
GCSE FRENCH

Unit 3 Speaking
Report on the Examination

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Administration

Schools/colleges are requested to note the following points for future series:

- Errors in additions on Candidate Record Forms were noted at times and total marks also need to be copied onto Centre Mark Forms correctly.
- Centre Declaration Forms were often correctly enclosed with samples but occasionally had to be requested. This was also true of Task Planning Sheets.
- Schools/colleges are reminded that task sheets must be provided to the moderator. Moderation cannot take place without the task sheet.

General

This unit produced a lot of high quality work on the part of both teachers and students. There were many impressive performances and interesting dialogues and materials were presented in a neat and consistent manner in many schools/colleges. However, although there was evidence that teachers are becoming more used to the format of the unit and its assessment, there were still a few difficulties encountered in the unit.

There was evidence of increased entries for the unit and perhaps as a result, there was a greater number of students whose work attracted fewer marks than was the case last year.

In most schools, the more able students were able to talk at length and teachers allowed them time to develop answers fully. This was not always the case however and some teachers asked far too many additional questions which sometimes confused the students who were unable to respond appropriately.

The following comments are in many cases the same as in last year's report, as what was applicable then is equally relevant now.

Tasks

The number of bullet points within a task varied greatly, but there were generally between 4 and 7. As soon as there were more, there was a danger that those students who had a lot to say about each bullet point could find it hard to do so within the maximum 6 minutes. Alternatively they gave answers that were less well developed so that the mark for Communication was lower than it might otherwise have been. The entire Task Sheet must be in English – some task sheets were in French.

AQA exemplar tests were not as common as in the past and teachers in more schools/colleges had devised their own tasks and within the school/college, there was more evidence of a wider range of different tasks being used than was the case in previous years. The themes of Free Time, Holidays, Healthy Living, Home and Education were much in evidence as in the past. It is logical that teachers should want to choose familiar topics, as they fit comfortably into a scheme of work. Some tasks, however, gave a different slant to a familiar topic area, for example 'My Life as a Celebrity', 'A Job Interview' or 'An Interview with a Homeless Person'. This worked well except when students tried to say things which were too demanding for them.

Other tasks were quite challenging and sometimes were done poorly by the less able students, such as 'My Favourite Film' or "The Economic Crisis."

Tasks were most successful when they required students to produce language of which they were capable, and when they enabled students to develop their responses as well as they could. For mixed ability groups, this meant that there needed to be some differentiation in the task or in the questions asked within the bullet points. When the same questions were asked of all students, invariably some suffered because either they were not stretched sufficiently or, far more commonly, they were asked to say things which were beyond the level of their French, from the perspective of grammar and/or vocabulary knowledge.

It was encouraging to see that a greater number of teachers made use of the non-compulsory sub-divisions which had been publicised both on the AQA website pages and also at Teacher Support sessions organised throughout the year. This often acted as a useful support for students and enabled them to maximise their abilities and perform with greater success. For more able students, these sub-divisions merely acted as an aide-memoire for the answers they were going to give and they may have been asked just one question per bullet point. For those students who were unable to give long answers to questions, each sub-division became a different question and this meant that the conversation could flow far more successfully. It usually meant that the responses were developed less well and that the criteria for the 9-10 and 7-8 bands for Communication were not achieved, but the type of questioning was still in the interests of the students. Teachers are reminded that, when sub-divisions are used, they are not compulsory and also that it is easier to arrive at differentiation where the sub-divisions change to suit the ability and interests of the student.

Students tried to memorise their answers to the different bullet points. When they tried to learn material that was too difficult for them, marks in all categories were adversely affected because pronunciation and intonation and/or grammatical accuracy meant that it became difficult at times to understand the intended message. It also caused students to hesitate more as they were trying to recall what to say, often unsuccessfully. This is the main reason why tasks should be differentiated.

It was extremely important that students gave at least two opinions. If they did not, then the maximum mark for Communication was 2. In a similar way, two opinions had to be explained (justified) in order to score in the top band for Communication. It is therefore highly recommended that these requirements are reflected in the bullet points.

