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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2021

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary Level
In French (WFR02/01)
Unit 2: Understanding and Written Response

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January 2021 Examiner's report
IAL French Unit (WFR02/01): Understanding and
Written Response
IAS compulsory unit

Introduction

WFR02/01 is a unit from the current IAL French specification which does not supersede a previous one.

External assessment: written examination

Availability: January and June

First assessment: June 2017

Total marks: 90

Weighting: 69.2% of the total IAS raw marks

34.6% of the total IAL marks

Examination time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Assessment across Unit WFR02/01 relates to the following General Topic Areas:

General Topic Area

Subtopics

Youth matters

Family relationships and friendships

Peer pressure and role models

Music and fashion

Technology and communication

Lifestyle, health and fitness

Food and diet

Sport and exercise

Health issues

Urban and rural life

Environment and travel

Tourism, travel and transport

Natural disasters and weather

Climate change and its
impact
Energy, pollution and
recycling

Education and employment Education systems and
types of schooling
Pupil/student life
Volunteering and
internships
Jobs and unemployment

Assessment

The assessment for this unit has three sections.

Section A: Listening (20 marks)

Candidates will be required to listen to a range of authentic recorded TL material and to retrieve and convey information given in the recording by responding to a range of TL questions.

Candidates will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and short answers in the target language.

Section B: Reading and Grammar (30 marks)

Candidates will be required to read authentic TL printed materials and to retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of test types in the target language. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and TL answers.

Questions are linked to a range of reading comprehension exercises.

Candidates will also need to understand and manipulate grammatical structures in the TL by selecting the most appropriate word form to fit a gap.

Section C: Essay (40 marks)

Candidates will write a 240-280 word essay in the TL, in response to a short TL stimulus and four related bullet points. The assessment rewards candidates for communicating relevant information effectively as well as for the quality of the language produced.

Comments relating to individual questions from the 21 01 series:

Section A: Listening

Question 1. Multiple Choice Candidates were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 1 was taken from the subtopic of technology and communication. Examples of candidate performance:

Q1(a) Candidates were generally successful in making the association between *pas envie d'en changer* and *garder*. The phrase *d'en changer* was not always understood within the recording. Some candidates seem to have simply equated *changer* with *remplacé*.

Q1(b) Candidates needed to establish the link between *Ça m'irrite* and *agaçante*.

Question 2. Multiple Choice Candidates were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 2 was taken from the subtopic of tourism, travel and transport. Examples of candidate performance:

Q2(a) In order to secure this mark, candidates needed to use the concept of *fraîchement élu* to rule out the distractor *il y a longtemps*. Equally, *deuxième campagne* ruled out the *après plusieurs essais* distractor.

Q2(d) Most candidates were successful in aligning *temporaire* with *provisoire*, even though all three distractors were very plausible in context.

Q3. Summary completion Candidates were required to complete a summary, choosing from a list of eight words. There was a mixture of

word types. Question 3 was taken from the subtopic of pupil/student life. Examples of candidate performance:

Q3(a) Whereas a significant majority of candidates succeeded in identifying *réputation* as the correct response, a small minority offered the distractor *situation*, as they may not have realised that the university's location was not being targeted for the response.

Q3(c) Most candidates were able to establish the link between *plus ou moins à la française* and *peu*, with only a small number being tempted by the distractor *beaucoup*.

Q3(d) In the final paragraph of the recording, candidates were able to rule out the key distractor *études* by the end of the first sentence. The only other option, in this instance, was *loyers*. As this was listening rather than a reading item, *se dérouleraient* may have proved challenging for some.

Q4. Short Answer Questions This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 4 was taken from the subtopic of food and diet. Examples of candidate performance:

In a number of responses across Q4, candidates gained marks even though one or more grammatical errors had been made. Responses to Q4 are only marked on the basis of communication, rather than accuracy of language. For example, in Q4(a), the following responses were accepted:

- *Que Charlotte utilise les vielle recetes de cuisine*
- *Que Charlotte continue a utilise les recets du passé*

In these examples, the correct response has been conveyed, albeit with grammatical errors, so the mark was awarded.

