correctly.

(e) Most candidates answered correctly.

**Q.7** This question focused on the skills of identifying key points, details and extracting information.

### Section 1

Mentioning the name of the campsite ('Flower') led some to give the answer 'plant flowers'. Very few candidates recognised *baignade surveillée* or *partout en France*. Many candidates understood *ensoleillée* and *plages*.

### Section 2

Many candidates understood *activités nautiques* and *prendre le soleil*. Very few understood *faire un château de sable* and gave the answer 'visit a castle'.

**Q.8** This question focused on the skills of identifying the overall message, key points and details, as well as deducing meaning, evaluating and drawing conclusions.

### Section 1

(a) *La cigarette électronique* not only starts off the report but is also referred to another two times. Most candidates answered correctly, although some, wrongly, simply said 'smoking'.

(b) Some candidates did not notice the *ne peut pas* before *devenir accro* and thus said that it 'is addictive'.

(c) Many candidates answered correctly. One answer, 'always evaporate later' perhaps did not quite convey the candidate's intended meaning!

### Section 2

(d) For some candidates des *recherches supplémentaires* became 'research into supplements'.

(e) One candidate, not understanding the poisonous nature of *toxines*, suggested that they should 'develop toxins which are good for health'. A number of candidates did get 'liquid or e-cigarette with fewer/less toxins'.

**Q.9** This question focused on the skills of identifying the overall message, deducing meaning, extracting information and evaluating.

### Section 1

(a) Several candidates mistook/misinterpreted *enfance* as *en France*, thus turning Paul into someone who was doing his studies abroad. A few candidates imaginatively misunderstood *je suis tombé sur la présentation* as 'having fallen whilst receiving his exam certificate'!

(b) Many candidates correctly answered 'lab assistant' (with varied spellings of laboratory), but some thought it was a 'classroom assistant'.

- (c) The fact that he 'likes working with people' won out over the fact that he is 'meticulous'.

## Section 2

- (d) Many candidates understood *attentifs*. The important point to get across was the help/care/support of the teachers.
- (e) Many candidates misheard *recommencer un exercice* as 'recommend' and several took 'exercice' in a literal sense to mean doing 'exercise/physical activity'.
- (f) Getting across the idea that his education 'suits him' or is a 'success' proved problematic for some candidates.

## Summary of key points

Centres are encouraged to remind candidates to pay attention to the number of marks available for a question to avoid losing marks when one correct answer is negated by an incorrect answer that was not required. Candidates are encouraged to pay attention to the use of the negative, as many lose marks by failing to recognise this. Centres are also advised to ensure that all skills within the scope of study for Listening are covered.

**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2019**  
**UNIT 3: READING**

**General Comments**

Most candidates were well prepared for the Reading examination in that they generally followed the rubrics correctly, responded in the correct language and attempted all questions. Just as last year, there was again evidence that most candidates are reading questions carefully, underlining key words, writing notes on the script and translating rubrics. This is good practice to be encouraged.

Candidates are required to understand and respond to a variety of different types of written language in short and more extended texts, identifying overall messages, key points, details and opinions and many candidates demonstrated their ability to do so successfully. They can expect to read and understand familiar language but also to encounter some more complex language and unfamiliar material. At Higher Tier particularly, candidates may have to deduce meaning, draw inferences in context and recognise implicit meaning where appropriate. Higher Tier Q7 required these skills and some sections of this question proved challenging. Manipulating answers into English sometimes proved difficult where implicit meaning or inference was present for example Foundation Tier Q6(e). Spelling errors were again quite frequent but provided that incorrect spelling does not interfere with the message communicated, a mark may still be awarded.

Candidates need to recognise the relationship between past, present and future events and this is particularly important in the translation questions at both Foundation and Higher Tier where precision is required.

