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# **GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS**

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**GCSE (NEW)  
FRENCH**

**SUMMER 2018**

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:  
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?!=en>

### **Online Results Analysis**

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

### **Annual Statistical Report**

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2018**  
**UNIT 1: SPEAKING**

**General comments**

Given that this was the first year of the new specification for GCSE French, many candidates performed well. Some centres stood out as having prepared candidates particularly well. Due to the nature of the tasks in the assessments and the good practice evident in most centres, the speaking skills demonstrated by candidates seemed to have improved this year in terms of pronunciation and natural sounding conversations and dialogues. Centres are to be congratulated for their efforts in preparing candidates for this element of the new specification. For the most part, candidates were entered at the correct level for their ability.

**Role Play**

- This year, many candidates provided too much information during the role play. For this task candidates should only provide the information requested and are not required to extend answers.
- Candidates must ensure their answer contains a verb and therefore make use of full sentences.
- Some candidates did not attempt the unseen question.
- Candidates at both tiers found the unseen question more challenging. Only a minority of candidates responded correctly to Higher Tier Set 7 *Qui fait la cuisine chez toi ?* and Higher Tier Set 8 *Tu as ton portable depuis combien de temps ?*
- Many candidates misunderstood the unseen question at Foundation Tier Set 5 *Où est-ce qu'on mange à midi ?* and answered what they were going to eat instead.
- Asking a question proved difficult for some candidates at both tiers. *Quand ?* was not known by some and *Où ?* also caused problems.
- Sometimes candidates mixed up tenses which caused ambiguity. For example, *L'année prochaine, je suis allé...*
- Occasionally some teacher examiners did not allow candidates enough thinking time. This was particularly evident with regards to the unseen question where some teacher examiners jumped in too quickly with the next question.
- Sometimes candidates or teachers omitted a bullet point.
- Occasionally teachers rephrased a prompt which is **not** allowed for this element of the task.

**Photo Card Discussion**

**Communication and Interaction**

Some candidates were able to give detailed answers to the first two questions and were less confident on the two unseen questions.

At times candidates misunderstood questions because they did not understand the key question word. For example, in the photocard discussion for Set 7 Higher Tier, many candidates did not correctly answer the question *Comment vas-tu en ville en général ?* and instead stated what they do in town or what facilities there are in the town.

For the Photo Card discussion, candidates should extend their answers by giving opinions and justifying these opinions. Some responses to the four questions were too factual. In terms of understanding questions, many candidates struggled with *travail/travailler*, mistakenly assuming that this meant travel rather than “work” and therefore provided irrelevant information in their answers. This was particularly problematic with question 4 of the Photo Card Discussion in Set 7 Higher Tier *À l’avenir, comment serait ton transport idéal pour aller au travail ?*

Sometimes candidates or teachers omitted a bullet point.

Candidates were able to use relevant vocabulary and structures for the first question at both tiers. For example:

- Je peux voir...
- La photo nous montre...
- Au premier/deuxième plan il y a...
- Ils ont l’air... (some pronunciation problems)
- À mon avis....
- Il fait beau... (some errors with weather expressions)

It was pleasing to hear some candidates using *ils sont en train de...*

### **Linguistic knowledge and accuracy**

- Many candidates struggled to use the present tense correctly, saying for example, *Ils sont recycler* rather than *Ils recyclent*, possibly due to the influence of the English structure “They are recycling”. Many candidates who correctly employed *Ils recyclent* pronounced the “-ent”.
- Some candidates were unable to use the negative form correctly, omitting “ne” or “pas”.
- Candidates mixed up *Je suis* and *J’ai*.
- Candidates mixed up *c’est* and *il y a*.
- Some candidates had difficulty knowing when to use *très*, *trop*, *plus* and *beaucoup*.
- Some candidates used *pourquoi* instead of *parce que* and *parce que* when *à cause de* was required.
- Many candidates had difficulty with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, employing *nous* or *vous* rather than *ils* or *elles*.
- Some candidates found it difficult to discuss the weather correctly, using *c’est* rather than *il fait*.
- Some candidates used *je regarde* rather than *je vois* when describing the photo during the Photo Card Discussion.
- *Mal* and *mauvais* were often used incorrectly by candidates.

To access the full mark range, candidates must show the ability to refer to events and use tenses as specified for the relevant tier (Ref: grammar section of the specification). Candidates should be encouraged to extend answers to questions and ensure that they attempt to include at least one tense. The questions set will elicit tense responses and candidates are required to respond appropriately.

Some teachers misunderstood what “extra” questions can be asked during the photo card task. It is imperative that centres review the relevant section of the specification and are clear on what types of questions can and cannot be asked.