Two or more tenses are needed for students to achieve a mark of 7 or more for Range and Accuracy of Language and it is important that students who are expected to score the higher grades are given bullet points that elicit at least two tenses. In fact, able students can improve the complexity of their language by using more than two tenses and the bullet points can be devised accordingly.

Tenses should not be included at the expense of variety of language. For example, students who were asked to talk about their present, past, future and ideal holidays, over 4 different bullet points, often repeated very similar language in different tenses. This fulfilled the tense aspect of the criteria, but the range of structures and vocabulary used was often limited.

Teachers are advised not to make the unpredictable bullet point too complicated since this approach proved to disadvantage many, in particular the less able students, but even the most able students were sometimes unable to answer a particularly difficult unpredictable question. Many teachers had a selection of unpredictable bullet points which they varied well. An opinion was often asked for here and students would usually develop this with a reason (although this is not a requirement). Students should always be made aware of the fact that although short answers here are quite acceptable, there needs to be a verb. Not all teachers provided a list of unpredictable questions however and in some instances, the list did not correspond with the question asked. Teachers are also reminded that they must cover all of the questions on the task sheet, including the unpredictable question in the allotted time, ie 6 minutes maximum, if students are to have access to marks in the higher bands for Communication. There were many tasks

where students were asked all the unpredictable questions. This is acceptable in terms of prolonging the test in order to make it last 4 minutes or more, but the response to the first unpredictable question is the one which decides whether the bullet point has been successfully addressed or not.

Teachers are reminded that each school has a Controlled Assessment Adviser who will be able to advise and comment on teacher devised tasks and any other issues not covered in the FAQ document relating to Controlled Assessment. It is recommended that teachers ask for advice from their adviser whenever anything is unclear or when a second opinion on a task is required. Details of Controlled Assessment Advisers can be obtained from the Languages team at mfl@aqa.org.uk.

Timings

The length of tasks varied enormously, although there were few which exceeded the 6 minutes by a significant amount. Teachers did not always adhere to 4-6 minutes per task and they need to understand, when assessing student performance, how marks for Communication can be affected by going under 4 minutes or going over 6 minutes. Many teachers were too lax with timings or did not seem to understand how marks could be affected. On a few occasions, a vital tense was only used outside the 6 minute limit, when marking ceases, and there were some instances of the final unpredictable bullet point not being addressed before the 6 minutes were up.

Recordings

There was again an improvement in the quality of recordings but where problems occurred, it was usually on CDs and sound files where the volume was too low and there were examples of unwanted background noise. There were also delays in schools sending materials or sending the wrong/incomplete materials. Devices need to be labelled appropriately and teachers should announce all students in the correct manner at the beginning of the test (see Instructions for the June 2013 AQA Examinations booklet on e-AQA in the Secure Key Materials section or on AQA's subject pages). However, there was evidence of a lot of very well-organised materials and memory sticks/CDs generally proved much easier to deal with. In some schools, cassette tapes were still used and some were of very poor quality, included other recordings, sometimes in a different language, or many students' tasks were presented on the same tape. Moderators also reported very many cases where all recordings were on one sound file which did not pinpoint an individual student's task, which made it very difficult for them to find the appropriate student required. Each student task must be saved as an individual sound file.

Schools are reminded that sound files must be in MP3 format. WAV or AUP files will not be accepted. **Cassette tapes will not be accepted by AQA in June 2014.**

Task Planning Forms

The use of these continues to decrease. However, they need to be scrutinised more carefully by teachers and edited prior to the test by the student. There were very few instances of students exceeding the maximum number of words permitted, which was pleasing. Nevertheless, it was often the case that conjugated verbs appeared on the form or had not always been obliterated or had been crossed out but were still visible. Teachers are reminded that every time these verbs were used in the task, the clause containing the verb was discounted for assessment purposes.

