Grade Boundaries

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. This will be available at: http://www.wjec.co.uk/index.php?nav=51
UNIT 1: LISTENING

Candidates found parts of the listening examination challenging in both tiers. One of the overlap questions, question 8 Foundation tier / question 3 Higher tier (X), in particular, presented difficulties to candidates at both levels but parts were also accessible and the marks covered the whole range. Few candidates, if any, gained full marks at Foundation tier which suggests that for the most part candidates had been entered at the correct level. At Higher tier, a few candidates but not many gained full marks, however there seemed to be a reasonable number attaining 30 marks or more. There was, however, a large number of candidates who failed to gain half marks and centres should perhaps give more consideration to the level for which candidates are entered. Overall, candidates followed the rubric and answered in the appropriate language (English or Welsh). No marks are given for a misspelt word which has the same spelling as the French e.g. *visite* for *visit*. Responses seemed to take account of the allocation of marks and there were very few instances of more boxes than necessary ticked in the multiple choice sections. A few candidates had difficulty writing clearly. Where an answer required a letter this was sometimes unclear. Almost all candidates attempted at least part of each question. There was evidence of candidates making use of the reading time to highlight / underline instructions or mark allocation as well as noting key vocabulary under pictures or on the 'rough notes' page. There was no discernible difference in the performance of candidates who undertook the on-line version of the examinations nor that of Welsh medium candidates. It should be mentioned, however, that candidates at Welsh medium centres have a tendency to answer many questions in English or a mixture of English and Welsh.

Administration

Generally, centres are using the correct procedures for forwarding scripts to examiners. Most scripts arrived promptly and were very well packed and labelled. Attendance registers were correctly completed. However, problems encountered included:

- Some packs were received unsealed or so tightly packed that the plastic packaging tore open in transit
- Attendance registers not completed
- No information on the outside of the script packet other than the Centre Number. The front should also indicate the title and paper number of the scripts inside.
- No indication of the total number of scripts in the packet.
Question 1 Foundation

This question was suitably answered by most although a minority of candidates only ticked one item per row, some three in the top box and one in the bottom box. A few candidates selected ‘blue and black’ instead of ‘blue and green’ in top box. They may not have revised colours in Key Stage 4. The mean score for this question was 3.9/4.

Question 2 Foundation

SECTION 1: A number of weaker candidates selected ‘dog’ instead of ‘cat’ as would be expected. A few selected ‘parrot’.

SECTION 2: Answered correctly by most candidates.

The mean mark for this question was 3.5.

Question 3 Foundation

SECTION 1:
(a) ‘Museum’ correctly selected by most.
(b) Usually well answered although ‘expensive’ was occasionally ticked instead of ‘boring’.

SECTION 2:
(c) ‘Closed’ often selected correctly with a few ‘too busy’.

SECTION 3:
(d) A number of candidates selected the middle picture of ‘play on computer’ rather than the ‘TV’.
(e) ‘Chocolate cake’ often selected correctly, although a minority of candidates selected the hot chocolate drink.
(f) ‘Town’ selected correctly by most, a few selected ‘beach’.

The mean mark for this question was 5.5.

Question 4 Foundation

SECTION 1
(a) ‘An earache’ selected by most although ‘a stomach ache’ was often selected by candidates who may not have learnt this topic.
(b) As in (a) most candidates selected the correct visual for ‘wants to be sick’ although some selected the other two visuals randomly because they did not understand the structure ‘j’ai envie de vomir’.

SECTION 2
(c) Most candidates answered 18:00 correctly although as in past papers, numbers created difficulties for some: 8:00 selected instead of 18:00.
(d) Most candidates answered this question correctly ‘Dupont’.

The mean mark for this question was 3.2.
Question 5 Foundation

This question was answered reasonably well. Questions 5 (d) and 5 (e) caused problems for candidates.

SECTION 1:

(a) Most candidates selected the ‘hairdresser’ visual correctly.
(b) 9:15 often selected instead of 9:45.

SECTION 2:

(c) Two answers required. A number of candidates gave one correct answer and one incorrect. ‘speaking/responding/answering the phone’ were accepted as correct. Some candidates answered ‘phoning’, ‘using her phone’, ‘picking up the phone’ ‘working on phone’ which was deemed to be incorrect - ‘talking to customers/clients’ often answered correctly although sometimes left out.
(d) ‘Cutting hair’ or ‘cleaning up / sweeping hair’ were most often given answers. A high number of candidates did not answer ‘washing hair’ correctly.
(e) ‘Useless’ (inutile) was not well known. Candidates often answered ‘useful’ (heard ‘utile’ at the end of ‘inutile’ perhaps?) or were not specific enough and wrote ‘did not like it’ or ‘not good’.