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**Foundation Tier**

- Q.1** This question was answered very well. Candidates were able to understand job advertisements. Almost all candidates attempted the question and the majority achieved full marks. The most common error was putting H instead of B, candidates presumably taking *travailler* to mean 'travel.'
- Q.2** This question was answered well. Candidates demonstrated good knowledge of environmental vocabulary. F, D, C and H were usually correct. G was often put instead of B as *fermer les robinets* was not known. *Fermer* may have led some candidates to think of 'farm.'
- Q.3** This question was answered well. Candidates demonstrated good knowledge of school vocabulary and were able to match up opinions about school subjects with the correct subject. Occasionally *je m'intéresse aux fleurs et aux arbres* wasn't understood and candidates put H – *histoire-géo* instead of C.

**Q.4** This passage in the form of an email required candidates to understand longer sentences and respond in French. Knowing the meaning of French question words is vital so that the answer is at least feasible. Most candidates tackled the question very well and understood that full sentences are not required as long as the key words are given.

- (a) Manipulating the possessive pronoun proved problematic for some although it was not required for the mark. It was sufficient to write *en Belgique* and as with all questions of this type, there is a danger that candidates may lose marks by trying to give too much information which can be inaccurate, and invalidate the correct answer. Brevity is the key here and knowing which information to select is a skill in itself.
- (b) This question required two pieces of information and most candidates observed the rubric and wrote in one piece of information per line.
- (c) *Combien de temps* required an amount of time and so *un jour, une journée, toute la journée* were all correct answers but not *aujourd'hui* or *dimanche*. Once again, it was not necessary to answer using a full sentence.
- (d) There were several possible answers for this question and synonyms were accepted. Most candidates understood the question, identified the answer in the passage and most used the vocabulary from the passage for their answer. *Fatigant* was a more popular answer than *formidable*.
- (e) Once again, a single word answer was sufficient, so either *demain* or *lundi* was correct.  
A small number of candidates gave answers in English.

**Q.5** Candidates needed to understand a slightly longer text in the form of a public notice. They would be advised to read carefully through all the questions before attempting their answers. Although pointers in the text direct candidates to the correct response, they often look elsewhere. Sometimes an alternative correct answer may be accepted but often candidates give correct information but for the wrong question. Unfortunately, they cannot be credited for this although they have clearly understood the text.

- (a) This question was answered well. Most candidates went for 'an interest in history' rather than in 'coal mining.' Some focused on *ancienne* in the first line and suggested 'old/elderly people.'
- (b) Mostly correct.
- (c) This more open question could have been answered in a number of ways. The expected answer was that the tour was 'underground' and 'lasted 50 minutes.' There was some confusion between 5/15/50 for *cinquante minutes*. Very few answered 'underground.' Some candidates found information from elsewhere in the text ('You have to walk 700m') and since this did answer the question it was accepted.
- (d) This question proved a little more difficult and candidates needed to explain that the guides were former miners who talked about their experience of *working in the mine*. 'Experienced' on its own was insufficient. At this stage answers require more than comprehension of just single words or short phrases.

- (e) Most candidates worked out that you needed to wear good shoes or bring a warm jumper although one candidate advised 'Don't come if you weigh over 5 kilos.' This incorrect answer could have been avoided with careful thought.
- (f) This proved to be the most difficult question to answer correctly. Candidates needed to think this through. The product was correctly identified as cheese but what was *unusual* was that it was actually made in the mine. Some candidates expressed this answer very well. However, many failed to recognise *fabriqué* and gave some very imaginative answers such as 'Fabric cheese, cheese fabric, fake cheese.'
- Q.6**
- (a) There were a number of correct answers however, some candidates focused on the means of transport for getting to school, punctuality or being environmentally friendly. The key point was that they travelled together.
- (b) There were some incorrect answers due to partial understanding of the text and so 'for eight years, since Year 8' appeared quite frequently.
- (c) Candidates could choose an answer from a number of details. Very few candidates spotted 'her laughter,' some mentioned 'her calmness' but most went for 'her (long brown) hair.'
- (d) Candidates needed to recognise *sœurs* to give the correct answer and the majority did so.
- (e) This proved to be a challenging question. Very few managed to get the concept that the two girls had done things together for the first time. The word *premier* was repeated three times giving candidates ample opportunity to grasp this meaning. Recognition of *partager* and *fois* would have given the answer. Any of the examples would have been tolerated as an acceptable answer. Many found difficulty in manipulating the answer into English, especially the example containing the word *vacances*. Camille had stayed away from home (without her parents) at Léa's house for the *first* time. Perhaps the combination of *chez elle* and *vacances* in the same sentence proved confusing. Some careful thought was needed to produce a coherent answer.
- (f) This question proved a little easier and most candidates described without difficulty how the families had become friends and spent lots of time together.
- Q.7** Answers for this question were in table form and the question focused on the skill of demonstrating understanding by being able to scan for particular information and organise and present relevant details.
- Part 1:** 'Drastic changes' alone was not sufficient for one mark and needed to be qualified by 'to your diet/in training.'
- Part 2:** 'Swimming' was recognised by most.
- Part 3:** Some variation in answers was noted and there was some ambiguity. The answer needed 'to research/search for recipes/meals online' and that 'you can use an app on your telephone to count calories.' Most candidates got one detail correct.