In response to Q4(b), some candidates offered a response which had not taken account of the verb *éviter* in the question, responding with *Préserver tous les bons conseils du passé*. Most candidates were however successful in Q4(b).

In 4(e), most candidates were successful in securing at least one mark. A significant minority did however offer *beurre* or *crème* as one of their responses.

Q4(f). Some candidates were able to offer the correct spelling of *à portée de main*, whereas others skilfully opted to convey the idea of *produits locaux* as part of their response. Misspellings included *apporter demain* and *importé*. In these two cases, the response could not be credited.

Section B: Reading and Grammar

Q5. Multiple Choice Questions Candidates were provided with four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 5 was taken from the subtopic of energy, pollution and recycling. Examples of candidate performance:

Q5(a) In order to access the correct option, candidates needed to understand the concept of *diplômes en poche*. Alternatively, there was the option of individually discounting all three distractors.

Q5(b) The phrase *progressivement croissant* was key to candidates being able to discriminate between the distractors and the correct response. Some candidates were however unaware of the meaning of *croissant* in this context.

Q5(d) Most candidates correctly associated the text with the concept of *sérieuse*. Others did seem to be unsure and may have been tempted to offer the response which seemed to be the most outwardly plausible of the four available, within the context of environmental volunteering. This is a useful example of the need to base responses solely on evidence found within the text.

Q6. Short Answer Questions This question required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 6 was taken from the subtopic of sport and exercise.

When responding to this question, most candidates were mindful to avoid the use of untargeted lifts from the associated text. Candidates are asked to express responses in their own words, where possible.

Untargeted lifts:

An untargeted lift is an answer where a candidate copies out a chunk of the text indiscriminately, with no manipulation of the text.

Questions are phrased so that candidates cannot offer an untargeted lift and give the correct answer.

Example:

Q6(b): *Quels étaient les avantages du premier cours à la salle de sport ?*

The text reads:

... j'ai été contente de profiter d'un premier cours offert pour pouvoir me faire une opinion ...

An untargeted lift such as *j'ai été contente de profiter d'un premier cours offert* does not answer the question.

However, candidates can take vocabulary from the text to make a correct answer (a targeted lift) e.g. *Le premier cours était offert* or *C'était offert*.

Other examples of candidate performance:

In Q6(a), most candidates were successful in conveying a correct response. There were however instances where candidates had not taken account of the final sentence of the first paragraph, leading to some responses which stated the opposite of the correct principle.

In Q6(b), there were a number of responses suggesting that candidates were unaware of the meaning of *convenir* in the text.

Q7. Short Answer Questions This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 7 was taken from the subtopic of jobs and unemployment. Examples of candidate performance:

Q7(a) For one of the responses, a number of candidates answered with correct responses such as *Manon doit demeurer elle-même*. Where the grammar was incorrect, but the meaning was clear, the mark was awarded. For example, *Manon doit demeurer lui-même* was credited. However *Manon doit demeurer sa-même* was not accepted.

Q7(c) Candidates sometimes offered short responses, where possible, as opposed to full sentences. This can be an effective strategy, as candidates avoid offering additional material which may contradict a correct response. For example, the following response was awarded two marks:

- *Identifier de nouveaux talents*
- *Quitter sa zone de confort*

However, the following responses did not answer the question and were not credited:

- *Nouveaux talents*
- *Quitter sa zone*

7(d) Most candidates offered a correct response, though many of others responded with *conserver l'esprit d'équipe à tout prix* thus not answering the question.

As per Q6, candidates should avoid untargeted lifts. For example, in 7(f), *je suis toujours à l'écoute de ce qu'ils proposent comme stratégies* was not credited. Simple manipulation of the text was however quite acceptable. For example, *Elle écoute ce qu'ils proposent comme stratégies* and even *Elle les écoute* were credited.