Candidate Record Forms

Errors in additions were noted at times and total marks also need to be copied onto Centre Mark Forms correctly. Sometimes there were discrepancies between marks awarded on the record forms and those on the mark forms, which caused time to be spent in seeking the correct total. In addition, some students' tasks were incorrectly listed on the form, as the recorded and unrecorded tasks had been reversed.

Teachers' assessment of work

The fact that in the vast majority of cases, centre marks were accepted suggests that most teachers are marking work correctly. It is, however, also very important for internal moderation to have taken place before marks are agreed and sent to AQA and the moderators. Overall, many teachers were too lenient in awarding marks for Communication, Range and Accuracy of Language and Pronunciation and Intonation in particular. To gain access to the top bands, teachers must understand the need for opinions with explanations and full responses (Communication) with variety of structure and not just the use of 2 tenses (Range and Accuracy).

In terms of the Communication category, on some occasions teachers did not heed the need for performances to be completed with confidence for the mark to be awarded in the highest band and there was also some inconsistency in the award of marks in the top band where there was no evidence of consistent development of ideas. In addition, in some instances language which did not clearly communicate as it was badly pronounced was accepted for communication.

Less frequently, teachers were rather severe in their assessment of all the criteria. Where this happened, it often stemmed from an unwillingness to award full marks to students who deserved to receive them, but severity was also in evidence at the lowest range of ability, where some less able students were not given enough credit for what they managed to say. This echoes the comments made to this effect in last year's report.

Student performance

There was evidence of excellent use of a variety of linguistic structures; *après avoir/être*+ past participle, *en*+present participle, *depuis*, direct and indirect object pronouns, appropriate use of adjectives, adverbs, connectives and time phrases, and good use of a variety of tenses (many showed use of the subjunctive). Students were also confident in developing opinions/ideas and narrating events. Many able students were able to talk about topical issues such as the environment, healthy living, relationships, and comparison of French and English schools.

In less successful performances, students struggled with verbs especially *er/é* endings, confusion with *avoir* and *être*, and omission of verbs, particularly after *car/parce que*. Students would muddle up the order of the bullets and finally, there were many examples of poor pronunciation - perhaps because this had not been practised orally in the initial stages of teaching before the task was given.

Further advice for teachers

A lot of advice is contained in the information given above, but here are some more things that teachers hopefully will find helpful:

- Familiarise yourself with all the documentation and exemplar tasks in the Teaching and Learning Resources and the Controlled Assessment pages on our website. This may give you ideas as to what you may use for future tasks and how best to set them out. There are also examples of students' work with marks and commentaries.
- Advise B grade students and above to prepare about 4-4½ minutes of input. This means that they will have enough to achieve full marks for Communication and not so much that they exceed the 6 minutes maximum time, taking into account the length of time the teacher speaks too.
- Encourage students to vary their language structures and vocabulary as much as possible. Opinions are the most obvious area to focus on - not everything has to be described as *intéressant* or *barbant* and there are other ways of expressing *j'aime*, *j'adore* and *je déteste*. In order to introduce some variety of language, ensure that students have a bank of adjectives to render positive and negative opinions.
- Advise students that in Stage 2, when they are preparing answers to the bullet points, that they vary the order of bullets with which they begin their preparation. For instance, on night

1 they may begin with bullet 1 but on night 2 they may start with bullet 5 and so on. In this way there will be equal coverage of all of the bullet points and this should lead to a more even performance overall.