**Part 4:** The full answer was 'to run barefoot on the beach' however 'to run/jog on the beach' was accepted but not 'run to the beach/walk on the beach.' *Courir* was not widely known and very few candidates recognised *pieds nus*.

**Part 5:** Usually correctly answered.

**Q.8** This was the first 'overlap' question with the Higher Tier and there were fewer correct answers at Foundation Tier than at Higher. The question focused on the skill of drawing inferences in context, recognising implicit meaning, and deduction.

- (a) Candidates found difficulty in manipulating the English answer to avoid ambiguity.
- (b) There was a variety of answers and most candidates managed to answer correctly.
- (c) Usually correct although there were some alternatives: socks, shorts, a hat, flip flops and even 'mature shoes.'
- (d) Most candidates opted for the fact that snow on the mountain was evidence of a cold winter. Of those that tried to express 'your teeth chatter when you go to bed,' some struggled to express 'chatter' and gave alternative verbs. These alternatives were tolerated if understandable to an English reader.
- (e) Not many candidates spotted either *si vite* or *quinze jours seulement* and failed to realise the significance of the spring's brevity.
- (f) Similarly, *des mois* was enough for this answer. Many candidates failed to see the contrast of spring and summer, which lasts for months and some wrote 'a month.' Careful reading of the text and attention to vocabulary which may seem insignificant can mean the difference of a mark. Articles, possessive adjectives and pronouns etc. are as important to comprehension as some more obvious key items of vocabulary.

**Q.9** This question was answered in table format and focused on the skills of demonstrating understanding by being able to scan for particular information and organise and present relevant details.

**Part 1:** A surprising number of candidates failed to recognise *trois mille* and there were a number of different options given such as three million participants. *Les huitièmes* gave rise to confusion and 800 was a frequent answer. Where several numbers are mentioned some thought about the logistics of such an event may help to arrive at a correct response.

**Part 2:** Quite well answered although lack of attention put cycling as non-sporting activity.

**Part 3:** 'Four years' was often incorrectly given as a response. *Une fois sur deux* misled some into thinking that the games were held every two years – or every two months!

**Part 4:** A lot of good answers for this question. Some candidates deduced that the games helped developing countries and this was also accepted as a valid response.



**Part 5:** More difficult. Once again, manipulation of English was sometimes an issue. The answer needed the idea of 'preparing' for larger events. Not many candidates got both details correct.

Generally, candidates observed the rubric and didn't add too many details. However, the answers sometimes appeared careless and a more careful approach would have perhaps produced a few more marks.

**Q.10** The translation is a new element at GCSE. There were some extremely good answers. However, a surprising number of candidates failed to recognise *infirmier* as nurse. A large number wrote 'doctor' instead. Most understood 'to help people who are ill.' Most candidates translated the perfect tense correctly in *J'ai travaillé* but missed the past tense in *Mon patron a dit...* and *J'étais* and so marks were lost, as was the case last year.

In general, at Foundation Tier there seemed to be no significant difference between the Welsh- and English-medium answers. In 5(b) although the Welsh idiom 'rhad ac am ddim' means 'free of charge,' 'rhad' by itself now means 'cheap.' In the Welsh translations, as in the English versions, insufficient attention was paid to the tenses of verbs.

