
GCSE

FRENCH

8658/LH: Listening Higher
Report on the Examination

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General comments

The paper proved to be accessible for the vast majority of students. In addition to some high scoring scripts, there were, however, a few cases where students may not have been entered for the correct tier and thus did not cope well with some of the more demanding questions on this paper.

As per last series, questions requiring a written answer discriminated well. Students must remember that questions aimed at the highest grades require precision and clarity.

This year, a slightly larger proportion of students wrote answers in English in Section B. Students should signpost this section during their 5 minutes' reading time.

As at Foundation tier, it is pleasing to see the majority of students attempting all of the questions, including those requiring answers in French. Students should be reminded that they can often simply lift vocabulary, even if the prompts on the question paper are worded differently from what they hear.

Teachers should continue to remind students of the following points:

- highlight the title and rubric of each section to help focus on the topic being tested
- identify the questions which have more than one part (eg 10.1 and 10.2)
- note down synonyms and/or words associated with the key words on the paper
- listen to the whole utterance once **before** writing down your answer
- pay particular attention to the words which have been emboldened
- avoid giving alternatives and/or unnecessary additional information
- cross out clearly the answers you do not want to be marked
- write down option letters carefully and legibly
- only write answers which are possible (eg: A, B or C in an A B C multiple-choice question).

Questions 1-3

These questions proved a positive start to the paper. Around 90% of students answered Questions 1 and 2 accurately, having listened to the whole utterance before choosing their answer. Those who singled out key words or phrases tended to answer the questions incorrectly. *Ça m'est égal* in Question 3 was ignored by some students, who therefore chose the wrong option.

Questions 4-6

This section was accessible to most students. Questions 4 and 5 were straightforward, resulting in over three quarters of students scoring one mark. About half of the students also chose the correct answer for Question 6. However, option B was a popular incorrect option for a sizeable proportion

of students; those who chose B did not pay attention to the first part of the utterance *Ce sont les volontaires qui*.

Questions 7-8

This section discriminated well. Question 8.1 attracted the highest number of correct answers, most likely due to the accessibility of the vocabulary being tested. Question 8.2, on the other hand, caused the most challenge. This question was aimed at the most able students as it required some manipulation. Furthermore, a significant proportion of students mistook the expression *mot de passe* for passport, which led to a range of incorrect answers relating to travelling issues.

Some answers lacked precision and did not fully convey the key ideas heard; such responses did not score. This was particularly the case for Questions 7.1, 7.2 and 8.1.

Questions 9-13

This was an overlap section. As expected, students at this tier performed much better than those at Foundation tier. Question 15 nonetheless proved challenging, even at this tier. As at Foundation tier, P was incorrectly chosen by the majority of students, thus suggesting that *embêtant* was not known.

Questions 14-16

This section caused difficulties for many students, particularly Question 16 which was the least well-answered question on this paper. All of the questions were targeting the highest grades and required precision and clarity in students' answers.

In Question 14, students were only expected to identify one type of fish to gain a mark. Answers which were incorrect, eg 'no fish' or 'they did not have the food that they wanted to order', were not rewarded.

In Question 15, it was pleasing to see that the lexical item *formation*, tested last year, was better known in this series. There was a range of confusing responses as a sizeable proportion of students second-guessed answers based on individual words. For instance, upon hearing *fini*, some wrote that the waiter was rude because he had cleared the table before they had finished their meal. Others heard *commande* and thought the problem was that the waiter was bossy; similarly, *formation* was occasionally mistaken for *information*.

In Question 16, very few were able to convey the key idea successfully. The vocabulary tested here was either not known (*goût*) or not identified via communication strategies (*épices*). For example, the word *épices* was often mistaken for 'pieces'. As stated in the specification, students are required at Higher tier to understand and respond to words and/or forms of words that are not on the vocabulary list and which are less common or familiar than those used in relation to Foundation tier assessments. While *épices* does not feature in the vocabulary list, the adjective *épicé* does appear in the Free-time activities list of vocabulary and so students could be expected to recognise it.

Vague answers (eg 'the food was bad/inedible') were not accepted. As in Question 15, there was some confusion when answers were loosely based on key words. For instance, *le plat le plus populaire* often led to incorrect answers such 'the most popular dish was not available'.