- Train students to give and justify opinions without necessarily being asked to do so. This can form the basis of different starter activities.
- Practise pronunciation as often as possible. It can be a good use of the Foreign Language Assistant's time, if you have one.
- Some teachers seemed to have recommended to their students that they ask a question of their own. There is no need to do this and in fact it can prove disadvantageous when the teacher gives quite a long response to a question. The advice is to discourage students from asking you a question.
- Check the Task Planning Form very carefully well before the test, ensuring there are no more than 40 words and that there are no conjugated verbs.
- Do a short test recording before the first student's test to check recording levels and clarity.
- Position the microphone or digital recorder so that it picks up both voices clearly.
- Make sure that your own and the students' mobile phones are switched off (not just on silent) before the recording begins. Students should not have access to their mobile phone during the assessment, in accordance with examination regulations.
- Tackle the bullet points in the order in which they appear on the Task Sheet.
- Be sensitive to the ability of the students - someone who struggles to describe his/her town is not going to be successful discussing the impact of global warming or the biggest threat to humanity.
- Check that each bullet point requires different information. For example avoid something like 'What are the problems in your school?' and then another bullet point 'What is the worst problem?'.
- Respond positively to what students say, even if it is not very good. It will encourage them for the rest of the test.
- Allow students to develop their answers as well as they are able, unless it is clear that they are going to go over 6 minutes, in which case it will be better to interrupt them.
- If an able student finishes in less than 4 minutes, it is fine to ask further unpredictable questions in order to get to the minimum time. However, as soon as 4 minutes is reached, do not ask further questions because fluency will probably be affected.
- When marking your own tests it is advisable to use some sort of annotation so that you can achieve consistency in your own marking and that you can compare tests with other teachers in the department when you are standardising internally. We have included the annotation sheet in the published mark scheme which can be accessed via the Secure Key Materials section of e-AQA. Examinations Officers have details of how to access e-AQA.

Terminology – a Glossary

Task Sheet	The sheet containing the task bullet points in English which form the task.
Main Bullet Points	The number of main bullet points which make up the task and all of which must be addressed by the student.
Unpredictable Question/ Bullet Point	The last question asked by the teacher, which the student has not prepared in advance. Shown as ! on the task sheet.
Task Planning Form (TPF)	Downloadable from our website, this is the form that a student uses as a prompt during the task. It is not compulsory. http://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/coursework-and-controlled-assessment/candidate-record-forms-2013-2014/gcse-201314
Centre Mark Form (CMF)	There are 2 of these, one for the recorded task (SR) and another for the unrecorded task (SU). There are 3 copies, white, yellow and pink. Before May 7 in the year of entry, the marks for all students are entered on the form. The white copy goes to AQA and the other two copies go to the school's moderator, who will then select a sample.
Recorded Task (SR)	The recording of this task is sent to the moderator if the student is in the sample. Only one task is sent for moderation.
Unrecorded Task (SU)	This is the second task (which may in fact have been recorded) but only the marks for this task are sent to AQA and the moderator, not the recording.
Candidate Record Form (CRF)	This form is available on our website and must be filled in for all students. It includes the breakdown of marks for the recorded and unrecorded tasks. http://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/coursework-and-controlled-assessment/candidate-record-forms-2013-2014/gcse-201314
Centre Declaration Sheet (CDS)	This is also available on our website and is a declaration by the school that the work is that of the students and has been carried out in line with the requirements of the specification. http://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/coursework-and-controlled-assessment/candidate-record-forms-2013-2014/gcse-201314

The Moderation Process – a Quick Guide

- 1 Before 7 May, complete the Centre Mark Forms (SR for recorded task and SU for unrecorded task) and send the appropriate copies of both forms to AQA (top copy) and to your moderator (pink and yellow copies).
- 2 Receive the yellow copy of the Centre Mark Form from your moderator highlighting the students whose recorded tasks are needed for the moderation sample, indicated by the letter S alongside the candidate name.

(If your school has 20 students or fewer, you should send the recorded tasks of all your students to the moderator with the pink and yellow copies of the Centre Mark Forms, and all the other items listed in 3 below. **The top copy of the Centre Mark Form should be sent to AQA.**)

- 3 Send to the moderator the following:
 - A recording of the Recorded Task for all students in the sample
 - A completed and signed Candidate Record Form for all students in the **sample signed by the teacher and the student**
 - The Centre Declaration Sheet (signed)
 - The Task Sheet for all tasks used by any student in the sample
 - A copy of the unpredictable questions for all tasks used in the sample, on a separate sheet, not on the Task Sheet
 - The Task Planning Form for each student (if used)

Please ensure that the recordings are clearly labelled. A checklist, which the moderator will send when requesting the sample, can be found in the Teaching and learning resources page of our website (see [Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations and Controlled Assessments](#)). It is a very handy reminder of what should be sent to the moderator, particularly for those schools with 20 students or fewer. Please use treasury tags to secure the paperwork.