Q8. Sentence Transformations: Candidates were required to write out the correct form of each targeted word. Question 8 was taken from the subtopic of jobs and unemployment. Examples of candidate performance:

Q8(a) No change was needed in respect of the masculine singular form of *aucun*. Across Q8, not all bracketed forms necessarily need to be amended.

Q8(b) Even some more confident candidates were unable to produce the correct form of the adjective: *régionaux*. Many candidates agreed *régional* with *La Fédération*.

Q8(c) The feminine singular plural form *cette* presented a difficulty to only a small number of candidates.

Q8(d) Many candidates offered the correct infinitive version: *négociier*.

Q8(e) A significant proportion of candidates offered the correct form: *diverses*. Candidates also needed to be mindful not to place accents within their response.

Q8(f) A significant proportion of candidates knew the feminine singular form: *professionnelle*. Others kept *professionnel* in the masculine singular form, possibly due to the presence of **mon** *expérience*.

Q8(g) Candidates were generally successful in offering the complete response: *a pris*. Where candidates omitted the auxiliary verb, the response could not be credited.

Q8(h) Most candidates realised that the present participle form *estimant* was required here.

Q8(i) A sizeable majority offered the correct form of the verb: *exerce*. Responses such as *exercé* could not be credited.

Q8(j) The conditional first person singular *changerais* was known by most candidates, although several wrote *changerait*.

Section C Writing

Q9 Essay: This section requires candidates to write an essay based on a short printed stimulus. The recommended length for the essay is 240-280 words, though examiners mark all the work written by candidates; they do not count the words when marking the essay. It is, however, quite possible for an essay of 240-280 to gain full marks and candidates should avoid writing essays which are over-long. Question 9 was taken from the subtopic of music and fashion.

It was clear that the vast majority of candidates had studied the appropriate subtopic. Many actually agreed with the point of view expressed in the text and there were numerous examples of development of the argument in an entirely coherent and balanced way. Even within the first paragraph, there were however many instances where candidates digressed significantly from the bullet point, offering quite a sometimes lengthy essay broadly relating to *la mode*.

Comments relating to the four bullet points:

Bullet point 1 –The vast majority of candidates addressed the bullet point, with a pleasing degree of development. In numerous cases, candidates agreed with the stance adopted by this parent. Most responses also addressed the issue from the perspective of an adolescent.

Bullet point 2 – The majority of candidates placed the focus upon recent influences on their choice of clothing. A few did however begin by pointing out that they are never influenced with regard to fashion.

This tended to work well, as it typically led to a very coherent, original and developed response.

Bullet point 3 – Most responses predicted an increasing future importance of *la mode*. Many candidates skilfully expressed concern relating to the future impact of the manufacture of clothing on the environment. There were however many cases of digression in relation to the coverage of this bullet point. The third point presented some additional challenge to candidates whose grasp of the future tense was not secure.

Bullet point 4 – In response to the final bullet point, it was clear that not all candidates had understood *en dehors de la mode*. Amongst those who did address the fourth bullet point, there were some highly original interpretations, whereas others tended to offer just a list of a few suggestions.

Q9 What candidates did well:

- All four bullet points were attempted
- Responses were typically of between 240 and 280 words
- Candidates developed the bullet points
- Exemplification of bullet points, based upon personal experience of the subtopic
- Restricted the response to just relevant material
- Many essays offered a wide range of complex structures and lexis

Q9 How some candidates could improve upon performance:

- Be sure to address all four bullet points
- Read each bullet point carefully
- Avoid digression from the required content
- Remember that irrelevance is more commonplace in very long responses
- Avoid the use of over-ambitious structures
- Be aware that an essay of 240 words can attract full marks

General summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates should:

- Ensure that handwriting is clearly legible

- Avoid the use of untargeted lifts from texts when answering questions in Section B
- Base all comprehension responses upon evidence from the text/recording
- Use their own words, where possible, when answering questions in Section B
- Be familiar with grammatical structures associated with this specification
- Address all elements of each question, especially Question 9