## **Conversation**

Some candidates were not given the opportunity to initiate the conversation while others were unsure of how to do so.

In some centres (particularly at the Higher Tier) the timing of the conversations was longer than those stated in the guidelines. It is important that the correct timings for each tier are adhered to. Teachers did not always give an equal amount of time to the two sections. Very occasionally the teacher forgot to do the first or second part of the conversation.

In a minority of centres the conversations had very little interaction and were more like mini-presentations or monologues. This had an impact on the marks accessed by the candidates for interaction and spontaneity.

Some candidates who had learned long answers had issues with poor pronunciation and intonation (including sounding final consonants).

For the most part teacher examiners pitched the questions at the correct level for the candidates’ ability. There was a small minority of centres that pitched questions at too high a level for the Foundation Tier candidates.

Most candidates attempted to use past, present and future/conditional tenses although not always successfully.

## **Themes**

- Very few candidates chose to discuss “Social issues” or “Local and regional features of France...” during the conversations.
- Conversations on the theme of “Self and relationships” sometimes drifted to discuss hobbies and other themes.
- Many candidates chose to discuss “School/college life”, “School/college studies”, “Technology and social media” and “Holidays and tourism”, where these were an option.
- There was a fair amount of overlap between the two school/college themes, with uniform and break time activities being discussed during conversations in both. Centres are advised to ensure that the two separate themes are distinctly different when asking questions.
- During discussions about “la technologie”, many candidates used “addictive”. It would be better to encourage candidates to employ the figurative term “accro”.
- The theme “Local and regional features of France...” sometimes followed with an ensuing discussion about the candidates’ own region with no reference to France.
- In some centres the theme of “Travel and transport” was used for a discussion of the candidates’ holidays.

It is vital that the stated theme is adhered to so that candidates can access the full range of marks for communication and interaction.

For the conversation, candidates should extend their answers by giving opinions and justifying these opinions.

## Pronunciation and intonation

For the most part, candidates' pronunciation and intonation was good and an improvement from the previous specification. There were some common words and phrases that many candidates mispronounced.

Common mispronounced words included:

- frites
- fruits
- choses
- famille
- ville
- fille
- femme
- homme
- trop
- sœur
- gens
- aussi
- déchets
- maison
- poulet
- l'eau
- biologie
- chimie
- bouteille
- la Tour Eiffel
- emploi
- et
- élèves (pronounced as *e/ves*)
- environnement
- corps (pronounced as *corpse*)

## Technical Issues

- Some examiners were unable to access the documentation as centres had uploaded Foundation and Higher Tier forms in one file.
- Some sound files had not been fully uploaded by centres.
- The sound quality of some recordings was poor.
- Most centres provided a quiet venue for the NEA. A small minority used venues where there was a lot of background noise and in these centres this issue needs to be resolved for next year.
- Most centres provided the relevant details at the beginning of the recording, stating centre name and number, candidate name and number, date, set and tier.

**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2018**  
**UNIT 2: LISTENING**

**General comments**

Candidates at both Foundation and Higher Tier appeared to have found the examination accessible and most were entered at the correct tier for their ability level.

As can be expected, a few candidates found some parts of the listening examination challenging.

In both tiers, the majority of candidates attempted every question. Spelling errors were frequent but, in most cases, the answer was unambiguous and therefore credited. Handwriting occasionally made the answer difficult to decipher.

Times and numbers were generally understood apart from Foundation Tier Q.6 (e) where *quinze pourcent* was often answered incorrectly. In addition, in Higher Tier Q.4 (c) the time *quatorze heures* was sometimes given as 4pm, 4 o'clock or 2am.

In general, candidates seem to have understood the gist of most questions but lost marks by giving answers which were imprecise and, therefore, not credited e.g. Higher Tier Q.8 (e) 'without parents', when 'without **her** parents' was required.

Candidates were familiar with the format. In most cases, candidates followed the rubrics correctly and responded in the appropriate language. However, too many candidates lost marks by giving two answers for a one mark question. Candidates need to be reminded that by hedging their bets and giving more answers than is required, they risk giving an incorrect answer and losing the mark.

As seen in former examinations, most candidates respected the rubric and answered in English/Welsh as required. Most understood that the number of answers required depended on the marks bracketed next to each question and the lines provided for their answers. In written responses, candidates occasionally gave too many alternative answers or added some incorrect, superfluous information. However, more marks were lost because of imprecise answers or insufficient responses than because of extra information.

**Welsh-medium**

There was no appreciable difference between the Welsh-medium and English-medium scripts.

However, marks were lost in Foundation Tier Q.7 (b)/Higher Tier Q.1 (b) where candidates confused two similar Welsh words: 'diwydiannol - industrial' and 'diwylliannol - cultural'. In addition, marks were also lost in Foundation Tier Q.7(c)/Higher Tier Q.1(c) with confusion between 'diwylliant - culture' and 'diwydiant - industry'.

In Foundation Tier Q.8 (d)/Higher Tier Q.2 (d) a few candidates confused 'poblogrwydd - popularity' for 'poblogaeth - population'.

In Foundation Tier Q. 9 (a)/Higher Tier Q.3(a) there was far more use of the term 'bilingual' in the Welsh scripts.

There were occasional vocabulary items whose Welsh forms are not very familiar e.g. *victimes* and *climatique*.

## FOUNDATION TIER

### Question 1

This question was suitably answered by most candidates. '8.30pm' was sometimes not known or recognized and '8.15pm' was ticked instead.

### Question 2

Some candidates selected 'PE' instead of 'D&T' in Section 1 and some candidates selected '35' instead of the '30' in Section 2.

### Question 3

#### Section 1

- (a) Most candidates selected 'make-up'.
- (b) Some candidates selected 'sunglasses' instead of 'lipstick'.

#### Section 2

- (c) 'earrings' was selected correctly by most candidates, although a few ticked 'umbrella'.
- (d) Most candidates recognised *j'adore* and ticked the correct emoji.

### Question 4

#### Section 1

- (a) *Dans un café* was answered correctly by the majority of candidates.
- (b) *À bicyclette* was correctly given as an answer by many candidates.

#### Section 2

- (c) Many candidates correctly ticked '30€' although some candidates did not successfully recognise *trente*.
- (d) *Barbant* was answered correctly by many candidates.
- (e) *Enseignant* was not recognised as a synonym for *professeur* by some candidates.

## Question 5

### Section 1

- (a) This question was successfully answered by most candidates. A small number of candidates answered with the wrong country. Spelling of “Switzerland” was approximate in many cases; however, different spellings were accepted.
- (b) ‘Promenades’ was sometimes given as an answer instead of ‘walks’ or ‘walking’. Many candidates answered ‘skiing’ instead of ‘water skiing’. In addition, a few candidates answered ‘parasailing’, which was not accepted. Generally, candidates selected two correct activities out of the three given in the script. Some candidates did not attempt this question.

### Section 2

- (c) This question caused problems for some candidates. Many other members of family were incorrectly given. ‘My aunt’ was not accepted. Some candidates did not pay enough attention to the question word ‘who’ and answered with ‘Italie/Italy’.
- (d) This question confused the candidates. *Temps* was not widely known by candidates, which led to a number of varied answers. Candidates did try to guess with ‘high/ideal temperatures’. Some candidates confused *temps* with *tante* which led to some very interesting answers!

## Question 6

### Section 1

- (a) Generally, candidates understood the question and could answer this question successfully. Some candidates did not recognise *normalement* and answered incorrectly.
- (b) Most candidates understood ‘cake’ and ‘pancake/crêpes’. Incorrect but recognisable spellings of ‘crêpes’ were accepted. Some candidates answered with “gateau”, which was not accepted.

### Section 2

- (c) *Demain* was understood by a small number of candidates. ‘The next day’ and ‘16<sup>th</sup> May’ were also accepted as correct answers.
- (b) A large number of candidates answered ‘phone’ instead of ‘laptop’ or ‘computer’. Some candidates lost the mark by adding additional, incorrect information; e.g. laptop and phone.
- (c) When candidates gave the wrong percentage of discount, they lost a mark; e.g. ‘50%’ instead of ‘15%’. Generally, candidates understood that there was a price reduction and could express this idea in their answer.

## Question 7 Foundation Tier / Question 1 Higher Tier

### Section 1

- (a) Correct answers were 'lively', 'busy', 'vibrant' and 'dynamic'.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (c) Most candidates understood the idea of an interest in either history or culture and gave a correct answer. 'Historians' was not accepted.

### Section 2

- (d) Although candidates coped well with the advantage question, the disadvantage section proved more demanding. Many candidates said that the city was 'too noisy' rather than 'students were too noisy'.

## Question 8 Foundation Tier / Question 2 Higher Tier

Some candidates drew on their own knowledge of climate change; such as global warming and the greenhouse effect; and did not listen for specific detail.

### Section 1

- (a) Some candidates incorrectly answered 'it is a problem' rather than 'it has a problem'. In addition, several candidates used the information about high temperatures from Section 2. 'Global warming' was not accepted.
- (b) *De nombreux* was misunderstood by some candidates, this led to incorrect responses such as 'animal numbers' and 'the number of animals'.

### Section 2

- (c) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) Many candidates did not recognise that there was 'not enough bamboo' for the pandas. 'Running out of food' was also accepted. A few candidates suggested that the pandas were being eaten!
- (e) Some candidates incorrectly answered with 'a smaller population' rather than 'a smaller population of pandas'. Many candidates lost their mark by answering 'small population of pandas' instead of 'smaller population of pandas'.

## Question 9 Foundation Tier / Question 3 Higher Tier

### Section 1

- (a) Many candidates answered this question correctly. However, 'several', 'a lot', 'many' or 'multiple languages' were not accepted. 'Parents from Canada' was accepted, but 'parents live in Canada' lost several candidates a mark.
- (b) Some candidates misunderstood *collège* and answered 'college' rather than 'school'.

### Section 2

- (c) This question was highly successful. Most candidates answered with 'set up a blog' and other similar variations; such as 'made a blog'.
- (d) Most candidates answered this question correctly. However, some candidates answered 'gave information' rather than 'gave information about languages'.

## HIGHER TIER

### Question 4

#### Section 1

- (a) Many candidates answered this question correctly. Some candidates incorrectly answered that Pierre was 'starting his job' or had 'found his ideal job'. Some candidates did not recognise *facteur* and answered that Pierre had 'an interview for a factory job', which lost them a mark.
- (b) Most of the candidates answered this question correctly. Some candidates incorrectly answered 'is it paid?'

#### Section 2

- (c) Many candidates misunderstood *me lever* and answered 'he likes to wake up early' instead of 'get up early'. Only one answer referencing the hours was accepted. There is still confusion over the 24 hour clock and many lost marks by putting 4 o'clock/4 p.m. '2am' was not accepted.

### Question 5

A small number of candidates ticked more than four statements, which lost them marks.

Some candidates selected '*Zoé a une sœur*' rather than '*Zoé aimerait avoir une sœur*'. Many candidates incorrectly selected '*Ses grands-parents habitent un appartement en Suisse*' as they heard *Suisse* but misunderstood the context.

### Question 6

#### Section 1

- (a) Most candidates recognised *responsables* and selected the correct answer.
- (b) This question was answered correctly by most candidates.

#### Section 2

- (c) Most candidates recognised *musicale* and chose the correct answer.
- (d) Some candidates heard *le douze mai* and selected '*dans douze jours*' rather than '*dans dix jours*'.
- (e) Most candidates selected the correct answer; however, some candidates confused *avant* and *après*.

### Question 7

#### Section 1

Very few candidates achieved full marks in this section.

Candidates had to give three advantages for families. Although most candidates filled in the box, some achieved no marks at all because they failed to identify the correct answers. One example of an incorrect answer is 'family rooms are available' with no reference to size. A large number of candidates incorrectly answered 'friendly staff/attendants'. Many candidates answered 'it's like a home' rather than 'it feels like home'.

## Section 2

Very few candidates achieved full marks in this section.

Candidates had to give two disadvantages for teenagers. This question caused problems for a good number of candidates. 'Beaches' was the most popular answer given for this question. Very few candidates understood *vagues*.

Many candidates lost a mark with 'big shop' and no reference to shopping.

## Question 8

### Section 1

- (a) Most candidates answered this question correctly. A few candidates incorrectly answered 'travel to school'.
- (b) This question was answered well by most candidates. 'Abroad' was not accepted.
- (c) 'Gave her more confidence' was the accepted answer. Some candidates were not awarded the mark as they omitted 'more', answering with 'gave her confidence'. 'Boosted her confidence' was also accepted.

### Section 2

- (d) In general, this question posed some difficulty for most candidates who did not recognise *anxieuse*.
- (e) Some candidates lost the mark by answering 'first time on holiday without parents' rather than 'without **her** parents'. Other accepted answers were 'it gave her freedom', 'it liberated her' and 'the experience was liberating'.
- (f) Most of the candidates understood and inferred *indépendance*. Very few candidates gave 'common sense' as an answer.

## Question 9

### Section 1

- (a) Not many candidates managed to get the idea that 'there is something for everyone'. Some candidates tried to say too much and it led to some confused answers. Any response with just 'sports' or 'shows' only was not correct.
- (b) Most candidates understood *du monde entier*. Some candidates lost a mark with the answer 'all over the country'.
- (c) This question was answered well. 'Climbing' was the most popular answer.

### Section 2

- (d) Most candidates gave the correct answer 'publicity'. Not many candidates understood *bouche à oreille*.
- (e) Many candidates lost a mark with the answer 'last year' rather than 'this year'. '2018' was also accepted.
- (f) Many candidates misunderstood that the activity was 'not for him' and wrote opposing answers, such as 'he likes it' or 'it's absolutely for him'. A few candidates successfully recognised *j'ai peur*.

**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2018**  
**UNIT 3: READING**

**General comments**

Item Level Data demonstrates that both the Foundation and Higher Tier papers were accessible to most candidates.

As is expected, particularly, considering the new style paper, a few candidates found parts of the reading exam challenging.

Foundation Tier Question 6 seemed particularly challenging for candidates.

Higher Tier Question 6(a) was not answered particularly well due to candidates maybe not reading *de un à quatre jours par mois* carefully enough and consequently giving 4 days a month as an incorrect answer. Candidates rarely answered 6(b) correctly either as they did not seem to know *plus de la moitié*.

Higher Tier Question 8(d) and (e) proved problematic. Some candidates were unable to recognise and respond to key information, important themes and ideas in more extended written text.

Spelling errors were frequent with some answers which were required in English (e.g. the spelling of engineer, muscles (for mussels)), however, in most cases the answer was unambiguous and therefore credited.

Most candidates were well prepared for the new style exam in that they generally followed the rubrics correctly and responded in the appropriate language.

Most candidates understood when 2 or more details were required for a question e.g. Question 8(b) on the Higher Tier paper when usually, 3 details were given, even if they were not always correct. Candidates occasionally gave too many alternative answers or added some incorrect/superfluous information e.g. Higher Tier Question 2(b) "How did he prepare for his space mission". Write one detail. Many candidates answered "he learnt Russian AND English" which lost them the mark.

There was evidence that some candidates had read the questions carefully as they wrote notes on the script and underlined key words or translated the French rubrics/questions into English. This is good practice and is to be encouraged. It is paramount that candidates read for detail and with care to avoid losing relatively straightforward marks (see Higher Tier Q6(a)).

Candidates at both tiers but particularly at Foundation Tier seemed to answer the translation questions very well. Teachers must have worked very hard to prepare their students for these questions. A sentence was either correct or incorrect so if a single word of vocabulary was not known to a candidate, they did not obtain the mark for that sentence even if the rest of the sentence was correct. Incorrect translation of tenses was also an issue which needs to be addressed at centre level. An example of this is Foundation Tier “I want to visit Paris” instead of the correct “I would like to visit Paris” and Higher Tier “The villagers organised ...” instead of the correct “The villagers organise...”.

### Foundation Tier

- Q1 (i) This was answered very well.
- Q1 (ii) “listen to music” was the most common answer, followed by “talk to friends”. “Read” was accepted for 1 mark. *Une bande dessinée* seemed not to be widely recognised. This question was answered well.
- Q1 (iii) This question was answered very well.
- Q1 (iv) This was answered well overall. Water was accepted for 1 mark. A few varieties of footwear were not accepted
- Q2 Confusion here seemed to be centered around 6 and 7. *déchets* had been understood, but not *trie*. Similarly 4 and 8, with the word *électriques* spotted, but not *débranche*. Quite well done on the whole demonstrating a good knowledge of environmental vocabulary.
- Q3 On the whole, the connections were made between *promenades* and *randonnées*; *monuments* and *historique*; *bord de la mer* and *plage*; *chien* and *animaux*; *natation* and *piscine*. Occasionally *chambres* led candidates to choose one of the hotels. Again, well done. Mistakes were fairly evenly spread with perhaps a little more trouble with (f) and ‘natation’.
- Q4 As in Q3, connections were made between *animaux* and *vétérinaire*; *voyager* and *hôtesse de l’air*; *malades* and *infirmière*; *bureau* and *secrétaire*. Answered well on the whole, but some difficulties with *infirmière*.
- Q5 Most candidates seemed to get the food item (mostly “chips”, some “mussels”). (Belgian) festival, drink included and free entry for children were the next in correctness. *La mairie* and *échecs* were not extensively known. This caused many more difficulties. Few candidates understood the type of tournament – ‘franco-belge’ was usually translated (or not) as an answer.

- Q6
- (a) Very poorly answered. Almost no correct answers. *Il gèle* seems to be not at all widely known. The blue sky led many to think it was sunny.
  - (b) Again very few candidates managed to refer to removing either gloves, hat or scarf.
  - (c) Very few correct answers, but slightly more than the first two questions (perhaps surprisingly). Not many got the idea of not having slept for two days. Some were almost there with ideas such as “not much sleep” or “only two hours sleep”.
  - (d) Quite a few answered correctly, but added some unnecessary, unmentioned detail which negated the mark e.g. next to the window and the hot chocolate machine. One mark was allocated for “next to” and one mark for “window”.  
‘Two details’ was frequently misunderstood. Those who got ‘by the window’ understood this as one item, added another and sometimes lost their marks.
  - (e) *journal* was not widely known.

Q7 This question was not particularly well answered but many candidates found it easier than Question 6.

- (a) *banlieue* caused problems.
- (b) Not well-answered. Many candidates answered incorrectly with “near the River Taf”, not having spotted *J'adore cette ville* in the second paragraph.
- (c) This was answered correctly by the majority with “going for a walk” or “going to the park/public garden”.
- (d) Most answered incorrectly with “museum”, rather than the paintings themselves.
- (e) Many candidates understood the idea of the student card, however, several answered incorrectly with “because she is a student”.
- (f) Going on a tour of the town was not widely understood. Of those who understood ‘guided tour’, quite a lot didn’t give any destination. Many students answered incorrectly with “go on a tour guide”.

Q8 Generally, reasonably well done.

- (a) Mostly correct, although some put “inspectors”.
- (b) Mostly correct, although some gave the incorrect answer “be on your best behaviour” or some thought that it was the teacher who wanted to give a good impression.
- (c) Quite well-answered.
- (d) Most got at least one correct part, with many getting both. Correct answers were more commonly “talk” and “eat” than “laugh”. Some common incorrect answers had the idea that the students shouldn’t “interrupt” the teacher.
- (e) This was not correctly answered by many candidates. Unfortunately, quite a few went for “stand up” rather than “sit down”, probably acting on their own experience of being in class in this country.

- Q9 Generally, candidates found this very difficult throughout.
- (a) Candidates found this particularly difficult as there were many time-related elements to choose from. Many plumped for the 6 months, not realising that this referred to a future time. ‘Many years’ was also frequently given as an incorrect answer.
  - (b) Many candidates answered correctly with “learn a language” or “learn Russian”, however, some candidates negated the mark by adding “he learnt Russian and English”. The second correct answer “to get fit” was usually answered correctly with a variation on “he did two hours of sport a day”.
  - (c) This demonstrated that most candidates did not understand the difference between personal qualities, experience and skills. Hard-working was more usually given than “practical”.
  - (d) This was probably the best answered section – though there are more ways to spell ‘engineer’ than could ever have been imagined! There was a misunderstanding that he trained initially, specifically, to repair the space station.
  - (e) Many candidates did not attempt this question. There were lots of incorrect answers given about a competition between the Russians and Americans. Some students managed to answer correctly one part of the answer with “he is concerned/worried about something happening to his family” but were unable to stretch it to the next correct element of “not being able to help them”. The verb *arrive* was misinterpreted in this context and several candidates referred to Pesquet arriving, or even his family arriving, at the space station!
- Q10 This was well done by many – better than expected given that it is a new element, particularly for Foundation Tier. Tenses caused the most problems and sometimes caused candidates to gain no marks in spite of correctly translating most other words. e.g. Next year I will go to Greece. I will stay ... it will be hot... *Je voudrais* was translated as “I want” and *tous les jours* often misread as *toujours*.

### Higher Tier

- Q1 At Higher Tier, many more candidates found this reasonably straightforward, although there were still some difficulties with part (e).
- Q2 Part (a) was nearly as poorly answered at this level as at Foundation, but other parts were much better dealt with.
- Q3 This caused relatively few problems.
- Q4 This question was relatively straightforward for most candidates.
- Q5 Part (i) was problematic for many candidates; most candidates guessed *Swansea*, presumably as they are aware that Swansea has lots of shops or maybe mistaking *marche* for *marché*. Some had problems with (vi) and gave the incorrect answer of “Conwy” but the other parts were mostly well done.

- Q6
- (a) Poorly done – *de un à quatre jours par mois* was misunderstood by many candidates. ‘Four days’ was the answer seen most frequently. 62% and 70% also seen quite a lot. Candidates need to read more carefully rather than plump for the first number which stood out.
  - (b) Few correct answers here either. Most got the “half”, but not the *plus de la moitié*. ‘The majority’ was frequently given as an incorrect answer.
  - (c) Better answered.
  - (d) This was good too – some confusion about *la restauration* with a few offering ‘building’ or similar.
  - (e) Fairly good, though quite a few thought *les économies* meant putting their money into the economy.
  - (f) Good, but some qualified their response by saying (wrongly) that it did not have “a lot” of effect.
- Q7 Overall, moderately good.
- (a) Quite a few candidates said “apples” for “potatoes”.
  - (b) This was generally answered incorrectly, the most common incorrect answer being “cousin”.
  - (c) Mostly correct. Those who suggested “8 days”, or even “8 hours” had not really thought out the implications of him walking the dog twice a day.
  - (d) Some confusion here, with many describing the dog walking routine as a reason for the dog being well-treated, ignoring the sentence *Salamano bat le chien et l’insulte*.
  - (e) This was not answered particularly well, with many describing Raymond (typically as ‘unlikeable’) rather than the feelings of other people towards him. Some candidates misread *aimé* as *animé* and tried to describe him as “lively”.
  - (f) There were many ‘he listens’ as predicted! Others did get the idea of not having any reason not to.
  - (g) This was generally answered correctly.
  - (h) This was generally answered correctly.
- Q8
- (a) The main problem was one of being too vague, giving ‘transport’ or ‘school’ as answers instead of the required answer of “travelling to school”.
  - (b) Many candidates got two out of the three elements. The idea of walking was understood by most. However, a significant minority still thought that it was an actual bus.
  - (c) This was mainly correct.
  - (d) This question was slightly more problematic. Some candidates understood that there would be “several/a few/more children per car”.
  - (e) This was almost always answered incorrectly.
  - (f) This was generally answered correctly.
- Q9 This question was well done overall, especially as translation is a new skill for candidates to master. Not many knew *feu d’artifice* or *animations musicales*. Incorrect tenses caused a lot of lost marks. Candidates need to be diligent when checking their work as some got the majority of the passage correct, but gained few or no marks because their mistakes were spread across each section rather than concentrated in one part.

**FRENCH**  
**GCSE (NEW)**  
**Summer 2018**  
**UNIT 4: WRITING**

**General comments**

Candidates were well prepared for the Writing examination and most coped well with the requirements of the tasks at both Foundation and Higher tiers. The vast majority attempted all of the questions and responded fully to each one. For the most part, candidates had been appropriately entered.

**Foundation Tier Question 1**

Candidates responded well to this question. Most attempted responses to all 6 headings and the majority scored marks for each answer. Most responses were appropriate, the exception being a small number of candidates who gave personal details such as name and age in response to the first heading where a *description* (of their appearance or characteristics) was required.

It should be noted that candidates are only required to produce **one** sentence for each of the headings. If they write more than is required, the whole response is assessed against the mark scheme. Candidates who chose to go beyond the requirements of the task often self-penalised. There were numerous instances where the first sentence alone met the criteria for 2 marks but an additional sentence or sentences resulted in a partially communicated response with error(s) in the verb(s), thus matching the criteria for 1 mark.

Most candidates attempted to provide responses with a verb. *Porter* was the least well known verb and, where it was known, it was quite often misformed e.g. *j'ai porte; je porté*. Other common errors included the use of an infinitive and the mixing up of the verbs *avoir* and *être* e.g. *je suis les yeux marron et cheveux noir, je suis une soeur et un frère*. Occasionally but less frequently, candidates formed the verb correctly but lacked the key item of vocabulary e.g. *Je porte un shirt, J'aime manger le mango*, and the misspelling of *cheveux* as *chevaux* completely changed the meaning of some responses to the first heading.

**Foundation Tier Question 2**

Most candidates understood that they were required to write about their own local town (**ta** ville locale) and did so, providing full answers with a response to each bullet point. However, some candidates did not make the switch from 'ta' to 'ma' in the response and thus wrote about their French friend's town rather than their own e.g. *Bonjour! J'ai visiter ta ville locale et c'est tres belle*. Occasionally a candidate wrote about a town he/she had visited e.g. Paris, New York.

Similarly, the 'tes' in bullet point 3 (**tes** activités en ville) was overlooked by a number of candidates, who misinterpreted it as 'les' and wrote about activities available in their town rather than what they themselves do. This oversight often resulted in the listing of more attractions and in such cases the range of language often became limited to the repetition of the structure *il y a + noun(s)* throughout the response, thus limiting the range of language.

It is worth reminding candidates to read the rubric and instructions carefully and to take note of every word, as misinterpreting 'tes' for 'les' also featured in Question 3 (see below).

### Foundation Tier Question 3 / Higher Tier Question 1

Candidates generally responded well to this question at both Foundation and Higher tiers and there were some excellent answers, with able candidates achieving marks from the top bands for Communication and Content and Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy. Most candidates understood the need to meet the requirements of the task and attempted all aspects of each bullet point. Candidates should be made aware that to qualify for the top band for Communication and Content, they have to meet **'all'** requirements of the task'. In this question there were 8 in total i.e. mention of at least 2 of their subjects, their homework, at least 2 opinions, at least 2 activities they did at school last week and their studies/work plans for September. Some candidates ticked the items to ensure that they had covered all 8 requirements but some candidates omitted a task, most commonly failing to mention homework or just mentioning one activity they did in school last week.

The vast majority of candidates stayed within the remit of the task. A few digressed and wrote unnecessarily lengthy answers containing extraneous information in which the quality of the language usually suffered.

The following points were noted in respect of each of the bullet points:

Bullet point 1: 'Tes matières, tes devoirs et tes opinions'

- Some candidates overlooked the possessive adjective 'tes' in the rubric ('**tes** études') and again in bullet point 1 ('**tes** matières') and wrote about subjects that were offered in their school rather than giving a personal response to the subjects they themselves study.
- Candidates coped well with giving opinions on their subjects and homework.
- The verb *étudier* was frequently misformed in its present tense form e.g. *j'études, je études, j'étudier*.
- The adjective *difficile* was often misspelt e.g. *difficule, difficle*.

Bullet point 2: 'Les activités que tu as faites au collège la semaine dernière'

- As mentioned above, some candidates only made reference to one activity.
- Some candidates overlooked the 'tu' and presented a list of clubs/activities offered by the school.
- Most candidates understood that they were required to write about what they had done in school last week and wrote appropriate responses (exams, lessons, revision in the library etc.) but some ignored the '*au collège*' and narrated activities they had done outside school.
- The correct formation of the perfect tense proved difficult for many candidates and references to the past were often ambiguous. The most frequent errors were the omission of the auxiliary verb or an incorrectly formed past participle. A number of candidates continued in the present tense: *La semaine dernière je fais...et je joue...*

Bullet point 3: 'Les études ou le travail que tu vas faire en septembre'

- Most candidates attempted to respond appropriately by presenting their immediate plans for September but some overlooked the word 'septembre' and wrote about their future career plans: 'A l'avenir ....'

## Higher Tier Question 2

There was no perceived preference for task *a* or task *b* across the cohort or within centres. However, a small number of candidates appeared to lose sight of their chosen option and incorporated aspects of both questions, beginning with the advantages and disadvantages of living in their region then switching to write about where they would like to go on holiday in the future.

Most candidates used the bullet points to help them and the best answers came from those who adhered to them. The bullet points presented them with opportunities to express and justify facts, opinions and ideas and encouraged them to use more than one tense. There were some excellent discursive responses to both questions and the formation of the conditional tense to express desires for the future was often well done.

Most candidates had been appropriately prepared for this type of question and rose to the demands of the task. However, there were some who lacked the structures and range of language to be able to put forward an argument, so they tended to resort to a simple description of their region or a narrative of a past holiday. A few candidates chose not to address the final bullet so only used one tense throughout, which limited the marks available for linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

## Translations

### Foundation Tier Question 4

- (a) Most candidates managed to partially communicate the sentence but few were able to convey the regularity of *on Mondays*.
- (b) This was generally well done with many candidates managing to score 2 points, though the use of the wrong possessive adjective (*mon amis*) was quite a frequent error.
- (c) This proved difficult for many candidates. It was often not clear to whom the question was being directed. *Tu j'aime le sport?* was a fairly common attempt and *le sportif* also appeared on numerous occasions as a translation for 'sport'. A small number of candidates decided to answer the question rather than attempt a translation e.g. *Oui, j'adore le foot*.
- (d) This was mostly well done though again the occasional inclusion of 2 subjects (*Mon père j'aime ...*) caused ambiguity. *Sur/dans la television* featured fairly regularly and the Welsh spelling of rugby or a hybrid version appeared quite often.
- (e) An inability to translate 'next year' correctly was fairly often an inhibitor to scoring 3 points and surprisingly *en Français* appeared quite a number of times as a translation for 'in France'.

### Higher Tier Question 3

The first 3 sentences were generally translated well, with many candidates scoring 2 points on these, though minor errors in agreement (*dernière, française*) were common and quite a number of candidates did not know the word for 'expensive'.

The incorrect formation of *préférer* in the conditional tense was the most common error in the 4<sup>th</sup> sentence with many candidates using the imperfect (*je préférais*). A number of Welsh medium candidates did not recognise the need to use the conditional when translating *byddai'n well gen i* and used the future instead.

In the final sentence, *sans* was frequently not known and attempts to use circumlocution were mostly unsuccessful e.g. *n'avec pas mes parents; ne pas avec mes parents; moins avec mes parents; avec mes amis*. The word *beaucoup*, which was required to fully convey the meaning 'a lot more fun' was often omitted in otherwise perfect translations.

The following is a summary of errors which were common to many scripts across all questions:

- The verbs *étudier* and *aller* were often poorly formed in the present and perfect tenses.
- *beaucoup des* was a frequent error.
- *mal* was often used where *mauvais* should have featured.
- The misspelling of the following words was common, with some taking on a completely different meaning: *histoire* (frequently *histoire*); *environnement*; *frère*; *soeur* (various combinations of vowel sequences); *magasins* (*magazines*); *natation* (*nation*) and *cheveux* (*chevaux*).



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