Teacher Online Standardisation

There are no longer face-to-face teacher standardisation meetings in the Autumn Term. These have been replaced by teacher online standardisation, which is available on our website from September 2013. Teacher online standardisation is a web-based system available anywhere with an internet connection.

To use the system you:

- log on to e-AQA, select 'teacher online standardisation' from the list of teacher services and choose your language
- listen to exemplar work, marked and commented on by the Principal Moderator
- mark a variety of work, receiving feedback as you go.

Teacher online standardisation offers your school a much wider access to standardisation. Rather than sending just the one representative to a meeting, you can now all enjoy and benefit from the training. And you still, of course, have the support of your Controlled Assessment Adviser, assigned specifically to your school.

- Go to <http://www.aqa.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/products-and-services/teacher-online-standardisation>

Extract from the published mark scheme

Assessment Issues

1. Task Planning Forms (TPF)

If more than 40 words are used on the TPF, ignore when awarding a mark the parts of the student's response (ie the utterances) which use words noted on the TPF beyond the first 40.

If conjugated verbs appear on the TPF, ignore utterances where that verb is used when awarding a mark. The same applies to the use of codes, for example a drawing of a bell to represent the French word, *belle*. It is recommended that teachers check the TPF before the student is tested so that all conjugated verbs and/or codes can be deleted.

Visuals on TPFs are not permitted in June 2012 and beyond.

2. Timings

Timing begins as soon as the teacher asks the first question relating to the first bullet point. From that point, the task should last between 4 and 6 minutes.

If the task lasts for less than 4 minutes (even 3' 59"), a student cannot get full marks for Communication. It would still be possible for this type of performance to achieve a mark of 9 for Communication. There is no impact on the other assessment criteria.

If the task lasts for over 6 minutes, marking stops at 6 minutes. If, at that point, the student is speaking, allow him/her to complete that sentence before you finish conducting the test. The only exception to this would be if you had a student with a disability where the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) procedures allow you to give up to 25% additional time in order for the student to complete the task. In such circumstances you should enclose a note to the moderator explaining why additional time was granted (if the work for the student is called for by the moderator as part of the sample for your school).

3. Coverage of main bullet points

In order to be able to score full marks for Communication, students must be able to give information on all main bullet points on the task sheet. If there are any sub-divisions within the main bullet points, these are **not** compulsory.

Students may ask the teacher to repeat/rephrase a question, if they do not understand. Likewise, if the student starts to give the answer to the wrong bullet point, the teacher is allowed to step in and repeat and/or rephrase.

If one or more main bullet points are not covered by the student, for any reason*, this will affect the **maximum** mark available for Communication, as follows:

Total number of main bullet points in task	Number of main bullet points <u>not</u> covered	Maximum mark for Communication
2-3 + ! task	1	7
2-3 + ! task	2	5
4 + ! task	1	8
4 + ! task	2	7
4 + ! task	3	5
5 or more + ! task	1	9
5 or more + ! task	2	8
5 or more + ! task	3	7
5 or more + ! task	4+	5

*The reasons for a main bullet point not being covered are:

- i) The teacher fails to ask anything about that main bullet point within the allotted 6 minutes.
- ii) The main bullet point is mentioned by the teacher, but the student cannot answer.
- iii) The student gives an answer, but it is unintelligible or not relevant to the main bullet point.