## Higher Tier

### Q.1 & Q.2

See comments under Foundation Tier Q.8 & 9. At Higher Tier most candidates found these questions more straightforward and answered more accurately.

**Q.3** There was a range of marks for this question but very few full marks and it proved to be the most challenging comprehension question. Candidates were tested on the inferences they could draw from their knowledge of synonyms. The school vocabulary in the *commentaires* should have been familiar to candidates and there was often more than one reference, for example either *travail supplémentaire* or *à la maison* should have given a clue to *les devoirs*.

- Q4**
- (a) The majority of candidates answered correctly using their knowledge of numbers and was the most accessible part of the question.
  - (b) Mostly correct.
  - (c) Candidates found this question slightly more difficult.
  - (d) Mostly correct.
  - (e) Not well answered. Some deduction was needed and *à travers* not widely known.
  - (f) Very few correct answers. Candidates needed to understand relatively easy vocabulary but then combine what they had read. A superficial reading of the text was not enough.

**Q.5** The rubric for this question was in French. Answers (a) and (c) were to be answered in French with the middle section (b) being a table format (which was answered very well).

(a) Proved to be the most difficult section because candidates needed to manipulate the text and get the correct possessive pronoun *son métier* or rearrange the language to give *le métier/job/boulot/emploi/travail de Patrick*. The rubric gave a clue to the pattern of language required *Lis le blog de Patrick*. Candidates are required to answer questions about the overall message of a text.

(c) was usually answered well. Candidates did not need to give synonyms, but could use vocabulary from the text, provided that the answer made sense and was not just a random section of the passage copied out. Scanning the text for the correct answer is a skill required for Higher Tier.

**Q.6** This question focused on the skill of organising and presenting relevant details.

(a) Well answered although some candidates did write ‘the whole world.’

(b) **Part 1:** The first part of the table proved to be the most difficult. Candidates did need to understand all of this section as only two details were given. *Casserole/couvercle* weren’t well recognised however many candidates managed to convey the idea of putting a lid/top/cover on something to make it boil quicker. Not many conveyed the idea of covering all of the burner/fire/hob of the cooker.

**Part 2:** For this section candidates needed to give only two details out of the three given. Almost all followed the rubric. Although there was a variety of answers, most candidates conveyed the ideas suggested in their own way. *Propre* proved a little confusing and often was rendered as ‘proper.’ As it didn’t contradict in answers such as ‘Cook proper meals at home,’ a mark was awarded. Not many candidates recognised *congelez*, however a mark was still given if they conveyed the idea of saving uneaten food for another day as it showed comprehension. Some candidates lost marks for saying ‘minimise use of plastic’ without ‘film/cling film.’

**Part 3:** Usually correctly answered although some candidates made up answers such as ‘Install double glazing’ or ‘Wear a coat.’ All good advice but not in the text! It may be worth advising candidates that even if they know a subject well, to be sure to stick to what is written.

(c) Not many candidates wrote ‘salt’ as an answer, the majority concentrated on ‘Bicarbonate of Soda,’ with various spellings.

(d) Mostly correct.

- Q.7** On the whole this question was quite well answered although some individual sections proved more challenging.
- (a) Some misunderstanding of *maternelle* with some candidates thinking that it meant 'from birth' or even 'before they were born'!
  - (b) There were many ways of expressing a correct answer here and most candidates were successful. Alternatives for *lycée* were accepted.
  - (c) Mostly correct although some candidates were distracted by the pleonastic *ne* and said they wouldn't go their separate ways.
  - (d) There were at least four potential answers to this question and candidates only needed two. Only a few astute candidates spotted *chance* and wrote that she felt lucky to have them. Many spotted the second family reference; not so many the sense of meeting up with them or enjoying doing things together. The use of a conditional tense invalidated the answer – 'She would like to meet them' was obviously incorrect.
  - (e) This was slightly more difficult and answers were expressed in a variety of ways. Candidates needed to say that the group didn't talk about their feelings/them/those kind of things etc. Some misinterpreted and said that they simply didn't speak to each other or hadn't spoken for a long time.
  - (f) Candidates needed to understand all of the last sentence to be able to give two details. Some of their answers overlapped and there was some invention. The key words were *discuter* and *compter*. Many got 'discuss problems together' but some went too far – 'solve others' problems.' Fewer candidates got the second element of relying/counting/depending on each other.
- Q.8** This extended text contained a lot of detail. There were pointers within the text for specific questions but if candidates spotted details elsewhere that adequately answered the questions, marks were awarded.
- (a) Mostly correct although *pédestre* in the second line confused some candidates who wrote 'pedestrians.'
  - (b) Well answered with snow/rock being the most popular answers. 'Forest/mountain/desert' weren't accepted as they are not ground surfaces. Some candidates however extrapolated that a desert surface would be sandy and this was accepted as an answer as it showed good inference.
  - (c) Generally well answered although some candidates incorrectly gave 'practise' for *pratiquer*, saying that you can practise at any time.
  - (d) Some candidates simply repeated that the sport was considered inaccessible and élitist without explaining why. Many candidates understood and translated des *terrains difficiles et dangereux*.
  - (e) There were a number of different acceptable answers given.