The mean mark for this question was 3.4.
OVERLAP QUESTIONS

Question 6 Foundation / 1 Higher

Worth six marks: Well answered by most candidates although some candidates did not write the letters clearly enough or used lower case rather than upper case letters, thus writing confusing letters ‘a’ ‘c’ and ‘e’ in particular. Some candidates changed their minds and wrote different letters on top of their first answers, producing a confusing mess, thus incurring a penalty if the letter could not be deciphered clearly. Answers to (iv) and (v) ‘baker’ (a) and ‘chemist’ (c) were often confused. Some candidates may also have known ‘docteur’ rather than ‘médecin’ and answered ‘chemist’ (c) when they heard ‘médecin’ (b) thinking it was ‘medicine’ for (v) his uncle is a doctor (je travaille à la pharmacie de mon oncle).

The mean mark for this question at Foundation was 4.4.
The mean mark for this question at Higher was 5.6.

Question 7 Foundation / 2 Higher

Worth four marks: Four correct boxes selected by more able candidates. Some candidates selected (ii) ‘he enjoys rock climbing’ instead of (i) ‘he cycles a lot’ when they heard ‘à la montagne’ missing out on ‘je fais beaucoup de cyclisme’. They heard ‘en voyage scolaire avec mes amis’ and selected (v) ‘has lessons when he goes skiing with his friends’ incorrectly. In the same vein, some selected (viii) ‘he also does the washing up at home’ just picking up on the ‘je fais la vaisselle’ without taking the remainder of the sentence into account.

The mean mark for this question at Foundation was 2.9.
The mean mark for this question at Higher was 3.5.

Question 8 Foundation / 3 Higher

This question was not very well answered.

(a) A few candidates wrote ‘pays de Galles’ in French and lost one mark as a result. Many did not understand what they heard. Answers often given were ‘Japan, Portugal, Netherlands’ aiming for masculine country names. Other countries were ‘Ireland, Switzerland’ or ‘Rome’. ‘Welsh’ instead of ‘Wales’ was often answered and accepted including various spelling of Wales (Whales – Walles).

(b) This caused problems for some: instead of ‘she is surprised’ – a number of candidates answered ‘confused’ ‘boring’ or answers such as ‘why would she want to go there?’ ‘it’s boring, the weather is bad, there is nothing to do’ – seemingly making up their own answers. Some answered: ‘Really?’ to the ‘vraiment’ they had heard. Very few answered ‘astonished’ (étonnant).

(c) Most candidates answered ‘mountains’ correctly although a few expectedly mixed up ‘campagne’ and ‘montagne’ and answered ‘countryside’. ‘Belles plages’ caused problems for some and this was less well answered ‘with beautiful scenery’ more often than not given as an answer or ‘beautiful views/surroundings’.

(d) Many candidates answered ‘[local] restaurants’ without the ‘eat out/go to’ and lost marks – the question was ‘What would he like to do?’ – just ‘local restaurants’ was not accepted as a plausible answer. ‘Castles’ without the ‘visit’ likewise was not accepted. A few candidates gave the answer ‘chateau’ in French, which was not accepted.

The mean mark for this question at Foundation tier was 3.1.
The mean mark for this question at Higher tier was 4.5.
**HIGHER TIER**

**Question 4**

Some weaker candidates did not answer all questions.

(a) ‘station’ (bus or train) not very often given as correct answer. Most answered ‘service station’ or ‘garage’ – ‘libre service’ may have been mistaken for ‘service station’.

(b) A lot of inferred answers were given – does not use fuel, it is electric, releases fewer emissions in the atmosphere – instead of no pollution. ‘Less noise’ was accepted for ‘no noise’ or ‘quiet’ or ‘not loud’ / silent, quieter, less noise (elle ne fait pas de bruit).

(c) How long does it take to charge the car? For some reason this caused problems – some candidates answered 6 correctly but wrote ‘heures’ in French instead of ‘hours’ in English or 6 on its own which could not be accepted. The usual 16 or 60 hours were given as answers.

(d) 250 (kms): this caused problems for many candidates at all levels: 205, 200, 2050, 1050. High numbers are still not known by many.

The mean mark for this question was 2.6.

**Question 5**

**SECTION 1**

(a) A number of candidates did not include ‘play’ with his friends and lost the mark: common answers were ‘hang out / meet up / go out / spend time with his friends’.

(b) ‘Reading and writing’ not often given correctly. Any subjects such as Science, P.E., R.E., English were given including ‘fencing’ and ‘homework’: guess work on the part of candidates. ‘Lire et écrire’ may not be used in class much. Candidates may be more used to the imperative form of the verb: ‘lisez et écrivez’.

(c) Why did he prefer Maths? Answered correctly by many although a lot answered: important / needed / helpful / handy – in life (dans la vie) was sometimes wrongly assumed to be ‘en ville’ – in town.

**SECTION 2**

(a) He repeated the year not known (redoubler). This was not answered well. Answers often given about some ‘accident on roller blades or skate boards / a fire / broke his back / was bullied / expelled / humiliated in front of the class / moving class / class split up / class was cancelled’ guess work probably from the ‘catastrophe’ they heard. ‘Apprenticeship’ often given correctly but wrongly spelt, and ‘work experience’ was often given as a wrong answer.