4. The unpredictable question/bullet point

In order to accomplish the unpredictable bullet point, the student must answer by using a verb. If that is not the case, then the bullet point is not covered and the table above must be used in order to arrive at a mark for Communication. The clause used, however, need not be totally accurate provided it communicates the required message in the answer to the question. See the following examples:

- in reply to the question *Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire le week-end? - J'aime je vais au cinéma* would be acceptable
- if an infinitive is used in place of a finite verb this would be acceptable, as in reply to the question *Que fais-tu le samedi? - Le samedi sortir avec mes copains*
- the correct person of the verb in the wrong tense would be acceptable, as in reply to the question *Qu'est-ce que tu as fait le week-end dernier? - Le week-end dernier je vais au centre-ville).*

Where a wrong person of the verb leads to ambiguity and the message is not communicated, the unpredictable bullet will **not** be achieved. For example in reply to the question *Qu'est-ce que tu fais le week-end? - Elle va au cinéma.*

It is unlikely that the answer given in response to the unpredictable bullet point will be as well developed as the main bullet points. If a student has developed fully answers to the main bullet points and gives a short answer, including any part of a verb (eg present participle, infinitive) to the unpredictable bullet point, he/she will still have access to full marks for Communication provided the response is complete.

If more than one unpredictable question is asked, the first one that is asked is the one that should be considered when deciding whether it has been answered appropriately, using a verb. Two-part questions for the same unpredictable bullet point are acceptable practice, for example, 'Do you like...? Why (not)?' or 'Do you prefer x or y? Why?' Credit should be given for the language produced in both parts. If other unpredictable questions are asked, probably to make the task last at least 4 minutes, these should be taken into account when awarding an overall mark.

If the unpredictable questions are not provided, then the last question to be asked counts as the unpredictable question as long as it does not relate to the final main bullet point (in which case it is considered as a follow-up question).

If the unpredictable question is asked in the wrong place, this is still credited.

Once the student gives an incorrect answer (either in French, in English or in any other language) then no further rephrases are possible.

If the student gives a partially correct answer in French, then the teacher can ask more questions to elicit further information so that the bullet point is fully covered.

If a student says, in French, 'I don't understand' or 'Please repeat' (or equivalents) then this counts as a request for clarification and the teacher is allowed to repeat or rephrase. This does not count

as an answer. (If this were said by the student in English or in any language other than the one being tested, then it would be an incorrect answer and no more rephrasing would be allowed).

If the student says, either in French, in English or in any other language, 'I don't know' (or equivalents) then this counts as an incorrect answer and no more rephrasing would be allowed.

If the student says nothing in response to a question then the teacher can repeat or rephrase until the student does respond (or until the 6 minutes are up).

If the teacher asks as the unpredictable question a question which has already been asked as one of the student's main bullet points, then the student has not been asked an unpredictable bullet point and the table in Section 2 (coverage of bullet points) applies.

If, however, the unpredictable question is different from a main bullet point, but elicits some repeat of information that has already been given in answer to one of the main bullet points, then any additional information can be credited. For example, the main bullet is 'Tell me about your family'. In a long answer, the student says that he/she doesn't get on well with his/her brother. The unpredictable question is 'Do you normally get on well with your family?' and the student says 'I get on well with my parents (new info) but not my brother (repeat)'. Although the unpredictable is connected to one of the main bullets, it is not the same question.

A student is not necessarily required to manipulate language in order to accomplish the unpredictable bullet point. For example, in response to the unpredictable question 'Is it hot in France?' '*Il fait chaud en France?*' the responses '*Il fait chaud en France*' and '*Oui, il fait chaud en France*' would both be accepted as having accomplished the unpredictable bullet point.

5. The criteria for assessment

All of the criteria should be considered when deciding on a mark, but the following guidelines may prove particularly useful.

(a) Communication

Must the teacher ask extra questions for the student to gain the highest marks for Communication?

No. If the student develops fully his/her answers to each main bullet point there will be no need for extra questions to allow the student access to the highest marks for Communication.

Can students get a high mark even if there is little interaction with the teacher?

Yes. Interaction and fluency are a global concept. Students can have access to full marks with minimal teacher input as long as they have provided full and developed responses. This is still true even if there is little interaction with the teacher.

Does an opinion have to be a personal opinion or can it be someone else's other than the speaker's?

It can be a reported opinion.

Example:

What do you think is good about your school?