- (f) Good answers clearly explained that you could alternate running and walking but occasional linguistic ambiguity suggested that you need only do part of the course and didn't have to finish the whole trail. Sometimes *parcours* was misinterpreted as the urban sport 'parkour.' As with Q7 Foundation Tier *courir* was often not known and *marcher* was sometimes translated as 'march' as in 'you can march instead of run.'
- (g) Quite well answered with many candidates understanding that you could take pleasure in being outside in the fresh air and close to nature.

**Q.9** Many candidates made good attempts to produce a finished translation. However, the level of accuracy required is high. With only 6 marks available (1 for each section) if there are any errors or omissions within the section, a mark cannot be awarded. So it is important to ensure that every section is translated as accurately as possible being careful not to overlook or ignore words. The structures and lexis used in the translation should be familiar to candidates e.g. *il faut/avant de/voulez-vous*. Application of grammar is important and the final translation should be written in normal English.

Candidates were awarded marks for translating *le bac* as 'A Levels,' but *baccalauréat* or simply *bac* was also accepted as the qualification is widely recognised outside France. Some answers were too vague and simply said 'choosing options' or incorrectly 'University Course.' Most candidates knew *facile*. *Cette* was often not known. Surprisingly, given the popularity of 'Prêt-à-Manger' a number of candidates didn't recognise *Prêt*. Other items of vocabulary that caused difficulty were *vraiment* which was simply omitted and *plusieurs* which was translated as 'many.' *Faiblesses* was not always known. The imperative of some regular verbs were well recognised *considérez*, *écoutez* as well as the imperative form of the irregular verb *être* *soyez*. Many candidates successfully translated *soyez réaliste* as 'be realistic.' The final sentence *Écoutez vos parents et vos professeurs* was almost always correctly translated.

In Welsh-medium scripts also, attention to detail was needed in order to provide an accurate translation. The correct preposition in the Welsh idiom is 'gwrando ar' (= to listen to...) not, as appeared in by far the majority of instances, 'gwrando i'ch rhieni ac athrawon.' The mark was credited nevertheless. Once again, as with Foundation Tier, insufficient attention was given to the proper tense of the verb and consequently the mark was lost even though the understanding of the vocabulary was correct.

There was no appreciable difference in standard in the answers given in Welsh to those in English, apart from perhaps in the translations.

### Summary of key points

Centres are clearly preparing candidates well for the skills required at both Foundation and Higher Tier, teaching them to adhere to rubrics whether in English or French. Continued preparation of key items of vocabulary, (particularly those that have proved difficult as identified in the report) would be beneficial as would the provision of relevant texts in a variety of lengths, styles and formats to allow candidates to practise their reading skills. Centres should also ensure that all aspects of the scope of study for Reading are covered. Candidates need to become accustomed to dealing with unfamiliar or complex vocabulary and realise that they don't have to understand every single word to understand key themes and ideas.