(b) ‘worked in a garage’ given correctly by many although a few added ‘his brother’s or father’s garage’ not understanding ‘patron d’un garage’.

(c) A high number of candidates gave the correct answer of ‘experience of work’ AND university qualifications but some just listed what they heard and did not make the distinction between work experience and university experience as such.

The mean mark for this question was 4.5.
Question 6

SECTION 1

(a) ‘Draw on the walls’ not often given – a lot of ‘painting on her house’ ‘painting on her walls’ ‘designing on her house’, ‘designing murals’ ‘doing art around her house’ ‘drawing her house.’
‘eat with her hands or without cutlery’ not known and sometimes left blank.
(eat with her mum / eat her hands / eat bugs or insects / played with dolls).

(b) This question was not well answered at all: ‘art dramatique’ not known so answers were often given as ‘it was dramatic’. Otherwise, ‘grammar’ often spelt as ‘grammer’ was a popular answer.

SECTION 2

(a) This was answered correctly by a high number of candidates although some answered – ‘protection of animals’ as well as ‘she does not like testing of products on animals’ (only worth one mark).

(b) Very few candidates managed to answer this one the ‘en’ caused problems in ‘en sept ans’ – ‘a long time’ was often given and ‘most of her life’.

(c) ‘Difficult or hard’ often answered correctly but ‘success does not come quickly’ answered correctly by a few. Some gave the following answers: ‘her work is not fast / is boring / is dull’.

(d) ‘A national treasure’ – not many candidates answered this question correctly. Amongst common answers: international star / national gem / a flower / a rose and original answer: a female ‘him’ (meaning Leonardo DiCaprio).

(e) Why is she so famous? Although many candidates answered ‘popular films’ this was not enough, they had to respond that ‘she had acted’ or ‘was in’ popular films or name some of her films – she was in Batman and Taxi, popular films for example.

(f) Little things in life / small things in life – this was not often answered correctly. Candidates answered ‘her family / her health / her home town’ ‘spending time away from fame’.

The mean mark for this question was 4.4.
UNIT 2: CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT SPEAKING

General Comments

Most centres undertook the Controlled Assessment Speaking in accordance with the WJEC guidelines and specifications. However, the same issues seem to have arisen again this year with a few centres.

Administration

Most Centres have adhered to the instructions for the submission of samples but the following points have not been addressed despite being highlighted in the past:

(i) A number of samples arrived late with the moderators – some as much as 20 days after the WJEC deadline, and some centres were guilty of this for the second or third year running. Many centres did not allow for the public holiday in calculating the latest date for posting.

(ii) There were examples of the wrong language samples being sent to moderators (German to French and vice versa) and/or the wrong unit (Speaking or Writing) being sent to examiners/moderators. This may well be the responsibility of Examination Officers rather than MFL teachers but needs to be mentioned.

(iii) In a few cases, a candidate on the requested sample list had been substituted by another which created problems for moderators accessing the on-line marks.

(iv) There was not always a balance of the two tasks submitted – one centre sent 9 conversations and only 1 presentation. WJEC recommends that you send an equal sample of both tasks.

(v) There were frequent errors in totalling the marks awarded for each strand on the individual mark sheets and also in transferring marks on-line.

(vi) Some centres submitted mark sheets for both tasks for the candidates in the sample. A minority of centres submitted mark sheets for all candidates entered.

(vii) The concept web and prompt sheets were included by some centres – these should be retained at the centre.

(viii) Some mark sheets had not been signed and dated. It is a requirement of the Code of Practice that the declaration of authentication is signed by both teacher and candidate.

(ix) Some mark sheets did not correspond to the recording.

(x) Recordings were generally of good quality but there were instances of some being barely audible or there being too much background interference. (In some instances the microphone was positioned in such a way that the teacher was heard loudly and the candidate hardly audible).
(xi) Some CDs were damaged in transit. Please ensure that they are packaged securely.

(xii) Many samples did not give an indication of the track number for each candidate nor of the task and some did not give the candidate name and number at the beginning of each recording.

(xiii) One parcel was received in an unsealed plastic bag and it is only thanks to a postman’s awareness that the audio files were not lost in transit!

Timings

On the whole centres followed the guidelines as regards the duration of the tests but there were many who did not.

This was more apparent in the Presentations and had an effect on the marks awarded. In most cases the task fell short of the time required or the Presentation exceeded 2-3 minutes but the discussion was curtailed.

Most Structured Conversations adhered to the prescribed time although a few lasted under 4 minutes and some exceeded 8 minutes. The timings for the assessments are stated in the specification and must be adhered to.

Structured Conversation

Topics followed the usual pattern – free time, holidays, family, local area, school and work experience – with environment or healthy eating occasionally chosen as a more challenging title.

Although candidates were for the most part well prepared, they did not always attain the standard expected as they were unable to develop or sustain their responses sufficiently to gain the highest marks for Content and Communication or else their pre-learnt responses lacked spontaneity and the element of unpredictability. Pronunciation was sometimes poor and there was a lack of evidence of complex structures and language.

On the other hand most of the weaker candidates were able to do more than answer closed questions and could take part in a simple conversation.

Teachers have an important role to play in the smooth conduct of the oral tests. Some teachers were able to tease out answers from their candidates by wording their questions in a way they knew their candidates would understand while others appeared to bombarding their candidates with pre-prepared complex questions many were unable to answer.

Presentation and Discussion

Again the topics for the Presentation followed the usual pattern and were similar to those for the Structured Conversations although some centres seem to opt for less personal topics for the presentation. These sometimes prove too challenging for some candidates and the ability of the candidate should perhaps be considered in deciding on the topic.
Most candidates were well prepared and were able to deliver the presentation competently although in some cases, despite the apparent fluency of the candidate, poor pronunciation impeded communication. Some presentations were recited at speed with no intonation. Some contained so many idiomatic expressions and complex language rarely produced by a Key Stage 5 student, let alone Key Stage 4, that they sounded as if they had been prepared by a foreign native speaker. They were often recited in a monotonous manner with frequent anglicised mispronunciation of content. Some presentations were recited at speed with the candidates catching their breath from time to time before launching into their next scripted passage, as if they could not wait for the test to finish.

On the whole candidates were able to respond to questioning in the follow-up discussion. In some cases the responses seemed to be over-rehearsed and it was evident that the discussion between teacher and candidate was scripted – even to the point of the candidate asking questions of the teacher at intervals. As one would expect, where the responses were not so rehearsed, the quality of the language was not as good.

There were a few instances of the discussion digressing from the topic itself. On the whole presentations were stronger than the responses given in the follow up questions.

The main issue in regard to the presentations was the timing. Many of the presentations themselves fell short of the prescribed 2-3 minutes and some discussions were short of 3 minutes too. In some cases a competent presentation of the required duration was followed by a very short discussion which limited the marks that could be awarded for Responding to questions as well as for Accuracy and Range.

In a few cases the recording for the Presentation and Discussion satisfied the timing guidelines but analysis of the task showed that the majority of the discussion time may have been taken up by the teacher rather than candidate – time taken by the teacher either to formulate the question or to respond to the candidate.

The timing of this task was to a large extent responsible for the need to adjust marks awarded for the Presentation and Discussion.

**Assessment by Centres**

In general the marks awarded by the centres were fair and reflected the standard of performance of the candidates. The WJEC mark scheme was followed appropriately by most centres but there was a general tendency to be more generous than strict. In the Structured Conversations candidates were awarded the higher range of marks for Content and Communication even though they did not always develop or steer the conversation or express sufficient points of view. Many candidates recited their answers in lengthy monotonous monologues intercepted by teachers’ questions.

Poor pronunciation was often overlooked in the allocation of Accuracy marks and 4 or 5 marks were often awarded for range when there was little evidence of complex structures and language.
On the other hand, at the lower end, some candidates were not sufficiently credited for their ability to answer open questions using full sentences and occasionally a variety of tenses.

For the Presentation, some candidates were awarded 4 or 5 for fluent delivery even though poor pronunciation impeded communication. The marks for Accuracy and Range seemed to be sometimes based on the Presentation only and did not take into account the less competent performance in the discussion. Centres mistakenly equated ‘recitation’ with confident delivery.

Candidates were often awarded the higher marks for the Presentation even if it fell short of the prescribed time. Centres should be aware that if the Presentation falls short of 2 minutes the mark for Delivery should be no more than 3. Likewise if only a few questions have been asked and answered in the discussion, candidates should not have access to the higher range of marks for Responding, Accuracy or Range.

A few teachers corrected errors during the assessment and this should be avoided.

It is important to remember that where a centre has more than one teacher at GCSE, that internal moderation is undertaken. In some centres, examining teachers had made use of the 'optional' section of the candidates' sheets to make a comment to explain how marks had been allocated. This proved to be very useful for both internal and external moderation processes.

Some common errors included:

- Interestant
- Enuiyeux, for ennuyeux
- Soir and sœur were mixed up
- The 's' in est was often pronounced and the 't' in et
- Pronouncing consonants at the end of words and in the middle of words
- Parents was often pronounced as pearon
- Doo for 2
- Many candidates used anglicised pronunciation in cognates
- Vacances was mispronounced as vacancies
- juillet was pronounced as julliet
- A variety of pronunciations were heard for aussi.
- Cheveux and chevaux were interchanged
- Voiture was difficult to say for some
- Ani was given for année
UNIT 3: READING

General Comments

A small number of candidates completed the front cover with incorrect examination numbers or with first names and surnames confused.

Candidates should not adorn their scripts with graffiti or comments about the exam, the subject or their school.

More than ever this year there was a problem with candidates' handwriting and that in two respects. First, there are questions where candidates had to write words which, when they were copying words already provided e.g. FT Q4 and HT Q3, was done almost universally well with very few copying errors. However, where candidates had to make up their own response and that in English, not French, the quality of handwriting deteriorated markedly in some cases. Candidates should be reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure that their answers, in whichever language, are legible and unambiguous on first reading. Secondly, there were many instances in which the candidates' responses to questions which required a letter were unclear. There was confusion in particular between C and G, E and F, I and J and also A and H. In addition some candidates used only uncials instead of capitals [given in the paper] or mixed uncials and capitals indiscriminately.

This year also saw an increased use of candidates writing an answer followed by ‘?’ and also a worrying trend for candidates to write two alternative answers. Sometimes these were both correct and so allowable e.g. FT Q6 (ii) / HT Q2 (ii) where some wrote *she walks/goes on foot* but many wrote *she walks/cycles* as if they were leaving it up to the examiner to choose the correct answer. Candidates need to be reminded that their answers must be unambiguous and that where a correct answer is given followed by incorrect information no marks are awarded.

Candidates are reminded of the need to observe the rubric, which is in English so there should be no case of misunderstanding the instructions or of misinterpreting the examiner’s intentions e.g. FT Q1 requires a letter chosen from those given not an answer in English or French.

Candidates cannot approach this paper expecting to work out everything from the context. Some knowledge of the minimum core vocabulary is essential.

Some candidates omitted the first two pages and others the last two while some did not attempt all the questions even though in some cases the only task was to choose a letter from a given list.
Q.1 The main pattern of confusion in this question was between D Ceintures and F Jupe. No marks are given to candidates who copy out the sign as an answer. The mean score for this question was 4.2.

Q.2 The only discernible pattern of incorrect answers to this question was for (iv) where candidates possibly interpreted the coin…vert of B as being a nice garden. The mean score for this question was 5.3.

Q.3 There was no discernible pattern of incorrect answers to this question though poire seemed least well known. The mean score for this question was 5.3.

Q.4 The rubric “…choosing the correct answer from the box” was disregarded by a smaller number of candidates than in 2012 and nearly all managed to copy the words chosen with the correct spelling. In detail:

(i) Some candidates gave step-father as a straight translation of beau-père.

(ii) Brest was very often given as an answer with many candidates failing to recognise the significance of meilleure ici qu’à Brest.

(iii) Strict was sometimes given when candidates did not read or understand mais drôle and boring by those who just guessed.

(iv) Swimming was sometimes given presumably because of the similarity between équitation and natation.

(v) Some candidates did not differentiate between the statements relating to the author, Lionel, and Ahmed. Although Lionel does not sign the email it is clear from the first line and from the rubric that he is the author. Perhaps some candidates do not read the rubric carefully enough before they attempt the questions. The fact that many gave Limoges as an answer suggests that some candidates did not recognise it as a place or even as a proper noun in spite of its capital L.

(vi) Those who recognised dur in the first line gave difficult as an answer here.

The mean score for this question was 3.9.
Almost all the answers were in English at both tiers.

(i) Some candidates did not read beyond midi so missed the et demi while quite a few struggled to convey the time accurately with 12.30 a.m., half-past noon and midday and a half quite common.

(ii) The director was a frequent mistake though some gave just the driver.

(iii) A large number of candidates gave fresh or strawberries for fraîches and sometimes did not even link this to drinks. Boissons was often translated as fish. Many candidates failed to follow the narrative and the fact that the group stopped deux fois for different reasons.

(iv) Most candidates recognised that there was some failure with the minibus [implied in the questions] but many gave the generic broke down rather than the specific answer required, pneu crevé not being well-known.

(v) The two marks could have been gained by writing just the two words cold and noisy but some candidates, especially those who had failed to follow the narrative of the journey, mentioned that the group had already boarded the ferry and that the noise came from other passengers [at a party - from parti or from the rough sea. Loud was sometimes given for noisy. There were also quite a few who wrote nosy.

(vi) Encouraged, perhaps, by autoroutes many candidates simply wrote [problems with] traffic. Embouteillages was no better known than pneu crevé. The satnav was often to blame as were, occasionally, rabbits.

(vii) Aside from the obvious there was an orange with éclairs, there was a storm of éclairs and they’d spent all their money on éclairs many candidates failed to take note of the context given in the rubric that the group was on its way to watch a match and not to play in one giving rise to such answers as they arrived too late. Many also failed to grasp the concept given in the first sentence that this was an international rugby match between France and England to be played in London so there weren’t enough players and there was a misunderstanding with the jerseys would be unlikely responses. Several candidates referred to fights between players, fans or between the players and the referee. The number of totally irrelevant answers, however, suggests that many candidates did not understand the word abandoned in the first place.

The mean score for this question was 2.3 at FT and 4.8 at HT.
FOUNDATION TIER Q6 / HIGHER TIER Q2

Almost all the answers were in English at both tiers.

(i) Most knew mercredi but many conjectured Saturday.

(ii) Many candidates went for the bus option though others picked up on the mention of vélo, missing the je n’ai pas de.