In my school you have to wear a uniform. There are many opinions about the school uniform and whether it is good or not. Some people think it's not good because it's uncomfortable.

If a student answers a main bullet point eliciting reference to future events by using a present tense verb, will he/she be penalised under Communication?

No, not if the response successfully communicates what the main bullet point required. However if aiming for a high mark for Range and Accuracy, the student must make sure he/she uses at least two different tenses over the task as a whole.

Must a student give some information relevant to the actual question the teacher asks in order for the bullet point to be accomplished?

Yes. If a student gives an answer that provides information in relation to another bullet in his/her task but does not contain information relevant to the question the teacher has actually asked (eg because the teacher and student get out of sequence), the bullet cannot count as being accomplished. The teacher may ask the bullet again to give the student the chance to offer relevant information.

Can the answer still be considered to give some relevant information even if the tense is wrong?

Yes.

Examples:

What did you do last weekend?

The following answers would be regarded as having some relevant information and would be acceptable:

'Football'

'I play football'.

The following answer would be regarded as unacceptable on the basis that it was clearly not answering the question being asked: it is not only the tense formation that is wrong. There are other indications that the student is not answering the question being asked:

'Next week I will play football' (using a future tense verb).

If the student gives exactly the same response to more than one bullet point and that answer gives relevant information in each case, will the response count as having accomplished the bullet in each case?

Yes.

Example:

Bullet 3 – What did you do last weekend?

'I play football'

Bullet 5 – What do you normally do at weekends?

'I play football'

Both bullets will be judged to have been accomplished.

If a student does not wait for the teacher to ask questions but simply delivers his/her answers to the bullets in the task, will the bullets be judged to have been accomplished?

Yes. However, in response to any question the teacher does actually ask, the student must give some relevant information – see above.

9-10 marks

- Students can speak with confidence and narrate events where appropriate. In order to do this, they will have to develop their answers well.

- They will have to offer ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2) and be able to explain them.

7-8 marks

- The answers will be regularly developed, even though some of them may not be. However, for the award of a mark in this band, most answers will show some development.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

5-6 marks

- There will still be evidence of an ability to develop some answers.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

3-4 marks

- Few responses are developed, but for some questions you can expect replies to go beyond the minimal, even if this is in the form of lists or very simple sentences.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

1-2 marks

- Very few appropriate responses are developed, but therefore there has to be evidence of development, however basic, in at least one reply.

0 marks

- No relevant information is communicated, but a student could still give some very minimal replies and still score zero if there was no development at all.

(b) Range and Accuracy of Language

- For performances with a large amount of complex language but lots of errors the following should be noted: the Accuracy strand in Range and Accuracy has a bearing on communication of intended messages. If communication is not taking place the marks awarded have to reflect this and a mark of 8 could not be awarded. If for, example, the Range strand warrants 10 marks and the Accuracy strand warrants 4 marks, then a maximum mark of 7 would be appropriate.
- The immediate future (eg *je vais aller*) counts as future tense. A present tense verb with a future time marker (eg *demain je vais..*) does not.
- The present subjunctive does not count as a separate tense from the present indicative. A construction using the present tense to refer to the past (eg *je joue du piano depuis 2 ans; je viens d'avoir 15 ans*) counts as the present tense.

9-10 marks

- A variety of **tenses** must be used. This means two or more. The tenses could come from the same time frame (for example the preterite and the imperfect) but a greater range of tenses will add to the complexity of the language used and most students getting marks in this band will probably use three or more tenses, unless the nature of the task does not allow it.
- There will be complex structures (e.g. *après avoir/être + past participle, avant de + the infinitive, en + present participle*), but remember that this is GCSE level and not higher. We will not necessarily be looking for the use of the subjunctive or similar grammatical structures. Complexity will often be achieved by variety of expression, for instance *j'ai décidé d'aller* or *j'ai commencé à faire* instead of *je suis allé* or *j'ai fait*, or *ça me plaît* instead of *j'aime*.

