



# **GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS**

**FRENCH  
AS/Advanced**

**SUMMER 2011**

## **Statistical Information**

This booklet contains summary details for each unit: number entered; maximum mark available; mean mark achieved; grade ranges. *N.B. These refer to 'raw marks' used in the initial assessment, rather than to the uniform marks reported when results are issued.*

### ***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**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**Summer 2011**  
**Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**

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**FN1a – External Examiner conducted oral**  
**FN1b – Teacher conducted oral**

**Unit Statistics**

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they 'cashed in' for an award. The attention of centres is drawn to the fact that the statistics listed should be viewed strictly within the context of this unit and that differences will undoubtedly occur between one year and the next and also between subjects in the same year.

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Entry</b>	<b>Max Mark</b>	<b>Mean Mark</b>
FN1a (01)	2785	60	49.9

**Grade Ranges**

A	52
B	47
C	42
D	37
E	32

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Entry</b>	<b>Max Mark</b>	<b>Mean Mark</b>
FN1b (02)	1652	60	49.9

**Grade Ranges**

A	52
B	47
C	42
D	37
E	32

*N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.*

## FN1

### Introduction

WJEC would, once more, like to thank centres for the welcome given to the visiting examiners and the arrangements made for them. Oral examiners are aware that centres vary in the quality of their facilities but appreciate the centres' efforts to provide suitable accommodation for the tests.

The preparation room does not have to be supervised, but it is quite helpful to have someone close by in case of an emergency. The preparation room, as well as the room where the tests take place, must be clearly indicated as examination rooms. It is not part of the examiner's duties to check whether candidates have inadvertently taken in mobile phones etc. into examination rooms, nor is it part of the examiner's duties to look after candidates' belongings during the examination. A chaperone is not required but is permitted. A chaperone, for any reason, should not be the candidate's French teacher.

### FN1a (conducted and marked by the visiting examiner)

#### (a) Topic based conversation.

The system of choosing cards worked well. Some candidates were disappointed, while others were pleased at their choice of card. All cards were well answered by some candidates and no cards appeared more popular than others. Centres need to cover every aspect of the topics. There were a number of worrying incidents whereby candidates claimed before their oral examination that they had not covered the topic area of one of their cards at all.

Many candidates exceed the guidelines in the amount of material they can write in the preparation room. Consequently, they try and read very full answers to the initial three questions. This is against the spirit of the examination as over-preparation is discouraged in the specification and mark scheme.

Some candidates were treating interruptions by the examiner as an affront. Candidates should not think that they can give mini speeches. Speaking at length about one aspect does not score highly for interactive atmosphere and initiative (and FN1b teachers, in particular need to be fully aware of this - see below).

Candidates sometimes do not understand a question and proceed to ignore it in their answer. Candidates may ask an examiner to rephrase a question.

#### (b) The general conversation.

Most candidates coped well with the general conversation - which is really a 'personal conversation'. Surprisingly, some candidates are still unable to discuss what they do in their other subjects through the medium of French. Candidates should be prepared to be stopped by the examiner who might wish to steer the conversation to another aspect of a subject or topic. Many candidates did not know what they would like to do in the future. They should not be content with 'je ne sais pas' in response, but rather they should try to indicate areas of interest and some possible ideas for the future.

Some barely improved their level beyond GCSE French. There needs to be a clear improvement in sophistication, length of utterances and quality of language and vocabulary between GCSE even when discussing hobbies. Again, those with few interesting hobbies should talk in detail about what they might like to try or what they used to do and not be content with 'je n'ai pas le temps', a common answer to searching questions about hobbies!

## **FN1b (tests conducted by teachers but externally marked)**

An increasing number of centres are presenting their oral tests on digital media and this makes for clarity of recordings - although labelling and identification of the candidate needs to be very clear. The board is certain to give clear guidance on submission of digital recordings in the future.

For FN1b, it would be very helpful if teachers could clearly identify themselves, especially in centres where more than one teacher conducts the test. A brief report form is made available to centres after the tests have been marked.

With very few exceptions, centres coped well with the process of the candidates' selection of the topic based cards.

There are more acute problems in the centre conducted tests than those tests conducted by an external examiner. When candidates answer the three initial questions on each card, many teachers allow their candidates to talk for too long, thus giving the impression of over rehearsal and overuse of pre-learnt material in their response to the three initial questions. In some centres no further questions were asked on each of the cards. Candidates should not be allowed to deliver pre-learned mini-speeches.

Centres should also aim to make their conversations more natural, in both the topic based conversation and the 'general conversation' and steer candidates away from mini speeches. They also need to present candidates with a challenge to show that they can cope with the unexpected, by asking questions that the candidate has not been asked before. These 'surprises' should arise naturally from the conversation and not be artificial.

Questions to the examiner always seem to be artificial or unnatural and are best avoided. We know that these recordings are not natural conversations but tests.

Centres also need to bear timings in mind as some conversations discussed one card for five to seven minutes, rather than the specified three to four minutes. Examiners who conduct oral tests that overshoot timings are not giving the candidates any advantage or favours. If a conversation is too long, candidates' performances often dip.

The general conversation is generally well handled - although again a little more naturalness and spontaneity would lead to improved marks. All three topics – hobbies and interests, current subjects studied and future plans - need to be discussed. GCSE-type descriptive topics such as family, school and region are not part of the test. We are looking for candidates who can give opinions and support these opinions. For FN1b, some centres are still questioning candidates about their old school and, in some cases, asking the candidates to talk about themselves and their families. These aspects are not appropriate for AS level French.

Having stated all their shortcomings, it is pleasing to report that many centres do succeed in conducting very good personalised orals which are spontaneous.

## FN2

### Unit Statistics

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they 'cashed in' for an award. The attention of centres is drawn to the fact that the statistics listed should be viewed strictly within the context of this unit and that differences will undoubtedly occur between one year and the next and also between subjects in the same year.

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
FN2	4666	98	58.7

### Grade Ranges

A	71
B	65
C	59
D	53
E	48

*N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.*

## FN2 - Listening, Reading and Writing

### Summary

The paper worked well and gave a good range of marks. The listening seemed a little more challenging than in previous FN2 papers but candidates coped well. The reading tasks proved to be the question where most candidates lost most marks because they copied answers from the texts. Centres need to alert their candidates to the fact that any lifted answers are not normally credited. The translation marks were slightly up on last year. The weighting in the essay marks is on the quality of response to the question set. This year, essays tended to be fairly focused on the title but there were a few completely irrelevant essays, as well as numerous essays, that did not answer the question set but were generic essays on a particular topic.

### Q.1 Listening, answered in French. (8 marks)

#### Première partie:

Some candidates had difficulties with numbers, antonyms and more abstract vocabulary

One mark was awarded for each question.

Most candidates seemed to correctly identify the four correct statements namely (a) (b) (d) & (g). (a) could also be FAUX as long as a satisfactory correction was given.

F: if V or F was not ticked and statement corrected properly, a mark was still awarded. If V was ticked and statement corrected, no mark was awarded.

- (a) Correction needed to mention that all young people or boys and girls were being given advice.
- (c) Using an antonym for 'difficile' was not a problem for most.
- (e) Many thought that this should be VRAI. A few negated the original assertion, which means that they were not awarded the mark. Many candidates, however, managed to find a verb that was the antithesis of the original.

Many candidates scored six or more marks out of eight on this question.

### Q.2 Grammar test based on the listening. (5 marks)

#### Deuxième partie

All spellings including all accents had to be completely correct. Generally this question was answered better than in previous examinations.

1. Most got this correct, some wrote '*dois*' and '*doigt*' rather than '*doit*'.
2. Accent needed. Many did not get this
3. Surprisingly many failed to get this right and gave homonyms, which often did not exist in French 'convansions' etc.
4. Due to the preceding elision many wrote '*ceŕ*' or other similar sound.
5. Almost every candidate got this correct.

It was not unusual for candidates to score three or more marks out of five for this question. This question often makes use of the monosyllabic homonyms found in French and can be considered to be a cloze test or as a dictation.

### Q.3 Reading

There is a distinct difference in the quality of answers within the different sub-sections of this question which is based on the two reading passages. Candidates could correctly identify relevant statements and could select the correct forms in the grammatical task based on the reading i.e. question 4. They could not, however, answer the questions on the reading passages in French. A large number of candidates copied their answers from the texts. This is clearly contrary to the rubric. Their answers, therefore, could not be credited. This was more evident in the passage on 'bizutage' (second passage Q.3(iii)) than the passage on eating Q.3(ii).

#### (i) Choosing the correct statements (5 marks)

This initial question on the first reading passage was well answered by most candidates. A number thought that (a) and/or (i) were true but these answers are incorrect. Only five true statements had to be ticked. One mark was deducted for any extra statement ticked.

#### (ii) Answering questions in French on the first passage (healthy eating) (8 marks)

Answers had to be in French and in candidate's own words. No lifting of text was allowed.

- (a) Idea of parents forcing children to eat was needed, no copying was allowed.
- (b) 'médecins' or 'PNNS' were the correct answers, not parents. Well answered.
- (c) Very few got the idea that no research had taken place on children. Many copied without understanding the syntax or meaning.
- (d) Some did not refer to the correct part of the text. Fairly well answered.
- (e) Most answers were copied. Some skilfully manipulated answer for '*maintenant*' and applied it to 'il y a 15 ans' and vice versa.
- (f) Although the question gave clear direction, some chose the incorrect part of the passage for the answer. Few marks awarded.