(iii) Some candidates failed to write a recognisable form of repetitive while others assumed it would be boring.

(iv) Many candidates gave repetitive as an answer here. Very few gave the correct answer with most who recognised porter often interpreting it as wear as in she had to wear a uniform/badge. Some who saw paquets gave answers which were less than carrying e.g. move, lift or sort. Others picked up on Philippe and gave stacking the shelves.

(v) Many who understood bouteilles did not go as far as breaking so dropped, knocked over or damaged were common. Vingtaine was redundant to the answer but many gave it as vintage.

(vi) Soldes was correctly rendered by many candidates but others gave a less precise answer such as promotion, clearance or price reduction.

(vii) About half of the candidates seemed to know maquillage.

(viii) Very few candidates knew jouets which was often given as games. Some who did appear to know the answer gave a specific rather than a generic reply e.g. toy soldier.

The mean score for this question was 2.9 at FT and 4.9 at HT.

HIGHER TIER

Q.3 This question was well answered though there was sometimes confusion between (i) and (ii) suggesting that lit and couché / levé were not well known. The mean mark for this question was 4.5.

Q.4 Most candidates identified at least four correct statements with E and F being the most common incorrect answers suggesting that the sauf before boucles d’oreille was not understood. The mean score for this question was 4.4.

Q.5 Only a few candidates tried to write the missing words into the limited space provided. Most candidates seemed to struggle to find the correct vocabulary which suited the grammatical context of each sentence. K and H were the common incorrect answers so promener le chien and tondre la pelouse proved most challenging. The mean score for this question was 3.4.
Q.6

(i) Most candidates recognised a morning element in matinée though some qualified it to only a part e.g. early or late morning.

(ii) This was generally well answered though some candidates gave [keep calm and] rest as part of their answer.

(iii) The concept of cancel as opposed to postpone seemed not to be clear to many candidates. Stopped was given frequently and the common answer closed probably arose from fermés in the earlier part of the sentence.

(iv) Generally answered correctly though many gave common-sense replies such as leaves on the line or branches on the wires. A popular wide-ranging response was bits of debris / debury / debrey / debrie / depuis.

(v) Currant or current were frequent answers along with energy but many candidates took Bex to be a person rather than a region and gave answers like dignity, heart or time. Others, who correctly recognised Bex as a region gave such answers as happy-hour, crops or time.

(vi) Answered correctly by most candidates but some put non, losing one mark by the absence of just one letter. Some gave not known. There was also a number of answers along the lines of know one and now one.

The mean score for this question was 4.1.
UNIT 4: CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT WRITING

ADMINISTRATION

Generally speaking the requirements regarding the administration of this unit were more closely adhered to than in previous years. However, some issues continue to cause concern:

(i) not all cover sheets are signed by both the teacher and the candidate. In this case the school is contacted and asked to provide a replacement sheet correctly filled in. Also a signature is required, not just initials. It is a requirement of the Code of Practice that the declaration of authentication is signed by both teacher and candidate.

(ii) some cover sheets lack titles, do not have a Context circled or have a title which does not match the Context indicated. Where there is no title or where there is ambiguity concerning the task the examiner has difficulty awarding full marks for Communication as it has to be “as complete an answer as can be expected”. The title on the cover sheets and the script must be written out in full on both and be identical. Copying and pasting these before printing the answer paper ensures that both titles are the same and avoids such errors on the scripts as *How I spend my Speartime* and *My Future Carer*.

(iii) some titles on the cover sheet do not match the title on the candidate’s script. In this case the title on the script takes precedence and the task is marked accordingly.

(iv) some centres are not using the up-to-date pro-forma for this unit and so do not always indicate which is Task 1 and which Task 2.

(v) some centres submit work in an unacceptable format e.g. in plastic wallets, in envelopes or attached with paper clips, staples or treasury tags or even completely loose with nothing separating one candidate’s work from the next. The guidelines clearly state that the scripts must be submitted loosely in A4 folders and any other format creates problems for storing and retrieving scripts.

(vi) some centres submit work which has been marked and even corrected by the teacher. For formative purposes scripts may be photocopied but the *original*, without annotation, must be submitted for the examination.

(vii) some centres submit scripts in teaching sets rather than candidate order. The order of submission must match the order on the blue attendance register, which must accompany the scripts.

(viii) some centres submit more than two tasks for each candidate and some initially submit only a sample of their cohort rather than the whole entry.

(ix) some candidates write in pencil and some use correcting fluid, both of which are not permitted.

(x) some centres submit more than one attempt at the same question. Candidates are permitted only one attempt at each question. Subsequent attempts within the same topic must have different titles.
some centres submit work on unlined paper, A5 paper, WJEC stationery with a heavy toning line down the middle, coloured paper or upside down on the reverse side.

some centres do not submit pro-forma 2 [crib-sheet] which must be submitted for every candidate. If it is not used, this must be stated clearly on the form. Others submit some on A5 or even scraps of paper. Some candidates seem not to be aware that the 40 word limit includes translations so that every word on the sheet counts. This applies also to those centres who divide their crib sheet into sections headed past, present, opinions etc.

some centres submit work with the pro-forma 2 on the back of the writing paper. This means that either the sheet was given out on the day the task was taken, in which case the candidates were deprived of the opportunity of completing a crib-sheet beforehand, or that the sheet had been given out up to 14 days prior to the day when the task was taken and that the candidates had access to their writing paper beforehand, during which period they could have pre-written their answers. The former practice is discouraged and the latter is not permitted.

**TASK SETTING**

The choice of topic must be open to candidates of all abilities so there are no ‘Higher Tier’ topics as such. However, some clearly invite candidates to express more opinions, rather than just giving information, and to use a wider and more complex range of structures. The vast majority of candidates write on the following topics: Home Life, Healthy Living, Free Time and Future Plans from the Context of Personal and Social Life; Home Town, School and Local Environment from Local Community; Work Experience, Part-time Jobs and Future Careers from The World of Work; Travel and Holidays and Healthy Living from The Wider World.

In choosing titles candidates [and teachers] have to be aware of the following:

(i) some very broad titles such as *All About Me or Ma Vie* cannot reasonably fulfil the criterion of "as complete an answer as can be expected" in 300 words.

(ii) a title such as *Creative Writing* gives no guidance to the candidate about what to write or to the examiner about what to expect.

(iii) a fairly general title such as *Holidays* gives candidates the opportunity to write about the topic using the time reference[s] they choose whereas a more prescriptive title such as *My last and next holidays* demands that candidates write in the past and future and if that does not appear in their response candidates cannot be given full marks for Communication as they have not given *as full an answer as can be expected*. Conversely a candidate who writes to the title *Holidays* who responds in only one tense will not be awarded full marks for Accuracy or Range. Titles such as *Write about your last holiday and another* or *Write about holidays including a bad one* are of no help to the candidate in terms of directing them as to what might be different in content or range in the second holiday. A title such as *Write about Health in Wales* is too general to be useful and titles which include two Contexts e.g. *Write about School and recent work* must be avoided. *Where I live* tends to lead candidates to use exactly the same language to describe each room in their house and also may mislead them into writing about their Home Town as well as their house [which are from different Contexts and therefore not permitted].
(iv) choosing a title from the WJEC Taskbank is perfectly acceptable but it must be stated on the pro-forma that this is so with the rubric WJEC Taskbank Q… along with the title of the task. It is not sufficient to merely give the title as, in this case, the examiner will assume that it is the school's own task and interpret it accordingly.

(v) the guidelines in the Specification [Section 5 Writing Task Setting] clearly state that the two pieces submitted must be from different Contexts. Centres who choose to submit work on both Home Town and School therefore contravene this regulation as both come from Local Community. Conversely, candidates must confine themselves to the Context prescribed so those who wrote on both School and Work Experience in the same piece strayed into two distinct Contexts as did those who wrote about both their Home Life [Personal and Social Life] and Home Town [Local Community] sometimes in response to a title such as Where I live. Some centres who submitted work on School [without any reference to Work Experience] circled The World of Work as a Context but the examiner exercises discretion when determining which Context is being addressed. Another common area where candidates did not keep to the rubric of the question occurred where they wrote about Part-time Jobs [The World of Work] when the Context given was Personal and Social Life and the topic Free Time.

(vi) although Healthy Living appears in both Personal and Social Life and The Wider World, in the latter it is a sub-topic of Social Issues and so cannot be treated in that Context as merely How I keep fit.

(vii) generally speaking closed questions such as Am I fit and healthy? should be avoided as technically they can be answered in one word.

**TASK TAKING**

It is absolutely the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that scripts are completed and submitted in an appropriate fashion. In this regard the following should be noted:

(i) the box for Word Count should be filled in and the count should be accurate [not “approx”]. Candidates need to remember that 100 words is the absolute minimum required for a C grade and 200 for an A*.

(ii) handwriting must be legible. Large numbers of candidates this year who wrote in miniscule hand, employed a florid style or whose letters were imperfectly formed would have benefitted from word-processing their answers. Candidates may complete tasks using I.T. but teachers must ensure that there is no access to online spell checks and grammar notes. Often candidates lost marks for Communication where just one letter could have made the difference e.g. je vais au collège un / yn car, je prends le jus au college, fume est mauvais pour la santé, il n'y avait pas, les moi dernier, tour les jours, il y a du bruit qui vent de la base militaire, je vais manger plus de sain and casse-lieds; where there should have been gaps e.g. alavenir, je penseque, déconomiser, cavamaider, and where gaps existed where they should not have been e.g. je l’ave le plancher, m… eux, autre…fois, nous allons sé…journer and j’ai aim…é. Neither was this lack of attention to detail confined to candidates’ use of French, one referring to the attraction in the local church of The Way off the Cross.
(iii) candidates should present their work in an organised fashion which should not, therefore be characterised by * marks, arrows pointing over the page or new paragraph or // written in the middle of a line.