- There needs to be a wide range of vocabulary. This means that students will not be too repetitive in the words they use (e.g. using a variety of words which might express a similar or same idea- *car/parce que/puisque or cependant/pourtant*)
- Errors usually appear in complex structures, or they may be minor errors, for instance of gender, which do not appear too often.

7-8 marks

- Two or more tenses must be used.
- Some complex structures will be used, but the note about what constitutes complexity for the 9-10 band will apply here.
- There must be a range of vocabulary, so students in this band will again be trying to avoid repetition of the more common words.
- Errors occur, but the message is clear, so that the type of mistake made will not prevent communication.

5-6 marks

- There is no need for students to use more than one tense to be awarded a mark in this band.
- Sentences are generally simple but occasionally more complex. There will be more repetition of simple constructions here, but sometimes a more unusual structure will be used.
- Errors are quite frequent, but the language used is **more accurate than inaccurate**. This should be apparent from the annotation used for marking.

3-4 marks

- The sentences are short and simple and probably there will be quite a lot of repetition of the more common verbs, such as *aimer, être, avoir*.
- The vocabulary is very limited, so there will probably be quite a lot of repetition of the same words.
- Errors are very frequent and it will be more inaccurate than accurate, or there will be relatively little said, so the lack of evidence means we cannot go into a higher band.

1-2 marks

- There are only isolated words of vocabulary with the occasional short phrase. It may well be that there is quite a lot of silence.
- Errors often impede communication, or there is very little evidence to enable us to form an opinion.

Pronunciation and Intonation

5 marks

- Consistently good accent and intonation are required. 'Accent' means 'pronunciation'. Isolated errors in an otherwise full and correct performance can be ignored (ie. we are not looking for a 100% flawless performance).

4 marks

- Generally good. It may be that problems arise mainly with the sounds that students traditionally find more difficult, such as vowel sounds in words such as *mince, novembre* etc, the letter *r* in words such as *feutre*.

3 marks

- Generally accurate, but there is some inconsistency. As well as the more common mispronunciations such as the pronunciation of the final *s* of words, there may be problems with some vowel sounds and anglicised words.

2 marks

- What is said is understandable, although comprehension is sometimes delayed. In other words there will be occasions where we have to listen very carefully to what is being said in order to get the intended meaning.

1 mark

- What is said is barely understandable and comprehension is difficult. There may well be very little to go on, because not much is said by the student.

(c) Interaction and Fluency

5 marks

- The student responds readily, without significant pause before answering the questions.
- There is initiative, as the student is able to fully develop answers to the questions.
- The conversation is sustained at a reasonable speed, but clearly not at native speaker pace.

4 marks

- The student will again have to answer without hesitation.
- The replies will go beyond the minimum, although there will not be as much development as in the top band.
- There is some flow of language, even if from time to time there is some pausing for thought.

3 marks

- There are ready responses, where the student can answer reasonably promptly most of the time.
- There is little if any initiative, so the student may not develop answers to any great extent.
- There is an ability to sustain a conversation, so that any hesitation does not break up the interchange of information too much.

2 marks

- There is some reaction to the teacher's questions, but the student is sometimes hesitant. In practice, there will be more sections of the test where the student is thinking what to say or cannot answer.
- There is little natural flow.

1 mark

- There is little reaction to what the teacher asks and the student is so hesitant that the conversation becomes disjointed. There will in all probability be lots of silence during the task.

(e) Limiting marks

- It is not possible to go more than one **band** higher than the band in which the Communication mark was given when awarding marks in the other categories. For instance, if 5 is awarded for Communication, the highest mark that can be awarded Range and Accuracy is 8, and for Pronunciation and Intonation and Interaction and Fluency the maximum mark would be 4.

- It is possible to give marks in lower bands for Range and Accuracy, Pronunciation and Intonation and Interaction and Fluency than the band in which the mark for Communication was given.
- If one mark or more is awarded for Communication, at least one mark must be given in all other categories.
- If 0 is awarded for Communication, 0 must be given for all other categories.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of our website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion