FRENCH

> **Paper 0520/12**
> **Listening**

Key messages

* Candidates scored well on the first half of the paper and a good number of candidates also went on to do quite well in the latter part of the paper. The examination was generally accessible to candidates.
* Some candidates wrote first attempts at answers in pencil and then wrote over them in ink, making the formation of words very hard to read. In such cases, examiners were not able to award marks as the answers were unclear. Candidates need to cross out any material they do not wish the examiner to consider or which is difficult to read.
* There were many cases of poor handwriting.
* Extra material will often invalidate the required answer, particularly on the last exercise of the paper.
* A few candidates ticked only four boxes instead of six on **Question 16**.
* Candidates should try to attempt all questions on the paper.
* Centres are reminded that the format of this paper will change in March 2021 and that candidates will no longer be required to write answers in French.

General comments

The candidature overall performed very well on the first three exercises of the paper. The majority of candidates went on to attempt the final section where even weaker candidates were successful on a few questions in each of the last two exercises. The candidature was usually familiar with the demands and structure of the paper and rubrics were usually well understood. There were a few cases of some candidates ticking too few boxes on **Question 16** and occasionally ticking extra boxes on multiple-choice questions. The exercises discriminated appropriately across the gradient of difficulty in the paper. The examined topics and contexts were found to be accessible to all candidates. A full range of marks was seen across the paper.

The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and density and featured both monologues and conversations. The emphasis of the questions moved from targeting the candidates' ability to pick out information contained in short factual pieces, to testing their ability to understand specific factual information, as well as opinions and explanations, in longer narrated accounts and conversations. Longer extracts featured a variety of register and references to both past and future events.

Brief answers are always preferable on this paper as candidates do not run the risk of extra distorting material being added which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. Candidates should also not answer or infer from general knowledge as they run the risk of adding extra material which is not on the recording and this will invalidate an otherwise correct answer. There were cases of poor handwriting which, at times, made it very difficult to read answers whether they were brief or long. Candidates should not use pencil to make a first attempt and then overwrite this in pen and, if they wish to make a second attempt at an answer, they should cross out their first attempt very clearly.

The Listening paper tests comprehension. Accuracy in written responses in French is not an issue provided that the message is clear. If the answer sounds and reads like French it will be accepted provided that the message is unambiguous.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–8

This first exercise tested the understanding of eight short conversations/monologues through multiple-choice questions with visual options. Candidates generally performed well on this opening exercise which was intended to give them a confident start to the paper. The extracts were straightforward and short and the vocabulary areas tested clothes, shopping, time, food, sporting activities, drinks, illness and personal objects. Rubrics were generally well understood by candidates but a few candidates ticked two options.

Nearly all candidates answered **Question 1** correctly. On **Question 2**, good numbers also recognised *parfums*. **Questions 3**, **4**, **5** and **6** were well answered by nearly all candidates and many identified *mal au ventre* in **Question 7**. Only just over half the candidates understood *une couverture* in **Question 8**, with many answering **B** instead.

Exercise 2 Questions 9–15

Candidates heard a longer extract which featured information about a village in the Dordogne. Questions tested distances, geographical surroundings, sporting activities, shops, leisure activities, places in town and forms of transport. Candidates generally performed very well on this exercise. Many successfully identified *7* on **Question 9** but those who chose to write *sept* were not always able to give an acceptable spelling and would perhaps have gained the mark if they had instead written the number in numerals. Some candidates misheard the number as *cent*. On **Question 10**, about half the candidates were able to identify the word *collines* successfully. **Questions 11**, **12** and **13** were very well done by nearly all candidates. On **Question 14**, most answered correctly but weaker candidates chose the park as the correct answer rather than *la place du village.* **Question 15** was done well by nearly all candidates.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 16

Performance on this exercise was very good but a few candidates ticked four boxes only or more than six boxes. Candidates should use a consistent method to indicate their answers: ticks **or** crosses are both acceptable, but can cause confusion when used together. Candidates should not attempt to put a tick and a cross in all boxes. Six of the twelve boxes need to be left blank.

Candidates heard four young people talking about their holidays. Candidates were clearly familiar with the topic area and associated vocabulary. Good numbers scored between 4 and 6 marks. There was no discernible pattern of incorrectly placed ticks.

Exercise 2 Questions 17–21

Candidates attempted **Questions 17–21** on the first interview more successfully than **Questions 22–25** on the second interview. Both parts of the exercise featured an interview with a young person talking about his or her journey to school.