#### Q.3 (iii) Bizutage. (11 marks)

As in the text on eating habits, answers to the passage on *bizutage* had to be in candidates' own words. Lifting of a sentence not allowed. Most candidates could not rise to the challenge of putting their answers in their own words. Substitution of a synonym or of an equivalent tense or a change of structure would have been sufficient to have shown that they understood the question and could answer it in French.

- (a) Most identified the correct year. An answer in figures was acceptable.
- (b) Few managed to form the adjectives required from the noun 'humiliation' or to find suitable synonyms.
- (c) It was possible to manipulate the language and incorporate some of the words in the text. Few managed this and copied the two phrases out.
- (d) Most got idea of 'two years' but others lifted the references to specific months / years (the latter not credited). Some were not awarded the mark because they said '*pour deux ans*' (future reference).
- (e) Large-scale copying from the text with few attempts at manipulation or paraphrase was found in answers to this question.
- (f) Some successful use of manipulation was found here.
- (g) Some managed minor manipulations which created answers that were credited.

**Q.4 The grammatical 'gap-filling' task. (Based on second reading passage this time). (10 marks)**

This question was well answered, however, once candidates started making mistakes and choosing the wrong word this led to a number of other wrong answers. This question is a test of grammatical and syntactical application and comprehension. Not all words were needed and every word could only be used once. The spelling had to be completely correct and accents had to be right and at the right place. Numbers five and eight were the main discriminators although others did get the wrong tense to some of the verbs, usually choosing the correct verb.

**Q.5 Translation of sentences from the reading passages into English or Welsh (16 marks)**

This question was slightly better answered than it has been in previous years although very few got full marks.

Some candidates are still getting tenses wrong and omitting the translation of often very simple words.

1. Well answered – some omitted 'trop', others did not know 'repas.'
2. Very few knew 'tort' many guessing 'cakes', 'right'; 'choc' was often chocolate, hardly anyone knew 'vient de'; many redeemed themselves with a mark for the last part of the sentence.
3. Many omitted 'vers' and 'même' but many managed to successfully translate for the second mark, although some again omitted 'bon'.
4. Generally 'se fâcher' was not known ('go against' was often used), but the rest of the sentence was reasonably well done.
5. Well answered by most candidates.
6. Reasonably well done. Many did not know 'enquête' or 'affirmant' and the tense was a major problem for most.
7. Most were put off by 'où' but managed to successfully translate the end of the sentence.

The rubric did require answers in good English (or Welsh) and candidates should realise that nonsense is unlikely to gain marks.

## Q.6 Essays (35 marks)

Twenty marks were awarded for Quality of response, 10 marks for Accuracy, 5 marks for range and idiom.

Some candidates did not specify the question answered (a), (b),(c) or (d) and it could be very confusing for the examiner when the question was not answered properly (see (b) and (d)).

- (a) This was the second most popular essay. Very many candidates tended to give the pluses and minuses of tourism or travelling which were only partially relevant. Few managed to get the idea of widening one's horizons. Rather disappointing responses because of the lack of focus on the question set.
- (b) Not a popular choice. Those who attempted this tended to write descriptive essays about various festivals or family routines. A few, however, managed to get the idea of 'special' interwoven into their responses. There were a few well thought out, relevant and interesting essays on this topic.
- (c) This was by far the most attempted question with some excellent essays and also very poor ones. However, for the most part, essays looked at the pros and cons of alcohol or the effects of alcohol rather than concentrating on whether drinking too much was a problem among young people.
- (d) Relatively few attempted this question but those who did mainly managed to keep the focus on the question set, so this was generally well answered.

A final comment on the quality of the language (relevant both to the essay and to the questions on the reading passage answered in French).

### **The grammatical errors were very similar to those found in the same examination last year.**

- (a) Poor use of present tense of common irregular (and even regular!) verbs.
- (b) Adjectival endings not correctly applied.
- (c) Ignorance of differences between *bon/bien mal/mauvais*.
- (d) The verbs *est/a/il y a* used interchangeably.
- (e) Use of *tu/vous* where French would clearly use *on*.
- (f) Very few candidates can use the Passive which would have been very helpful in answering some of the reading questions in particular this time.
- (g) Incorrect spelling of: *problème, travail, dangereux, malheureusement, par exemple, inconvénients, pour conclure*.
- (h) The virtually now standard but incorrect use of "*aussi*" at the start of a sentence to signify "also".
- (i) Incorrect use of "*avec*" and "*chez*". In spite of "*chez les jeunes*" in the essay title, many candidates changed the phrase to "*avec les jeunes*" repeatedly in their essays.
- (j) The appropriate / inappropriate use of link words / phrases.
- (k) Incorrect spellings of words given in the question e.g. abuse instead of *abus*.

## FN3

### Unit Statistics

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they 'cashed in' for an award. The attention of centres is drawn to the fact that the statistics listed should be viewed strictly within the context of this unit and that differences will undoubtedly occur between one year and the next and also between subjects in the same year.