For their part, candidates could enhance their examination success by reading over their answers carefully to ensure that they make sense and are realistic, especially if numbers are involved e.g. Foundation Tier 5(e) & 5(f) or Higher Tier Q2 Part 1. For the translation question, candidates should look at their English version and ask themselves how they would translate it back into French in which case mistakes such as translating *plusieurs* as 'many' might be avoided as candidates might then remember that 'many' is *beaucoup*. There are a number of strategies that can be used to maximise success.

**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2019**  
**UNIT 4: WRITING**

**General Comments**

Once again this year, candidates had been well prepared for the Writing examination. On the whole, candidates appeared to find the questions accessible and it was rare for a question not to be attempted. The majority of candidates had been appropriately entered but some Higher Tier candidates lacked the necessary skills and linguistic knowledge to cope with the demands of Question 2.

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**Foundation Tier Question 1**

It was encouraging to see that the advice given in last year's report on Question 1 had been heeded by many. This year fewer candidates wrote more than is required i.e. one simple sentence in response to each heading. Most candidates attempted six responses and many were able to score at least 1 mark for each.

As specified in the marking scheme, candidates must write a response with a verb in order to gain 2 marks. The majority did but often the verb was not formed correctly, or the incorrect tense was used. There is only a requirement to use the present tense in this question and when the tense is specified in the heading e.g. 'Where **you go** .../How **you travel**', the response must be in the present tense for 2 marks. It was evident that candidates were familiar with the verbs common to the topic of holidays but they were frequently not able to write the present tense forms correctly. Infinitives were common (*je voyager; je rester* etc), as were perfect or future tenses (sometimes formed correctly but used inappropriately here). Hybrid forms also featured e.g. *j'ai voyage*.

- Heading 1: 'Where you go on holiday'

Most were able to score 1 mark, though some wrote the nationality instead of the country (*Français, Espagnol*), for which no marks were awarded. *Je vais* was not well known and attempts such as *Je alle; j'ai alle* were quite common.

- Heading 2: 'How you travel'

Most were able to communicate the method of transport but again the verb was often misformed. Some used *Je travaille*.

- Headings 3 and 4: 'How long you stay'; 'Your accommodation'

Most were able to provide an appropriate timescale/type of accommodation.

- Heading 5: 'The weather'

Most candidates were able to give the key detail and gain 1 mark. *Beau* and *soleil* were the most common though *soleil* was often misspelt but credited if recognisable. Some were able to form a full sentence but there were a number of near misses with *il faut* instead of *il fait*.

- Heading 6: 'What you do on holiday'

Many were successful in gaining 2 marks here, particularly those who gave one simple detail e.g. *Je joue au tennis*. Those who went beyond the requirements and gave more than one detail increased the chances of errors in a verb/incorrect tense: e.g. *Je joue au foot et je suis allé à la plage*.

### Summary of key points

- Candidates are encouraged to write one simple sentence. They can often self-penalise when they go beyond this requirement.
- Candidates need to be able to form the **present tense** of common verbs in order to be successful on this question.

### Foundation Tier Question 2

This question requires candidates to provide information and opinions and to address the three compulsory bullet points. Those who scored highly fulfilled all of these requirements and wrote with clarity and a good level of accuracy about the prescribed elements of their school life. Some candidates did not address all of the bullet points or did not address them correctly. The majority of responses included opinions but some lacked information. Those responses which only contained an expression of opinion on each of the items and no facts lacked the necessary detail to meet the requirements of the higher bands.

For the most part, candidates appeared to find the question accessible and, pleasingly, there were very few examples this year of candidates failing to make the switch from 'ton, ta, tes' in the question to 'mon, ma, mes' in the answer (as highlighted in last year's report).

- 'Ton collègue'

Most candidates understood that the first bullet point required them to write about their school and gave either the name of their school, a simple description and/or an opinion e.g. *Mon college s'appelle ...; Mon collège est grand; Il y a beaucoup d'élèves; Mon college est super*. However, some candidates failed to address the bullet point correctly and gave details and/or opinions on their school studies, which were not relevant here.

- 'Ton uniforme scolaire'

Many gave a description of their uniform with varying degrees of clarity and accuracy. *Chaussures* was the most frequently misspelt item of vocabulary, sometimes taking on a whole new meaning (*chasseurs*) and quite frequently appearing in the singular (*un chausseur noir*). The spellings of *confortable/inconfortable* were frequently anglicised (*comfortable/uncomfortable*) and *uniforme scolaire* (the spelling of which was given) was also prone to misspellings (*uniforme scolarie; uniforme scolare; uniforme solaire*)

- 'Les professeurs'

Most candidates expressed opinions but some also gave information about the subjects they taught and/or how they helped them.

### Summary of key points

- Candidates need to be aware of the compulsory requirements of the task i.e. to **address all three bullet points correctly** and to include **information** and **opinions**.
- Candidates are encouraged to learn the spellings of key items of topic vocabulary. Whilst minor spelling errors were tolerated, many were ambiguous.

### Foundation Tier Question 3/Higher Tier Question 1

There were some very good answers to this question at both Foundation and Higher tiers, with many able candidates achieving marks in the top bands for Communication and content and Linguistic knowledge and accuracy again this year.

Once again, candidates are reminded that they must address all aspects of each of the three bullet points i.e. 'meet all requirements of the task' to qualify for marks in the top band for Communication. They should take particular care to note plurals (*Tes passetemps, tes opinions, les activités*), as more than one detail is required here. Omitting one or more of the requirements occurred across the ability range again this year, with some very linguistically able candidates missing a task. Some candidates completely overlooked the first bullet point and started the response with *Le weekend dernier* ... and others gave opinions on the importance of recreational activities but failed to mention their own. The second most common oversight was the mention of only one activity they did last weekend (where at least 2 were required). Successful candidates tended to work systematically through the requirements in the order they appeared in the question. Those who changed the order were more prone to omitting a requirement.

The ability to make clear reference to the past, present and future was the primary discriminator. Those with a good mastery of verb and tense formation were successful in communicating coherently with a good level of accuracy. The time markers (*le weekend dernier, le weekend prochain*) were provided in the question but it was not unusual to read *le weekend dernier je vais (aller)* and *le weekend prochain je suis allé*, thus creating ambiguity. As last year, formation of the perfect tense proved to be the greatest challenge, with reference to the future being less problematic.

Most responses were of an appropriate length but a small number were unnecessarily lengthy. The latter were often characterised by irrelevance and a deterioration in the quality of language as the piece progressed.

### Summary of key points

- Candidates are encouraged to work systematically through the 3 bullet points to ensure that they address all of the requirements, paying particular attention to plurals.
- The ability to make coherent reference to past, present and future events is key to success on this question.



## Higher Tier Question 2

It was evident that some centres had prepared candidates very well for the demands of this question and there were some truly outstanding answers. Conversely, some candidates lacked the linguistic skills to tackle this style of question.

Candidates are not limited to the three bullet points but they must respect the title they choose and adopt an appropriate style for the purpose prescribed. The bullet points help candidates to frame their response and give guidance on the kind of information to include. Once again this year, the vast majority of candidates adhered to the bullet points and attempted to write discursively in a style appropriate for an article. Whilst it is appropriate for candidates to make reference to their own experiences to illustrate their arguments, those who wrote entirely subjectively describing their own education (subjects they study, like, dislike etc.) or their own part-time job (where they work, when, what they do etc.) did not present appropriate information nor adopt the appropriate style.

Some excellent arguments were presented under both titles and candidates wrote about some interesting 'ideals'. Some, however, described their ideal school/job in the present tense so only used one time frame throughout (a minimum of two being required, as indicated in the bullet points). A number of candidates also missed an opportunity to justify their ideas when expressing their desires.

### Summary of key points

- Candidates are required to address the title appropriately adopting an appropriate style and including relevant information.
- Candidates should endeavour to justify facts, ideas and opinions.
- Candidates should make reference to more than one time frame.

### Translations

The most successful candidates in both tiers demonstrated a sound grasp of the grammatical principles required at each tier, good knowledge of topic vocabulary and careful attention to detail. They exhibited good practice by substituting an unknown verb or item of vocabulary with a viable or close alternative, which allowed them to partially if not fully convey the meaning.

Less successful candidates often gave the impression that they had rushed the translations, which were characterised by careless errors (e.g. misspelling *Toulouse*), omissions and oversights (e.g. writing a singular noun where a plural was required)

## Foundation Tier Question 4

Most candidates were able to partially convey some or all of the responses. Some candidates were successful in scoring 2 marks on (a), (b) and (c) but 3 marks on (d) and (e) were rare.

- (a) *Sud* was often not known or misspelt (*surd*, *sou*)
- (b) Some wrote *village* instead of *ville* and some did not know *s'appelle* or did not form it correctly (*s'apple*).
- (c) Many were able to score 2 marks with allowances for minor spelling errors or agreements in *industriel* and *intéressant*.
- (d) The translation of 'lots of things to do' proved problematic for many. Most knew *beaucoup* but very few knew *choses*. A number of candidates made a successful substitution with *activités* but this was occasionally anglicised (*activities*).

- (e) Again it was rare to see the sentence conveyed fully. Most knew *samedi dernier* but few were able to form the perfect tense of *faire du cyclisme/vélo* and 'my brothers' was often translated as *mon frère* or *mon frères*.

### Higher Tier Question 3

Most candidates were able to score at least 1 mark on the first 3 sentences and 2 marks on the final 2 but full marks (12/12) were rare.

- 'Sete is in the south of France by the sea':

Some did not know *sud* or misspelt it. *Français* was occasionally used instead of *France*. *Au bord de la mer* was quite well known but occasionally misspelled. A number of attempts (particularly on Welsh-medium scripts) did not have a verb (*Sète dans le sud ...*)

- 'I have lived here for ten years':

*Depuis* was known by a number of candidates but only a very small number knew to use the present tense here.

- 'In summer it is hot and sunny':

The lexical items *chaud* and *soleil* were generally well known but many candidates were not familiar with the constructions *il fait/il y a* + weather condition.

- 'Last August there were too many tourists and lots of traffic jams in the town centre.'

*Aout* was often misspelt or replaced with *awst* on both Welsh- and English-medium scripts. Some wrote the conditional *il y aurait* instead of *il y avait* and some wrote *c'était*. 'Traffic jams' was known by quite a few but prevented others from achieving 3 marks. Many candidates were awarded 2 marks for writing a grammatically correct sentence, substituting *bouchons/embouteillages* with *circulation*. *Confiture* appeared on more than one occasion!

- 'In the future, I would like to move to the countryside where it's quieter':

*Tranquille/calme* were mostly well-known and most candidates could form the comparative. *Déménager* was not well-known and was often replaced by *habiter* in an otherwise correct sentence, thus worthy of 2 marks. There were some near misses with *démanger*. The phrase 'cefn gwlad' was not recognised by some Welsh-medium candidates and resulted in some interesting translations (*pays derrière; pays dernière; centre pay; pays detendu*).

### Summary of key points

- Candidates are encouraged to take more time and greater care on the translations. Attention to detail is vital to ensure the correct meaning is conveyed e.g. my brothers - **mes frères**.
- Candidates are discouraged from leaving gaps or inserting English/Welsh words.
- Candidates need to be familiar with the grammar requirements of the specification

## Conclusion

The hard work of teachers in preparing candidates for this examination is recognised and it was heartening to see that centres had taken on board some of the comments in last year's report to improve performance. The standard of achievement of some of the candidates was truly laudable. It is hoped that the above comments will assist centres in the preparation of future candidates. Below is a list of common errors across both tiers, which may also assist with preparation.

Frequently misspelt words:

hockey (often *hoci*); [in]confortable (often *[un]comfortable*); l'esprit (often *l'espirit*); chaussures; aout; ennuyeux; difficile.

Other common errors:

*jouer/jeu(x)/jour* were often confused e.g. *jouer les joues*; *jour le foot*; *les joues video*.

*travailler/travail* were often confused e.g. *je travail*; *le travaille*.

*mal* was often used instead of *mauvais* e.g. *les mal notes*

*payé* was frequently misused as a noun e.g. *un job avec bien/mal payé*, *le payé est mal*

*beaucoup des* was often used instead of *beaucoup de*

*sujet(s)* was often used instead of *matière(s)*.



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