In the first part of the exercise, candidates heard an interview with Robert in Kenya. Candidates were required to correct an incorrect detail in each of five statements, a question type with which they were clearly familiar. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test and the extract heard was longer than the one heard in the previous exercise.

Candidates made a very good attempt at *francophone* on **Question 17**, giving an acceptable spelling of the word. For **Question 18**, just under half the candidature understood that at seven o'clock Robert waited for the school bus and, for **Question 19**, only about a third of candidates gave an acceptable spelling of *éléphants.* Candidates were also often unfamiliar with the word *lourd* in **Question 20** and wrote *louer* instead. Others chose to write a different colour as an alternative adjective. On **Question 21**, many candidates identified the word *facile*.

Exercise 2 Questions 22–25

On this second interview, candidates heard the interview with Mounia in Morocco, also talking about her journey to school. Here, candidates needed to write short answers in French.

Question 22 required candidates to identify that Mounia was a boarder as the reason why she did not make a journey to school every day. The crucial sentence to understand here was *J'y vais à pied, mais pas tous les jours car je suis interne du lundi au vendredi.* Many candidates wrote incorrect days of the week which invalidated otherwise correct answers or just said school was a long way away. To answer this question well, candidates needed to listen to the whole utterance and not just write the first thing they heard which supported the correct answer but was not enough in itself to gain the mark.

Question 23 was only answered successfully by the most able candidates. The adjective *étroits* was generally not well known by candidates. Many answered with phonetic attempts to write the key word with responses such as *étoile* or *et toi*. On **Question 24**, just over half were able to score the mark for *durs.* Incorrect answers often featured the word *fatigant*. A similar number of successful answers were seen on **Question 25** where many candidates identified *boire* and *eau.*

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26–31

Candidates heard an interview with Charlotte who talked about how she organised meetings between groups of elderly people and nursery children. Questions tested not just specific factual information but also gist understanding over the longer extract. Candidates needed to identify attitudes and emotions in some questions and be able to understand a narrative which, in places, depended upon them understanding a sequence of events. The exercise discriminated well across the candidature and a full range of performance was seen.

Question 26 was quite well done with over half the candidature able to identify the aim of Charlotte's project. Very good numbers were successful on **Question 27** and could identify that the favourite activity was singing together. **Question 28** required comprehension of the key part of the extract heard and the phrase *ils étaient ravis de les voir.* This in turn needed to be linked to the synonym *joyeux* which featured in the correct answer.

On **Question 29**, the majority of candidates identified that the elderly were afraid of sitting down on the floor and similarly good attempts were seen on **Question 30**. On **Question 31**, many candidates gained the mark and ended this exercise confidently.

Exercise 2 Questions 32–40

This was an appropriately challenging exercise at this stage of the paper. Very few candidates did not attempt this exercise. Even the weaker candidates followed the extract and answered at least some of the questions. Consequently, they were able to score some marks.

Candidates heard an interview with Elso talking about his work as a travel agent in Luxembourg. Questions tested key specific information and also attitudes, emotions and gist understanding. Some candidates wrote far too much and attempted to write several answers per question or included extra details which contradicted their otherwise correct answer. Candidates need to be concise and ensure that they do not add details from general knowledge or add material which does not answer the set question. Such material can distort and invalidate an answer.

Question 32 was done well by over half the candidates who answered briefly with part of the key verb *voyager*. Some invalidated their answers by including extra material about Luxembourg or incorrect details concerning numbers of years. On **Question 33**, the two key items to identify were *donner* and *conseils.* Many did not give a correct part of the verb and did not write an acceptable spelling of *conseils.* On **Question 34**, many candidates wrote *seasons, sesons or ses ans* which showed they had not clearly comprehended.

On **Question 35**, many candidates wrote *rave* instead of *rare* in response to the kinds of holiday destinations that Elso most liked finding. Better attempts were made on **Question 36** with candidates able to identify that Elso did not like selling insurance. Weaker candidates often wrote *insurance* as an answer or *excursions* which had been heard in the previous sentence. This showed the need to read the question carefully and

understand that the answer needed to focus on what Elso did not like selling rather than the first thing said in the relevant exchange. On **Question 37**, only the very best candidates identified and gave an acceptable spelling of *curieux*. Many guessed at qualities here or opted to write one of the words heard elsewhere such as *professionnel* and/or *patient.* The key to success here was to identify *essentielle* seen on the question paper and relate it to the cue heard *la chose la plus importante dans ce travail c'est d'être curieux de tout.*

On **Question 38**, the stronger candidates could identify the fact that customers were *déçus par leur hôtel.* Both elements were needed here to score the mark. **Question 39** required careful listening and the ability to identify what people asked for in such cases rather than what they were offered by the travel agency. Many incorrect answers gave *réduction.* The very best candidates were able to give an acceptable spelling of *remboursement*. More candidates were able to convey that Elso was planning a trip for himself on **Question 40**.

FRENCH

Paper 0520/22
Reading

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:
*   select carefully only the information from the text that answers the question, in particular in the last two exercises
*   attempt all questions, especially in multiple-choice exercises
*   cross out very clearly any material which they do not wish the Examiner to consider.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination. Where candidates change their mind about an answer, it is important that they make it clear which one is to be regarded as their final answer. There were many cases of multiple-choice answers with more than one option ticked. If a candidate chooses to write some answers in pencil first, it is essential that these pencil marks are erased, especially if they differ from the intended final answer.

Some candidates paraphrased the text in the exercises which require answers in French, rather than lift carefully from the text to answer the question. This often led to candidates losing marks due to inaccuracy or inappropriate choice of vocabulary.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–5

This exercise was accessible to almost all candidates, with no questions unattempted. **Question 2** (*patinoire*) and **Question 3** (*pull*) were the least known of the correct answers.

Exercise 2 Questions 6–10

Many candidates obtained full marks on this exercise. There was no particular pattern of error.

Exercise 3 Questions 11–15

Overall, this exercise was accessible for candidates. For **Question 13**, some candidates selected **B** instead of **A**.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 16–20

For this exercise, candidates completed statements in French, choosing words from a list. Some candidates did not use the grammatical markers in the sentences to assist with narrowing down their options. For **Questions 16** and **20**, where candidates selected the wrong response, they usually chose the intended distractor for that question.

Exercise 2 Questions 21–30

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text in the form of a blog from Marco on the subject of his post-school employment experience. The text was mostly straightforward and the vocabulary was familiar. Most candidates answered the questions well. Although long answers are not required, and often only a few words would answer the question, many candidates chose to copy a couple of sentences from the text for each question. For this exercise, extraneous material and incorrect tenses are often ignored as long as they do not in some way invalidate the candidate's correct response.

Some candidates missed out an important word in **Question 23** and, for **Question 27**, some candidates appeared not to have understood the question word *qui*. The most common wrong answer was a day of the week. For **Question 28**, some candidates missed out the word *dans* or misspelt *mois* as *moins*. A small number of candidates wrote *années* instead.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 31–35

In **Section 3**, examiners are expecting a higher level of attention to detail and for candidates to be more selective of the information they take from the reading texts. Candidates should not just write the opposite of the statement but need to look for the alternative information.

Many candidates identified the false statements successfully, although **Question 34** distracted some. Candidates who had identified **Question 32** as being false were usually able to write a correcting statement, but, for **Question 33**, a significant number of candidates did not realise that the word *donc* needed to be omitted from the phrase in the text for it to be a proper correction. For **Question 35**, some candidates selected the wrong part of the text, referring to Philippe being worried or having everybody's telephone number.

Exercise 2 Questions 36–42

This final exercise was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. Candidates did not gain the marks if they included information that was not necessary to answer the question. In **Section 3**, more emphasis is placed on understanding the question as well as the text, and just locating the answer is not sufficient if the candidate does not actually answer the question posed. Some candidates did not attempt certain questions, especially **Questions 40** and **41**. Very few candidates achieved full marks and the questions seemed to have discriminated appropriately.

The inclusion of too much material particularly affected **Questions 38**, **39** and **42**, where candidates kept in clauses which were not relevant to the answer, e.g. *Quand elle a voulu continuer sa promenade, elle s'est rendu compte qu'elle ne pouvait pas* for **Question 39**.

For **Questions 37** and **41**, the inclusion of words from the original text (*comme*, *donc*) invalidated candidate's answers.

FRENCH

<div>
Paper 0520/03
Speaking
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Key messages

- Examiners must not change the cues in the role plays or add extra tasks.
- Centres need to observe the stipulated timings of 5 minutes for **each** of the two conversations.
- Nearly all centres included questions in the General conversation section to elicit past and future tenses from candidates, but this was not always the case in the Topic conversation. Such tense usage is essential in both conversations if candidates are to score more than 6 marks for Language.
- There were not always enough opportunities for candidates to respond to unexpected questions or to develop their answers spontaneously.
- Centres should aim to cover two or three topics in the General conversation with each candidate.

General comments

The format of the test was as last year. Centres are reminded that as of March 2021 the format of the Speaking test will change.

The role play section was usually conducted correctly in centres. Examiners usually followed the cues correctly, prompting where necessary and encouraging candidates to work for the marks. Examiners who did not follow the scripted cues and changed the tasks sometimes made this section of the test harder for the candidates. Marks can only be awarded for the set tasks.

It is in the interest of fairness to all candidates to make sure that each candidate is given the full examination time of 5 minutes for **each** of their two conversation sections. If the Topic conversation and the General conversation sections are too short, candidates are not given the opportunity to develop their ideas and opinions or the opportunity to use a range of structures and tenses. Conversations which are too long can also disadvantage candidates. Examples of past and future tenses can only be credited within the stipulated timings of the test.

In the conversation sections, Examiners who included unexpected questions in a spontaneous, natural way went beyond the straightforward "closed" questions and gave their candidates the possibility of scoring in the Good band or above on Table B, Communication. It is essential to include questions which will elicit past and future tenses in both conversation sections as candidates need to show they can use both of these tenses accurately for a mark of more than 6 to be awarded on Table C, Language.

It is helpful to make a clear transition between the Topic conversation and the General conversation. The links between the different parts of the test should be in French and not in English.

The full requirements of the test are laid out in the Teachers' Notes booklet and all centres are strongly advised to read through these in advance of the test.

Application of the mark scheme

In the role plays, if there are two parts to a task, Examiners are free to split the task, but if only one part of a task is completed by the candidate, the maximum mark which can be awarded is 1. If a candidate uses a verb to complete a task and makes an error of tense or conjugation, a mark of 2 and not 3 is appropriate. Poor pronunciation should always be queried as there were many cases where poor pronunciation prevented clear communication of the set task. If the pronunciation of a key element is not clear, a mark of 3 is not appropriate.

In the conversation sections, marking tended to be generous in many centres, as marks were awarded in the higher bands when there was no evidence that candidates could respond in a spontaneous way to unexpected questions, develop their ideas and give routine justifications/explanations. Candidates should be encouraged to develop and support their opinions to gain high marks for Communication. To gain high marks for Language, they need to display a wide range of structures and communicate consistently and accurately in a range of tenses.

Impression marks were usually awarded fairly but were a little generous in some centres when pronunciation was not good and impeded successful communication.

Comments on specific questions

Role Plays

Examiners in centres generally prompted candidates when necessary but there were cases of candidates needing to be prompted when they missed a task. Examiners must keep exactly to the script provided, not change the tasks and encourage candidates to attempt all parts of each task. If only one part of a two-part task is completed, only 1 mark can be awarded.

On all the Role Play A situations, a task requires candidates to listen and choose from the two options offered by the Examiner. If one of these options is not chosen by the candidate, the appropriate mark to award is 0. Likewise, there is one task which requires candidates to respond to an unexpected question on all the Role Play B situations.

A Role Plays

These role plays were found to be of equal difficulty and accessible to candidates. Many candidates performed very well on them and made a confident start. Role Play A situations are designed to be easier than the Role Play B situations and are set using vocabulary from Topic Areas A, B and C of the Defined Content.

Centres are reminded that often a short response (perhaps one word) will be appropriate in many tasks and, in such cases, a mark of 3 can be awarded. Examiners should always query pronunciation if the meaning of a message is not clear due to mispronunciation.

Renting a bike

Candidates approached this role play quite well. On **Task 1**, some candidates said they wanted to buy a bike rather than rent one. On **Task 2**, a few candidates mispronounced the key word *ville* as *vie*. Many candidates were able to communicate a correct number on **Task 3**. **Task 4** was approached well but some found it difficult to pronounce *carte de la région*. **Task 5** was well done by nearly all candidates.

Reserving a hotel room

Candidates were usually confident when saying they wanted to reserve a room on **Task 1**. Most were also able to give a specific day or a correct date on **Task 2**. Nearly all could say for how many nights they wanted the room on **Task 3** but there was some mispronunciation of numbers, especially *deux*. **Task 4** was approached well and, on **Task 5**, most were able to formulate an appropriate question but a few made errors with the interrogative adverb or verb conjugation.

Buying an ice cream

Many candidates scored 3 marks on **Task 1**. Some did not understand the word *parfum* on **Task 2** but most were able to give a flavour. Many chose *chocolat* but mispronounced this as *chocolate* or *chocolade.* A few candidates also mispronounced *bouteille d'eau* on **Task 3** and *gazeuse* on **Task 4**. **Task 5** was well done.

B Role Plays

These role plays were deliberately more demanding than the A Role Plays. They required the ability to use different tenses, to explain, and give and justify opinions. They differentiated well, but even the weakest candidates could usually score a mark on most tasks when the Examiner kept closely to the script.

Phoning a friend about a holiday job

Most candidates were able to reformulate the rubric successfully on **Task 1** but some gave the wrong message and used *votre job* instead of *mon job*. On **Task 2**, the majority could give an opinion but only the better candidates were able to give an explanation for this opinion. **Task 3** required candidates to answer using past tenses and give two details about what they had done the day before at work. Some candidates did not conjugate perfect tenses correctly here. In **Task 4**, candidates needed to respond to the unexpected question about how much money they earned. Some candidates gave a number but no currency. The majority of candidates were able to formulate a question which communicated the message on **Task 5** but some candidates invalidated their response by using *il* or *elle* in their question rather than *tu*.

Making an appointment to see a dentist

Task 1 and **Task 2** were generally carried out well by candidates. On **Task 3**, some found it difficult to say that they were on holiday and when they arrived in France and did not use a correct auxiliary with the verb *arriver.* On **Task 4**, some candidates did not recognise the word *déçu(e)* in the prompt and some mispronounced the *ç* in *déçu(e)*. **Task 5** was approached more confidently with many candidates able to formulate an understandable, if sometimes inaccurate, interrogative form about the possibility of taking aspirin.

Phoning the owner of a holiday home about a broken parasol

Candidates were generally able to reformulate the rubric on **Task 1**. On **Task 2**, many were also able to explain how the parasol had been broken but there were frequent errors of verb conjugation which prevented a mark of 3 from being scored. Candidates usually recognised that the cue on **Task 3** required an apology and most were able to say that they wanted to buy another parasol. On **Task 4**, some candidates did not use the correct subject pronoun in their question and just read the cue as printed without addressing the interlocutor directly and appropriately. **Task 5** was approached more confidently with the majority of candidates being able to say at what time they would be going out.

Topic presentation and conversation

The standard of work heard in this section covered a wide range of performance. Nearly all centres conducted the Topic conversation after the Presentation but the timings were sometimes incorrect. The presentation should last between 1 to 2 minutes and the remaining time of 3 to 4 minutes should be spent discussing the topic. Examiners must avoid asking questions which elicit material already heard in the presentation.

Questions often did not stretch candidates and the questioning was frequently at a level which did not invite candidates to develop their ideas in a spontaneous way. Candidates need to show that they can talk about their material in a natural way, give explanations and give and support their opinions. To score highly in this section of the test, the questioning must not consist of a series of pre-learnt questions and answers. Examiners who did not ask any questions to test past and future tenses limited the Language mark to 6 marks. Centres frequently marked this section of the test too generously.

Presentation times were usually well adhered to by candidates and many candidates had clearly prepared their topic very thoroughly and chosen an appropriate topic which interested them. A few candidates chose very ambitious topics which proved difficult to exploit in the Topic conversation part of the test. The best candidates were able to sustain the communication and level of language after the initial presentation and managed to converse at the same level heard in the presentation. Most candidates spoke clearly but some rushed their presentation and often mispronounced their material which prevented them from communicating clearly.

Candidates chose a good range of topics with many focusing their presentation on the environment, India, their future plans and ambitions, festivals, healthy lifestyle, leisure activities, technology and holidays. Examiners are reminded to avoid questions which require precise geographical or statistical knowledge. The best performances in this section of the test were those which developed into a natural conversation and in which candidates could express not just factual information in response to straightforward questions but also develop and explain their opinions and feelings about the topic.

It always helps candidates when the end of this section of the test is indicated with a phrase such as *Maintenant, on passe à la conversation générale*.

General conversation

In many centres, this final section of the test was too short. Correct timings mean that candidates are given the opportunity to develop ideas and show they can use a range of linguistic features. In some centres, timings were too long and this can also disadvantage candidates.

Centres usually covered an appropriate range of topics but some centres covered too many topics, too superficially, with a string of unconnected questions. This did not give candidates the chance to go into depth on a topic. It was also confusing for candidates to have to switch from topic to topic.

Questions which are very straightforward or closed in nature often require simple short responses which will not give candidates access to the upper mark bands for both Communication and Language. The best examining gave candidates the opportunity to respond to logically connected questions on two or three topics only. Candidates need to be able to develop their answers, give and explain opinions and be able to respond to unexpected questions in order to gain high marks.

It is helpful on each of the two or three topics examined to include questions in different tenses. To score a mark of more than 6 for Language, the candidate should be able to produce accurately conjugated examples of past and future tenses. It is also important to cover different topics with different candidates and, if using the same topic with different candidates, to try to use different questions.

Many candidates spoke about festivals, holidays, school, healthy lifestyle, leisure activities, future plans, their town, pollution and the environment. Some spoke about their daily routine or their family but this topic was not always fully exploited in terms of a range of tense coverage. In terms of communication, the best candidates went beyond straightforward questions and developed their ideas adding personal opinions and explanations in a spontaneous way in longer utterances. They also performed consistently and accurately and showed control over a range of linguistic structures and vocabulary. Such candidates were also able to use structures such as the correct sequencing of tenses when using *quand*, *depuis* and *si.* Weaker candidates often did not use a correct auxiliary verb in the perfect tense or mispronounced past participles which sometimes made their messages unclear.

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|           Paper 0520/42              |
|             Writing                  |
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Key messages

- In **Question 1**, candidates should attempt to provide eight individual items.
- In **Question 2**, candidates must provide additional relevant detail when tasks offer the opportunity.
- The final task of **Question 2** always requires a change of tense.
- For **Question 3**, candidates should choose carefully the option for which they are best equipped.
- Candidates should respond to each task in **Question 3** in the tense indicated in the rubric.
- Candidates should always check their work carefully for basic errors.
- In **Question 3**, in order to access the top bands for Other linguistic features, candidates must demonstrate that they can use the complex structures which are detailed in the specification.
- Candidates should always aim for a high standard of legibility and presentation.

General comments

There were a number of key items of vocabulary, particularly in relation to the choice of verbs, which had a significant impact on individual outcomes. These basic areas of vocabulary and grammar are identified in the Defined content for this specification and should be part of the working language and structures of candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1: Au centre de sports

The majority of candidates were able to gain 5 marks. The mark scheme identifies the various acceptable spellings. The attempts at *chaussures* were often faulty and the spelling suggested something quite different. *Baskets* and *tennis* featured regularly. Both were allowed as they can refer to footwear as well as to sports. Other words for individual sports were not considered acceptable, since they were not *choses* as indicated in the rubric. For this same reason, *réceptionniste* was not accepted, but *réception* gained a mark.

Question 2: Le matin

Many candidates gained at least 8 marks. The choice of vocabulary/structure was not always appropriate.

The verb *manger* is commonly used and well known. There are other verbs which can be used instead, e.g. *consommer, prendre*. In French, the verb *avoir* is not used in this context, e.g. *pour le petit déjeuner j'ai un croissant.*

Candidates were not clear in their understanding of what verb to use for the idea of putting on their school uniform. The correct expression here is *je mets mon uniforme scolaire*, and few were able to communicate this idea using that pattern. Most attempted to use *porter* (*je porte mon uniforme*), which conveys a quite different idea, whereas some offered *je m'habille mon uniforme.*

Communication

Task 1 invited candidates to state at what time they get up in the morning. A simple statement such as *je me lève à six heures* was sufficient to gain the mark. Candidates who wrote *je lève* did not convey the required idea. Some candidates also used *a.m.* (e.g. *à sept heures a.m.*), which was not appropriate.

Task 2 provided opportunities to gain a number of marks for a range of details. Many wanted to include the ideas of having a shower, brushing their hair, cleaning their teeth, dressing etc., but they were not always able to use the reflexive verbs correctly (*je me lave / je me brosse les cheveux / je me brosse les dents / je m'habille*). Other pre-breakfast activities such as *j'aide ma mère / je promène le chien / je regarde la télévision* were awarded.

For **Task 3**, candidates had to state what they have for breakfast. Candidates gained marks for statements such as *je mange des céréales / je prends du thé / je bois un jus de fruit / je préfère des crêpes / ma mère prépare un œuf.* Sometimes the food mentioned seemed more appropriate to a midday meal, but marks were not withheld on that basis.

Task 4 asked candidates to state whether their morning routine at the weekend was different. There was an opportunity to give a range of details and explanations, including the fact that it was different: *ma matinée le week-end est différente.* Candidates offered a wide variety of details*.*

Task 5 regularly requires the use of another tense. Most candidates were aware of this and reflected it in their answers, e.g. *je voudrais aller à la plage / je voudrais jouer au tennis avec mes amis / je voudrais faire du shopping avec ma famille.*

Language

In order to gain 5 marks, candidates must use correctly the tense required in the final task. Most candidates were able to construct recognisable sentences, but the use of the infinitive or the wrong tense was common.

Section 2

Question 3(a): Le vélo

64.5% of candidates chose this option.

A number of candidates misunderstood the question and wrote about buying a bicycle or inviting their friend to accompany them on a trip.

Communication

Task 1 asked candidates to state whether they often used a bicycle. Some candidates responded focussing specifically to *souvent* by using an appropriate time phrase such as *je fais du vélo tous les matins* or *j'utilise mon vélo trois fois par semaine.* Other candidates gained the marks for stating where they go, e.g. *je vais à l'école à vélo.* Others offered both time and place, e.g. *je l'utilise souvent pour aller à l'école / je le prends tous les samedis pour faire les courses*. This was a straightforward task and many candidates gained 2 marks for a detail conveyed in the present tense.

Task 2 required details of a cycle journey in the past. Most candidates recognised the change of tense and responded accordingly. Candidates were rewarded for any relevant detail, destination, timing, accompanying cyclists, e.g. *la semaine dernière j'ai fait une promenade à vélo avec mes amis / nous sommes allés au parc qui était à sept kilomètres de chez nous.* Some candidates chose to mention a more functional journey and were also rewarded, e.g. *hier, je suis allé au supermarché / je suis allé au marché pour faire les courses avec mon père.* Many candidates used the noun *promenade* correctly but a significant number thought that the associated verb was *promenader*, instead of *se promener.*

For **Task 3**, candidates needed to comment on this journey using a past tense. Many wrote about what they enjoyed, e.g. *ce que j'ai apprécié le plus c'était la verdure / j'ai adoré la vue de la nature / le paysage était très beau*. Not everyone enjoyed the experience and some candidates conveyed more complex ideas, e.g. *cette promenade était horrible parce que j'avais mal aux pieds / mon sac était si lourd que c'était difficile de retourner chez moi.* Some candidates used a present tense and gained only one mark.

Task 4 gave candidates the opportunity to state the advantage or disadvantage of using a bicycle. There were some very detailed responses using a variety of vocabulary and structures. Environmental advantages and health benefits were often mentioned, e.g *l'avantage c'est qu'on ne pollue pas / on peut protéger l'environnement / ça m'aide à rester en forme / le vélo est très bon pour la santé.* The spelling of *environnement* often appeared in its English form. Some candidates also wrote about other advantages, such as *c'est facile / le vélo ne coûte pas cher*. Answers focussing on the disadvantages were often expressed more simply: *c'est fatigant / c'est dangereux / le vélo n'est pas rapide.*

For **Task 5**, candidates were asked to give details of their ideal cycle trip. The best answers were expressed using the conditional tense as indicated in the rubric, e.g. *je voudrais faire du vélo dans les montagnes* / *ma promenade idéale serait dans la forêt avec mes amis*. Candidates who used a future were also rewarded for Communication but future tense verbs were not ticked as part of the Verb mark.

Verbs

This was a very accessible topic and candidates were able to use a range of familiar, commonly used verbs to frame their answers, such as *aimer*, *aller*, *être*, *faire*, *prendre*, *rester*, *visiter*, *voyager*, as well as some highly relevant but less familiar ones, e.g. *polluer*, *protéger*, *rouler.* Few candidates knew the verb *rouler*, which was perhaps the most appropriate for the context. Some candidates used *conduire,* which was considered acceptable for communication. It is important that candidates use the appropriate tense and, if using the perfect tense, they use the correct auxiliary verb.

Other linguistic features

Some candidates were able to create interesting sentences by joining together two or more ideas. The use of the object pronoun and the subordinate clause enhance the meaning and demonstrate the candidate's knowledge and skill. It might help candidates to prepare by writing a simple sentence and then exploring ways of conveying the idea in a more complex manner.

Question 3(b): Mon club de jeunes

This question attracted 31.5% of candidates.

Communication

Task 1 invited candidates to give some information about the activities available at the youth club. Many candidates wrote *jouer au sport* / *jouer à la natation* instead of the correct *faire du sport* / *faire de la natation*. Candidates often wrote about the chance of meeting or making new friends (*on peut rencontrer ses amis*), but the spelling of *rencontrer* was occasionally faulty, e.g. *recontrer, renconter, rancontrer.* The reflexive was often missed in the structure *se faire des amis* and candidates who wrote *on peut faire des amis* did not gain the mark. The word *activités* appeared in the question but was often written in its English form: *activities.*

For **Task 2**, candidates had to use a past tense to state what activity they had recently done at the club. *J'ai dansé* / *j'ai participé au club de théâtre* / *nous avons organisé une fête* were among typical answers for this task. Marks were also given for activities which were organised outside, e.g. *nous sommes allés à la campagne* / *nous avons visité Goa*. Candidates who used a present tense gained only one mark.

Task 3 required candidates to state what activity they preferred this last year. A large number of candidates misunderstood this task writing about what they prefer to do in the present tense or what they would like to do in the future.

Task 4 gave candidates the opportunity to state the advantages of the youth club. Some candidates focussed on the nature of the premises and the facilities, e.g. *il est grand et moderne* / *nous avons de grands vestiaires.* Others mentioned the social benefits of membership, e.g. *ce club aide les jeunes à rencontrer de nouveaux amis / il aide à oublier tous vos problèmes.* The word *avantages* appeared in the question but was often written in its English form: *advantages*.

For **Task 5**, candidates needed to highlight an improvement that they would like to make to the club. The best answers were expressed using the conditional tense as indicated in the rubric, e.g. *je voudrais améliorer les repas dans le café* / *nous pourrions acheter des livres* / *on pourrait enseigner quelques sports comme la natation et le tennis.* Candidates who used a future were also rewarded for Communication but future tense verbs were not ticked as part of the Verb mark. A significant number of candidates misunderstood this task, possibly because they did not know the verb *améliorer*.

Verbs

Candidates used a wide range of common verbs in their responses, e.g. *aimer, aller, chanter, danser, faire, jouer, pouvoir, visiter, vouloir.* Verbs must be in the tense indicated in the rubric and candidates who do not respond in the correct tense cannot gain full marks for Communication and Verbs. Many candidates misspelt the verb *pouvoir*, e.g. *nous peuvons, on peuvait*.

Other linguistic features

Candidates used some complex language to express their ideas, but some could have developed simple sentences in order to enhance their marks, e.g. *il y a un petit stade **où** vous pouvez jouer au foot / il y a beaucoup d'activités **comme** la danse, la peinture, la cuisine.*

Question 3(c): Un vieil homme en difficulté

Only 4% of candidates attempted this question. Candidates need to demonstrate that they can sustain a simple narrative account using past tenses. Only a few candidates were able to maintain the expected level of control.

Communication

Task 1 invited candidates to explain what problem the old man had. There were only a few good responses, such as *le vieil homme était tombé / il ne pouvait pas mettre le sac lourd dans sa voiture / un voleur a volé son portefeuille.*

For **Task 2**, candidates needed to say how they helped, e.g. *je l'ai aidé à mettre le sac dans la voiture / j'ai appelé l'hôpital / je lui ai donné de l'eau.*

Task 3 asked for a piece of information about what happened next. Marks were awarded for something the man said or did, e.g. *il m'a dit qu'il avait du mal à respirer,* as well as for what the narrator did, e.g. *nous sommes allés à l'hôpital avec l'homme / je l'ai aidé à marcher.*

For **Task 4**, candidates were required to give a reaction of the old man, e.g. *il m'a remercié / l'homme était très content / il pleurait de joie.*

Task 5 demanded a summative reaction to events. This could be expressed simply, e.g. *j'étais content aussi / nous étions choqués* but some candidates conveyed a more complex idea, e.g. *je pense que j'ai appris quelque chose / j'ai compris qu'il faut aider les gens en difficulté.*

Verbs

The challenge of this question was to maintain a narrative in the past tense using the perfect and the imperfect. Many candidates tried to tell a story for which they did not have the necessary language.

Other linguistic features

Only a few candidates had a solid understanding of how to construct longer, complex sequences of language, showing good awareness of object pronouns, dependent infinitives, indirect speech and subordinate clauses.