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
FN3	2381	60	49.6

### Grade Ranges

A	54
B	49
C	44
D	39
E	34

*N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.*

**All the tests are conducted by external visiting examiners.**

**(a) The Guided Discussion**

Some candidates are still making too copious notes for the guided discussion and bringing these into the examination room. Brief notes, if any at all, are by far more conducive to more fluent conversations. Candidates need to bear in mind that the card containing the text is only a starting point for a conversation that could deal with any aspect of the topic area. It is often helpful for the examiner if the candidate can steer the conversation to an aspect of interest to that candidate within the general topic area. Other candidates get too involved in the detail on the card – this is not an "*explication de texte*". Whereas candidates often allude to information on the card, there is no expectation that the conversation will dwell unduly on the card.

Candidates seemed to be happier talking about the traditional topics at A2, namely 'racism' and 'the environment'. Most candidates seemed to go for one of these if they were offered as a choice of card to them. 'Media' can be popular, but some candidates are less comfortable talking about more recent developments within the media and do not always have the corresponding vocabulary in French to deal with new technologies in detail.

Some candidates also struggled to find sufficient opinions on the card discussing 'terrorism'.

Candidates should not expect to be able to give mini speeches as answers to the three starter questions. The answer to the first question should be brief - a sentence or two at most. Only in the third question can the candidate expect to be given a little more freedom to present a view in more detail. Some candidates seem to object to being stopped but they must be made aware that they need to be able to withstand robust questioning in order to get marks in the higher bands. The ability to present opinions and viewpoints in good French and being able to support assertions when challenged is the main feature of candidates who perform well in this examination.

**(b) The exposé**

The majority of exposés were on films. Many were on films from the list set for the Guided Studies essay in FN4. There is nothing wrong in this but candidates and centres need to be aware that there is a check to ensure that a candidate has not answered a question on the same film, book or region in both the oral test and the written test - which is contrary to the examination regulations.

Many centres had candidates talking about films and books not on the prescribed list and this worked well. Examiners cannot be expected to know every work that is presented (whether on the list for FN4 or not as most do not mark the FN4 paper) and, indeed, this does make for an interesting and possibly more spontaneous conversation.

This year a number of candidates chose different countries in the French speaking world and this was very interesting for examiners. This had given candidates the opportunity to undertake their own research on a country of interest to them.

All centres provided visiting examiners with a list of candidates and their examination numbers in the order candidates are being tested, Some centres, however, are still allowing candidates to use the title of the film or book as the title of the exposé. This makes it difficult for the examiner to get a focus for the ensuing conversation. Candidates should present titles for presentations in the form of a question to be answered or an issue or aspect of a film, book or region which is about to be explored. The best exposés did not give an exhausting description of the book, play or region but indicated clear areas that the examiner could pursue in the conversation. Very often the examiner will 'lead into' the questions with general questions, such as why was that film chosen? why that particular aspect was of interest to the candidate? Some titles were too narrow and the conversation had to be widened out to cover other aspects of the topic area. Some candidates found this disconcerting but the conversation following the exposé does last for up to ten minutes.

Generally the standard overall was good. There were some outstanding exposés and ensuing conversations. Those who tried to learn exposés by heart were not always convincing. In most cases there was quite a large discrepancy between the quality of French in the exposé and the quality of the language in the conversation that followed.

The best quality exposés keep to the four minute deadline. They are planned meticulously and the language is succinct. They have a short but effective introduction, a central part detailing and illustrating the candidate's opinion about the topic under discussion and a conclusion which is to the point and possibly offers a lead in into the ensuing conversation.

While the exposé is a structured oral essay, the ensuing conversation is more spontaneous and interactive. This means that the discussion can vary in depth and breadth. Even in centres where numerous candidates have chosen to discuss the same aspect of a book, every exposé and discussion is different.

## FN4

### Unit Statistics

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they 'cashed in' for an award. The attention of centres is drawn to the fact that the statistics listed should be viewed strictly within the context of this unit and that differences will undoubtedly occur between one year and the next and also between subjects in the same year.

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
FN4	2400	98	63.8

### Grade Ranges

A	76
B	68
C	60
D	52
E	44

*N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.*

## FN4 - Listening, Reading and Writing

**Questions 1-3.** These questions were multi-skilled questions covering various aspects of the specification. All three questions were compulsory for all candidates.

**Q.1** This question was answered in either English or Welsh. However, a small number of candidates ignored the rubric and answered in French, answers which could not be credited.

Generally speaking this was well answered with the majority of candidates gaining 4-6 marks. The underlying concept was understood although some did supplement erroneous material they had heard in the media but was not encompassed in this particular listening.

Main idea required that it was contributions from salaries. Most seemed to grasp this idea. Those who focussed on taxes were not credited.