Although students are encouraged to attempt to answer every question on the paper, they must also be reminded that listening to the whole utterance is crucial at this level.

Questions 17-19

These questions were aimed at the most able students and produced a good outcome. In such questions, students must take extra care and ensure that they write down their answers in the correct box.

Of the two aspects in Question 17, the negative was the more correctly identified, suggesting that *journée de travail* was well known.

In Question 18, it was the positive aspect which was correctly identified most frequently. This was particularly pleasing as the utterances were heard in a different order to the question. The phrase *en colère* (in the specification's vocabulary list for 'Me, my family and friends') may have posed a problem for some students.

In Question 19, the negative aspect was correctly identified more often than the positive one; *souci* may have proved challenging for some students in this case.

Questions 20-21

In this section, it was pleasing to see that almost all students gained at least one mark with over half gaining both marks available. The challenge in Question 20 was for students to listen to a longer passage and to infer meaning and draw small conclusions from it. In Question 20, Option C appeared to be the option which most students were able to identify correctly. In Question 21, Option A was the most popular.

Questions 22-26

This section discriminated well with Question 22 attracting the highest number of correct answers. Question 26, on the other hand, was attempted less successfully. The challenge stemmed from the vocabulary used which was less familiar to students (*ça ne veut pas dire que, les grandes marques, tentée*). Furthermore, the utterances heard did not match the order of the statements on the question paper, thus increasing the level of challenge. Other lexical items which may have created some issues were *malgré* and *renoncer* in Question 25.

Questions 27-28

As expected, this overlap section was universally better answered by Higher tier students

In Question 27.2, although *assiette* was more commonly known than at Foundation tier, it remained a problem for a sizeable proportion of students. As at Foundation tier, those who added the extra detail 'recyclable/paper' made the answer to this question incorrect, as it conveyed a different key idea to the one heard. Question 27.3 produced a much better outcome than at Foundation tier with many recognising the key word *les fenêtres*. However, the verb *fermer* was not commonly known which led to a range of incorrect answers such as 'opening/cleaning the windows'.

Question 28 was a positive end to section A with almost 90% of the students having chosen the correct option.

Question 29

This first part of section B produced two very different outcomes.

Question 29.1 was done well with over 80% of students gaining a mark for it, showing their ability to distinguish between tenses, which was pleasing.

Question 29.2, however, was much less successful with only just over a third of students scoring the mark available. The majority of students incorrectly opted for Option B, having heard *ils m'offrent un cadeau*.

Questions 30-31

As one would expect, this type of question always proves challenging to students. However, the mark scheme for this section allowed for a range of approximate spellings, in accordance with the general principles for marking. This enabled students to gain a mark despite minor spelling mistakes. As such, a variety of spellings to render *un bon choix* and *salaire* were credited.

Answers which created an ambiguity were rejected. This was particularly the case for Question 31.2 where students confused the words *pays* and *payé*.

In Question 30.1, *une bonne chose* was added to the mark scheme as an alternative to *un bon choix*. *Enrichissant* was not often identified by students. However, those who did identify it were often able to spell it fairly accurately which was pleasing.

Question 30.2 proved to be challenging because of the lexical item *permis de conduire* which was not well known and consequently only a very small minority achieved a mark for this question. As stated above, a range of spellings was accepted, as evidenced in the mark scheme.

Question 31.1 was done well, given it was aimed at the highest grades. Answers which did not follow on from the stem, had the wrong number or did not refer to the key idea of a pay rise were not credited.

Question 31.2 proved challenging for the majority of students. *Séjour* was either not known or mistaken for *ces jours*, or *seize jours*, thus leading to answers which created ambiguity. Similarly, *pays* was often misspelt as *payé*. These were not rewarded because of the ambiguity caused. Alternatives to *séjours* (eg *stage*, *apprentissage*, *travail*) and *pays* (eg *à l'étranger*) were all credited.

Questions 32-35

This final overlap section produced a much better outcome than at the Foundation tier. Question 33 was one of the best-answered questions on the paper. As at Foundation tier, some students incorrectly picked Option C in Question 34, having singled out the phrase *changé les règles*. In Question 28, *sauf* was spotted by over two thirds of the students who chose the correct answer.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.