(iv) as the title given is the starting point for the awarding of marks for Communication candidates must pay close attention both to what it demands and to what it explicitly or implicitly excludes. For some candidates it seemed that the title was virtually irrelevant and they wrote about whatever they thought they could make it mean. The following examples from 2013 illustrate where candidates lost marks in this respect:

(v) a task to attract somebody to your hometown should not, having dismissed your own town, be mainly about another, more attractive and interesting, town up to 50 miles away neither should it include negative comments such as il y a trop de touristes / renards, c’est trop ennuyeux and il n’y a pas beaucoup à faire or an indefinite list of il n’y a pas de…. A task such as How I spend my Free Time should not begin Je n’ai pas beaucoup de passé-temps or be spent mainly on writing about school and part-time jobs, both of which, as well as not being relevant to the title, are taken from different Contexts from Free Time [Personal and Social Life]. If candidates cannot write 300 words on the subject given then they should attempt an entirely different topic instead.

(vi) a task to attract somebody to your hometown is not an invitation to write a discursive essay on town v country.

(vii) many responses to a title about hometown and the local environment went way beyond the local remit of the Context and became generalisations about global warming, deforestation, drought, famine and AIDS. Such issues might feature in the context of The Wider World but not that of Local Environment in Local Community.

(viii) many responses to a title about hometown contained details about the candidates’ previous abodes and where they would like to live in the future whereas the variety of tenses in this task has to refer to the town not the candidate and so should discuss what the town might have been like in the past and how it might develop in the future.

(ix) some candidates indicated that their Context was The Wider World and wrote about a famous person but gave only the sort of information which would fit into the topics in Personal and Social Life. The topics which form part of The Wider World are very clearly indicated in the Specification and just because the subject of the task is “famous” and “foreign” (though sometimes not even that) it does not justify submitting it as a task under The Wider World.

(x) some candidates indicated that their Context was The Wider World and wrote as if they were a famous person but gave only the sort of information which would fit into the topics in Personal and Social Life. Simply by pretending to be a “famous” person does not justify submitting a task under The Wider World. In fact pretending to be a “famous” person does not form part of this Specification and in any case serves no useful purpose if the only information imparted is on the level of what the candidate pretending to be e.g. Jessica Ennis-Hill had for breakfast.

(xi) My Life as a Teenager is not a task which can be submitted under The Wider World unless it concerns social issues.

(xii) If a title contains a singular such as My Favourite Film then it must not stray beyond the singular remit. It must also respect the genre and not concentrate on e.g. animal
documentaries on TV. If candidates cannot write 300 words about one film, sport or book then they should attempt a different topic altogether.

(xiii) While some allowance is made for [lack of] general knowledge some mistakes have a material effect on the understanding and therefore communicate information ambiguously e.g. London having 800 inhabitants, placing the Eiffel Tower in Canada and the lack of chocolate being the worst consequence of deforestation. As far as I am aware La Tour de Pizza is not, at least yet, an Italian landmark.

(xiv) Perhaps the most common failure in candidates' responses to titles is where the title is in two parts such as Write about your Work Experience and your plans for the future but where one part, usually the second, is given only a cursory mention. The expectation in such an answer is for both elements of the question to be answered in, more or less, equal proportions in order to give as complete an answer as can be expected.

QUALITY OF WORK

Some candidates submitted work showing a marked difference of quality between the two scripts with often the later piece being the weaker of the two. There were many candidates who wrote interesting essays of an appropriate length with a high standard of language, showing a clear grasp of the structures and functions required at GCSE. The following comments are intended to draw attention to general areas where candidates might have performed better had they paid more attention to detail:

(i) there were numerous examples of spoken French being wrongly transcribed into written French e.g. ses [for c'est], c'était [for c'était], au collège un porte une chemise grise [with a literal translation of “one” as well], j'émerais, fere/fare/feire de la natation, je voudrais travaillais, bien pays, je me suis douchai and, very commonly, coshmare.

(ii) while there were fewer instances of dictionary misuse this year leur est continues to feature as there is, tellement as the conjunction so and je propre ma chambre as a verb. There also continue to be examples of candidates’ unfamiliarity with dictionary conventions e.g. faire du cheval v irreg, en prep ville, mon pron père and range v reg.

(iii) the inclusion of à mon avis does not in itself introduce an opinion e.g. à mon avis je mange des légumes.

(iv) if the candidate has written the title and it is wrong e.g. Mes vance it will count against the mark awarded for Accuracy.

(v) the imperfect seems to be a tense of which many candidates have little understanding, especially in its meaning as “used to/would” so there were frequent combinations of quand j’étais jeune je + conditional.

Some candidates spoke many a true word, sometimes unintentionally, as in je avoir besoin de améliorer mon français and je suis fort en légumes comme français.

The mean mark for this unit was 14.0 for Task 1 and 14.3 for Task 2 so a mean for the paper of 28.3.