Two answers from increase in numbers retiring, economic crisis and unemployment – any 2/3. Those who indicated 'numbers retiring' without indicating an increase did not get the mark. Most seemed to get these correct.

The idea of fewer workers for each pensioner was required or correct citing of ALL the figures. Some quoted partially correct or incorrect figures and could not be credited. Those who indicated 'pension' for 'pensioner' were not awarded the mark as the French word *retraité* clearly indicated the retired person. This question was therefore more of a discriminator.

Candidates needed to convey the notion that people lived longer in retirement now compared to 1991 or successful reference to completely correct figures was needed. As in the previous question many failed to get the figures completely correct or were distracted by *espérance de vie*- many elliptically alluding to 'life expectancy', without specifying 'in retirement.' Thus many lost marks for not giving the full details required.

Answer required was that workers needed to prove they no longer were able to work. Many omitted a reference to 'anymore/no longer'. Whereas many others latched onto the references to hazards at work and safety issues. This was a challenging question.

### **Q.2 (a) PREMIÈRE PARTIE**

These questions were answered in English/Welsh. Performance in this part of the examination was particularly good, with few candidates failing to gain at least 4 out of 5.

1. Most successfully conveyed ideas that appliances should not be put in the bin or left in the street.
2. Idea of recycling or collecting old appliances needed. Few problems in answering this question.
3. Reference to specific or general appliances with cooling systems accepted as an answer. If a contradictory answer e.g. 'heaters' appeared on the list, the mark was not awarded. Answers referring to appliances containing harmful gases were not allowed here.
4. References to greenhouse gases or harmful substances were acceptable here. Most indicated the main idea successfully.

## DEUXIÈME PARTIE

The remaining questions in this section needed to be answered in French. Only a small number did not answer in French. As well as demonstrating they could answer the question in French, candidates also needed to show that answers had not been copied verbatim and that they were able to manipulate the original passage in some way either in the form of a paraphrase, changing a verb, or making some syntactical adjustment.

1. Idea of buying a new fridge was required without using the exact phrase in the text. Many copied from the text and a surprising number thought *neuf* meant 'nine fridges' and even 'bought nine years ago!' Easiest way was to use the passive *on* which can be very useful when trying to turn a sentence round and to show manipulation of language.
  2. Idea of getting them/someone to collect the old appliance was required. Many failed to get a mark here as they either got confused and mentioned the website and taking the appliance to a *déchetterie*; they lifted from the text or they failed to grasp the syntax of *faire reprendre* and used *reprendre* on its own which was usually nonsensical or expressed the opposite idea.
  3. Idea of recycling or processed needed or an allusion to taking them to the recycling centre. Most gained a mark here as they showed some manipulation. If adjectival participles were used on their own they needed to be plural (not as they appeared in the text) or the verb needed to be in the plural. Thus *recyclés/traits* or *ils seront* + singular forms of the same adjectives were acceptable as they both showed an understanding of syntax needed to answer the question which was in the plural.
  4. The dismantling or making appliances less likely to pollute were the main ideas accepted here. Many gave the same answer as the previous question. Ideas of 'resuing / separating' were not credited. Few managed to gain a mark here.
  5. Any references to re-using, recycling or reducing Co2 emissions were viable answers here and most candidates managed to articulate one of these ideas without copying out slavishly from the text.
- (b)** Copying from the passages was widespread for questions on the second text. Other candidates tried to write long answers and the reader just got lost deciphering the answers.
1. Candidates were expected to convey the idea that fewer immigrant children voted as opposed to children of French nationals. A number successfully conveyed this idea and copying was not a particular problem with this question. Some got the idea basically but often alluded to *enfants étrangers* and *enfants français* which were incorrect. Others tried to cite the figures but did not manage to bring out the difference. Others had the misconceived idea that immigrant children were not allowed to vote.
  2. Idea of parents unable to vote was required but some had already used this in Q.1. Others resorted to copying from the text and were consequently not credited.

3. A number of ideas acceptable here and most got the ideas of changing society and belonging and expressed these without copying from the text. The sections frequently copied and not credited were *un geste fort...arme veritable... appartenance à la société*
4. Main idea was that an Italian could vote after 1 year in France but a Moroccan who had lived there for 20 years could not. Few managed to get 2 marks but many managed to express the first idea. The standard of language was poor for this question, often a sign of candidates struggling to understand. Many did not gain the mark for the Moroccan as they either misunderstood how long he had been in France or used *depuis* wrongly.
5. All that was required was that the mother went to vote but the father could not. A number gained 1 mark but few gave a simple, correct answer. Answers were often verbose, in poor French and elliptical. Thus referring to the father staying at home was not enough unless it was linked to him not being able to vote.
6. Few indeed understood that girls had participated in the competition. The vast majority of candidates quoted directly from the text or gave answers centred around *une manifestation*. A question that was a clear discriminator.
7. A short answer sufficed here along the lines of children not wanting to vote but parents wanting their children to vote. Many long-winded answers were given, often with substantial lifting from the text. This question was challenging as many struggled to understand the French. Some got the idea that the young were not eager to vote but most candidates thought the children wanted to vote for their parents which was not the right answer here. Most thought the parents wanted to vote themselves. Very few indeed managed to use correctly *vouloir que* + subjunctive, with those using this construction using the infinitive. In most cases the answer was, however, still comprehensible if not correct!

