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**GCSE**

**FRENCH**

8658/LH Listening Higher tier  
Report on the Examination

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## General Comments

There were a number of pleasing, high scoring scripts. Most students scored marks consistently throughout the paper. Questions requiring a written answer discriminated well. The majority of these questions were aimed at the top grades and required precise answers. Some also required students to draw simple conclusions and to understand material which contained more complex and less familiar language in line with the requirements of the subject content. As at Foundation tier, only a very small proportion of students wrote in the wrong language in section B. Although the number of students leaving blanks in multiple-choice questions was fewer, there were still instances of these. Teachers should continue to encourage students to attempt all such questions.

Teachers should also remind students to maximise the 5 minutes' reading time by:

- reading all the questions carefully, particularly those in Section B;
- looking at the examples given, as these point out the level of detail required;
- highlighting or underlining key words which have been highlighted in the rubrics/questions;
- identifying the questions which have two parts (e.g. 10.1 and 10.2);
- sign-posting Section B as it requires answers in French.

Finally, in some cases, answers were difficult to decipher. Students must make sure that they make their final answer clear to the examiners, by writing legibly and using the spaces provided. If students change their minds about an answer, the final choice must be clearly signalled to the marker and be placed as near as possible to the appropriate space.

## Section A

### Questions 1 – 4

These questions were much better answered than at Foundation tier, particularly questions 01 and 03. Questions 02 and 04 were done very well by the vast majority of students and were among the best answered questions in this paper. As at Foundation tier, for questions 01 and 03, those who had based their answers upon hearing '*cinq ans*' and '*qui a écrit un article*' opted for the wrong answers.

### Questions 5 – 8

This section was accessible to most students, each question faring equally well. In Question 08, option C was popular with a number of students who may have been distracted by the word '*temps*' in the last utterance.

### Questions 9 – 11

Question 10 attracted the highest number of correct answers (79.5%), most likely due to the literal translation of option B. Question 09.2, on the other hand, caused the most problems. The KS3 lexical item '*nez*' was not understood by all. Furthermore, the time indicator '*la semaine dernière*' in the last part of the transcript was often disregarded by students, leading them to choose the wrong option B.

## Questions 12 – 15

These questions were aimed at the most able students and discriminated pretty well. In question 12, very few students successfully conveyed the key idea required by the mark scheme. A large majority of answers lacked the precision required at this level and were therefore not awarded a mark. Only 4.7% of students were successful here. In question 13, '*lieu de naissance*' was not understood by many. Question 14 led to some guess work as to when you should alert an adult, rather than the actual information provided by the speaker. The mark scheme for this question accepted a range of possible synonyms for '*désagréable*'. Vague answers, or answers which did not make it clear that the comments were written, were rejected.

## Question 16

In this section, it was pleasing to see that almost all students had gained at least one mark. As this question was targeting the highest grade at GCSE, only a very small minority (7.3%) successfully gained the three marks on offer. The challenge was for students to listen to a longer passage and to infer meaning and draw small conclusions. Option C was the option which most students were able to identify correctly.

## Question 17

This question was an overlap question. As expected, students at this tier performed much better than those at Foundation tier. Although a significant number (48.7%) gained at least one of the two marks on offer, the main stumbling block was the lack of precision in some of the answers to the 'past problem'. '*Rubbish*' on its own was not accepted in the mark scheme as it was not precise enough. The mark scheme for 'future problem' was designed to accept a range of synonyms for '*les espaces verts*'. As at Foundation tier, but on a much smaller scale, there was evidence of confusion between *verts* and *verre*.

## Questions 18 – 19

Both of these questions caused difficulties for many students, particularly question 19 which was the least well-answered question in this paper (4.8% correct). The lexical item '*formation*' was the main issue for most students. 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. '*Formation*' does not feature in the vocabulary list; however, the verb '*former*' appears in the Education Post-16 list of vocabulary. Although question 18 was better answered generally, vague answers were rejected. Answers which contained additional information negating the main key idea were also rejected. Examples of these were added to the mark scheme.

## Questions 20 – 23

These questions were aimed at the most able students and produced a good outcome. In question 20, the mark scheme was refined to accept a wide range of synonyms for '*voir les résultats*'. In question 21.1, there was some confusion over the word '*heureux*', which many incorrectly understood as horrified. In 21.2, the use of the word '*répéter*' led to many answers about repeating a year, which was rejected as it did not convey the key message. '*Fier*' in Question 22.1 was not well known and therefore led many students to guess an answer. The meaning of '*moyennes*' was not as well-known as expected in question 22.2; alternatives such as 'ok' were rejected. Question

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23 proved very challenging (9.6% correct), most likely due to the vocabulary (*'mentir', 'dire la vérité'*) which was of a higher demand and therefore less familiar to students.

### Question 24

As expected, this overlap question was universally well answered by Higher Tier students, with just over 40% gaining all three marks. As at Foundation tier, a small number of students chose option B, upon hearing *matin* in the recording.

### Questions 25 – 27

This section produced a variety of answers and discriminated very well. Question 25 was the best-answered question in this section, though the first part of this question was not particularly well answered. Responses which included the actual name of a public holiday (i.e. Christmas, Easter...) were rejected. In question 26, *'épuisé'* was not familiar to many students. *'Se détendre'* was surprisingly not well known by students at this tier, despite featuring in the Foundation list of the specification vocabulary. *'Alimentation'* was an issue for many in question 27. Many students failed to gain marks in the first part of this question due to a lack of precision in their answers.

## Section B

### Questions 28 – 31

This first part of section B was done well by students. Question 29 was the highest scorer in this section (72.2% correct); it was clear that *'par contre'* was identified well and reinforced the idea of P/N being the answer. In question 28, the sentence *'je ne peux pas'* may have incorrectly led some students to choose N as their answer. Students should be reminded that, in such exercises, they are required to listen to the whole utterance in order to identify the overall opinion.

### Questions 32 – 33

As expected in this overlap section, students performed significantly better at Higher tier. As at Foundation tier, a significant proportion of students did not attempt question 32, though the proportion was noticeably lower here. 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. Answers which created an ambiguity were not credited. This was often the case when students attempted to transcribe what they had heard (e.g. *marier ou pas* or using *ici* for *aussi*). As at Foundation tier, both questions 32.1 and 33 produced similar outcomes. Question 32.2 proved more demanding, suggesting that students did not know the meaning of the verb *'compter'*. In a minority of cases, students had not realised that questions 32.1 and 32.2 were based on one recorded item. This is an aspect of exam technique in terms of making use of the reading time to identify questions with more than one part from a single recorded item (indicated by .1, .2 etc).

### Questions 34 – 35

These were questions aimed at the highest grades and therefore proved challenging for the majority of students. 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 *'surprise'* and

*'informé'* were credited. Answers which created an ambiguity were rejected. This was particularly the case for question 35 where students confused the word *'informé'* and *'en forme'*.

### **Question 36**

This question was a positive end to the question paper with a majority of students (68%) gaining the mark. Those who did not gain a mark had not recognised the relationship between past, present and future events.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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