**Q.3** This question was generally well answered. It was linked to the first reading passage and some vocabulary could be taken from that passage.

The standard of grammar continues to improve and centres are encouraged to continue laying a strong emphasis on teaching grammar in order to improve standards of language generally but in this question specifically.

Candidates should bear in mind that English words used here are not credited even if similar to the French – thus 'environment / future' were not credited in this translation.

Some candidates are still omitting words and sometimes whole sentences in their translations. They should ensure that everything is translated.

Other areas that require attention – tenses, especially common present tense verbs; adjectival agreements; gender of nouns; correct spelling of French words; generally candidates need to know more vocabulary.

Comments below relate to the 15 sections of text. Each section could gain 1 mark if it was comprehensible regardless of whether the French was correct. Half a mark was also used for partial communication. The whole prose was then assessed out of 10 for Accuracy as per generic criteria.

1. Very few used *on* or any other passive construction and the remainder frequently used *de* instead of *à*. A surprising number had no idea how to say 'be more careful' and there were some interesting inventions. *Sensible* was very common. A number of candidates used *Françaises*, and the majority failed to use a capital letter where appropriate. Few also used an agreement after *être*.
2. Although it was in passage 1, *se débarrasser de* was unknown to many. Some knew *débarrasser* and used it on its own with nonsensical results. *Disposer de* was frequently used and, with rather more meaning, so was *déposer*, though the use of the latter was often spoilt by the addition of *de*. Some candidates said *électronique* instead of *électrique* thus changing the meaning. Many had difficulty placing *ancien/vieux* in its correct position.
3. Generally problem free in terms of vocabulary, but there were many grammatical errors. Nevertheless, the gender and spelling of *problème* continues to be a problem for some candidates! *Environnement* was often spelt the English way
4. This caused difficulty, mainly because candidates missed the agreement of *être* and did not know how to express 'correctly' correctly! (*adéquatement* was very common).
5. Many cannot spell *récemment*, nor *gouvernement*. The past participle of the verb *réduire* was not known by many. Some made *nouveau* plural by adding an 's' not an 'x'.
6. 'Factories' caused a problem and there were many words used, some of which were acceptable and others not. *Factoires* (sic) was not uncommon. In this section, as in others, tense was an issue. For some reason, candidates seemed unwilling to use the present tense. A number used *avoir le droit* with the wrong preposition whereas others got the meaning across by using *pouvoir*.
7. A lot of improvisation here, mostly correct. However, 'air' was frequently expressed as *aire* which was not allowed as it is a different word. There were many alternatives: *propre, sain, moins sale, clair* etc. 'This' caused a problem for many.
8. Adjectival agreements frequently incorrect here and their positioning was also often incorrect. Very few used *certaines*. A number used  *cité*. Surprisingly many used *villages*.
9. Some lost the mark for using the English word 'future' and many used *droits* instead of *lois*, and when *lois* was used, gender, number and position of the adjective were often inaccurate.
10. Candidates made a mess of the future tense and often used *être* in the future along with a strange form of *forcer*. Several alternatives to *obliger*, usually *forcer*. *Ceux* was often incorrect and the verb was often in the singular. *Sont polluant le monde* was frequent. A large number thought *polluter* was a French verb.
11. Few problems, but *attitude* was usually plural and *à* was frequently *de*. A surprising number used *ses* for *leurs*,

12. An incredible number of candidates cannot conjugate *devoir*, and many used the future or even the conditional tense. There were good substitutes for 'reduce'.
12. Many did not know 'global warming' and there were a number of successful and other less successful renditions! *chauffage mondial* was not acceptable but fairly common.
13. A surprising number failed to use the obvious form *il faut*. There was some elaborate use of the subjunctive. A large variety of different constructions were used here, most were successful in terms of communication if not always for accuracy.
14. A small number used the subjunctive; of those who did, *ne* was frequently omitted. Most used *avant* without the *que*.

In spite of there being a variety of tenses and a number of challenging constructions, the accuracy of the prose seemed to have improved this year and this is very pleasing. Particularly pleasing is the fact that some candidates are able to use the passive confidently and this allowed them to show manipulation in the reading passage answers without copying the syntax verbatim.

## FN4 - Guided Studies Option

### A The World of Cinema

#### **Le Boucher**

There were very few essays on this film. All those seen chose (a) where they had to analyse the role of Hélène. All were very well done: well written and perceptive.

#### **Le Grand Voyage**

- (a) Most candidates prepared. Answers were adequate in their understanding of the role of religion in the film but were not always well written. This question gave rise to more story-telling than (b).
- (b) There were several essays marked on this film which dealt with the character of Reda. There was a tendency to be rather superficial. Candidates stuck to clothes and a western lifestyle with educational aspirations and included a lot of description, which, although relevant, did not answer the question set on its own. Religion was mentioned but not really analysed.

#### **Au Revoir les Enfants**

This was a very popular choice.

- (a) This seemed much more straight forward but was chosen by fewer candidates. Some answers were superficial and missed the more complex, darker areas of his presentation.

Overall, this question tended to produce the more original and interesting answers and some of these were very sensitive and intelligent.

- (b) This was generally well-handled by most, but there was a tendency to list the occasions when anti-Semitism came to the fore, without analysis. Some answers were very good but most fell into listing what is anti-Semitic in general terms and not anti-Semitic in the film. This entirely misses the main point of the film and tends towards narration. This type of approach unbalanced their essays as they over-emphasized or misjudged actions of German soldiers. Many didn't pay much attention to Jean Bonnet. The role of Joseph was often not clearly understood.

Candidates in one large centre all wrote almost identical essays on this theme. The influence of the teacher was very strong in the frequent references to *manichéisme*. Some candidates could not resist devoting space to Louis Malle's own experiences. The main criticism of these essays was lack of analysis.

Candidates failed to write "*Juif*" with the capital letter, where appropriate.

#### **La Haine**

Both questions were attempted and were generally quite pleasing in their understanding and handling of the question.

- (a) This was the more popular choice, with a surprising amount of sympathy being expressed for the police. It was worrying that some candidates did not understand "*anti-flic*". Those who did understand anti-flic analysed, or in the weaker answers listed, where the police feature. This led the majority to over-emphasise the importance of the 2 'nice' *flics*. Only one commented on the futility of their actions. Few referred to the overall intentions of Kassovitz in the portrayal of the police. On the other hand, there were a few excellent answers (Everyone knew what a *flic* is!) Answers were well balanced and analytical, but a main observation is that the candidates' understanding often exceeded their ability to express their views.

- (b) This attracted fewer answers but these too were balanced and well-argued. It is difficult to see why so few wrote on Vinz. Perhaps it is the use of the word *compassion* and the candidates didn't fully know what it meant. (Even though "*la compassion*" has regularly appeared in Literature questions). The answers mostly followed the film chronologically and the parts identified where the candidate did or did not feel compassion for him. There was little analysis and none of Vinz's justification of his violent behaviour.

### ***Les Choristes***

A very popular choice, this is evidently a film which gives much pleasure.

- (a) Most candidates attempted this, and the content of their essays showed a marked similarity across the board because of the nature of the question. Most candidates, however, were generally successful in analysing the influence of Clement Mathieu. They made clear the link between his mild manner, his opposition to Rachin's methods, the introduction of music and the improvement in the candidates' behaviour. There was a tendency among weaker candidates to write a character study of Mathieu without relating it to the question or to indulge in too much story-telling and answers generally displayed little originality. The majority were very well done.
- (b) Answers to this, though fewer in number, were very well written and interesting. For the most part analysing the importance of music was a way into the influence of Mathieu on the school and Morhange in particular. Only one dealt with the sound track. Some essays were sensitive, intelligent and well-written and of an excellent standard.

### ***Le Dernier Metro***

There were very few essays on this film.

- (b) All those seen chose (b) and were very competent. They present the life of the theatre, the actors and the Parisians during the Occupation, the impact of the Occupation on the everyday lives and the persecution of the Jews especially Lucas Steiner. They deal with the colours of the film. One mentions how each main character has a double life. Good work.

### ***Amélie***

Both options proved popular and were mostly well answered.

- (a) The majority of candidates attempted this and, while essays demonstrated a good knowledge of the text, there was a surfeit of narration without analysis. However, there were some very good essays which showed sensitive engagement with the film. The candidates were able to link Amélie's retreat into an imaginary world with her relationship with her distant father and an explanation for her character and behaviour.
- (b) Although this is a more abstract question many chose it and successfully. They all spoke about the idealistic representation of Paris, the nostalgic feeling evoked, the fairy story ambiance, the childlike colours, the naïve innocence of Amélie and the series of romantic climaxes. This question produced the more original and interesting essays and while these were not numerous, they were generally a pleasure to read on account of their differing approaches to the subject.

### ***Merci pour le Chocolat***

No candidate chose this film in the centres seen.

## **B. The World of Literature**

### ***L'Étranger***

This choice has declined in popularity.

- (a) Those candidates who did write on this book mostly chose (a). Unfortunately, the responses were not very successful because they mostly did not answer the title set. They tended to define Existentialism, to equate Camus with Meursault and focus on the final fall into consciousness in the prison.

Candidates continue to misspell 'Meursault'.

- (b) Answers were better but not remarkable and were generally rather pedestrian and often irrelevant to the title (even though the question had given them the characters upon which to focus). Many chose to write about Marie and his mother rather than focus on his neighbours. Again they tried to explain Existentialism and therefore, his attitude to other people.

There were few outstanding essays. Neither question evinced answers that truly demonstrated understanding of the text and of Meursault's character.

### ***Manon des Sources***

Not many candidates chose this book. It was difficult to tell whether candidates were talking about the book or the film because they had obviously watched the film also. The answers were for the most part chronological and tended towards narration.

- (a) Most candidates attempted this question. Candidates appeared to have engaged well with the characters and there were some pleasing essays. However, there was rather too much story-telling and digression into Jean de Florette. Few presented the balance between the uncle and nephew and mostly just outlined how nasty Papet is. This sometimes left little room for analysis of the relationship between le Papet and Ugolin.
- (b) The few essays were satisfactory, with some very good, thoughtful essays written. For this question candidates had to show good knowledge of the text and could not rely on the film.

### ***Les Mains Sales***

Candidates sometimes attempted to write about existentialism and talked about *en soi* and *pour soi* in an unfocused way at the expense of answering the question. In addition, because of the limitations of their French, these descriptions were generally meaningless and contributed nothing to their answer. All essays contained a lot of tangential information.

- (a) The majority of the candidates chose this. The answers were mostly very competent, but often incomplete.

Important components of Jessica's actions were left out as were the various facets of her character. The focus was placed on Jessica at the beginning of the play and then the kiss with Hoederer. Her speech or actions on behalf of her husband were often sketched over or omitted. However, most candidates understood her character and role in the play.

- (b) Unfortunately this question was dealt with superficially with a tendency to list where they liked or didn't like Hugo with a lack of focus on the question set.

Only one answer dealt with his intellectual idealism.

### ***Le Silence de la Mer***

Three small centres in my quota had prepared this text. Both questions were attempted, and answers to (b) tended to be better than (a).

- (a) Some candidates completely overlooked the importance of the love between Werner and the niece but nevertheless produced some interesting essays, drawing on other aspects of the book. The focus tended to be on how to fit the metaphor of "*la mer*" into the novel and the events of the Occupation. They did not explore how the calm surface of the sea conceals tortuous currents underneath and therefore represents the structure of the novel and, as a result, links to the idea of resistance. The central importance of the niece, the actual cottage and the disillusion of Von Ebrennac were not discussed.
- (b) Sometimes included too much biographical detail. On the whole, candidates had engaged well with the text.

Both titles are quite abstract and the candidates not always successful in moving from the idea of "*La Résistance*" to the characters and structure of the novel.

Most essays dealt with what the silence represented.

### ***Le Blé en Herbe***

Chosen by very few centres, but those who wrote on this novel produced some excellent essays showing empathy with the characters and analysing their rôles thoughtfully.

### ***325.000 Francs***

No example seen

### ***Boule de Suif***

This was a popular choice. Most candidates answered (b) rather than (a).

- (a) This question with a few exceptions did not elicit good answers. Most revealed a sketchy knowledge of Cornudet and got important facts wrong. They also missed the irony with which Maupassant presents him and took some of his statements at face value.
- (b) Unfortunately most of these answers were largely irrelevant. There was a tendency to deal with other themes because they were considered more important. So many reverted to what they had learned and did not answer the set title. Some, however, were outstanding.

## **C The Regions of France**

Very few essays were marked in this option and these are the only regions which were seen.

### ***La Bretagne***

Of those seen, this was the most popular region. Both (a) and (b) were chosen. The answers were generally competent with some outstanding essays on (b). Some of the answers on the festivals were simply descriptive and lacked analysis of their importance. They were mainly a long list of festivals with very little analysis of their importance. In addition, the essays tended to be greatly over length and so the conclusion was lost. The answers on (b) were very knowledgeable.

### ***L'Alsace***

One example seen on this region and wrote on option (b).

This was a very competent essay with many aspects covered: historic, linguistic, architectural and gastronomical.

### ***Quebec***

One example seen on this region. Unfortunately both questions (a) and (b) were addressed by the candidate in the same essay and a lot of marks were lost.

### **General Comments:**

- In Option B (Literature), very few essays exceeded permitted length.
- However in Option A (Cinema) there was a general tendency to list or narrate and an inability to see the purpose of the films. Length was often a problem, going over the limit of 400 words. Some full marks essays had to be scaled down because they lacked a conclusion within the word limit set.
- Films seem to be taking over from texts and the majority of the listed regions were barely represented but it is very nice to see so many still doing literature.
- There is still in too many cases a strong tendency to answer the question the candidate wanted and *NOT* the question set.
- PLEASE could centres put scripts in candidate order? Sorting them out when entering marks takes up a lot of time in the administration process.



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