

FRENCH

Paper 7156/11
Listening

Question Number	Key
1	A
2	C
3	A
4	D
5	B
6	C
7	D
8	B

Question Number	Key
9	A
10	C
11	C
12	D
13	B
14	D

Question Number	Key
15	B
16	F
17	E
18	A
19	C

Question Number	Key
20	C
21	B
22	C
23	A
24	B
25	B
26	A
27	C
28	A

Question Number	Key
29	D
30	B
31	C
32	A
33	B
34	C

Question Number	Key
35	A / C
36	A / E
37	B / D

General comments

The June 2025 Listening paper consisted of 37 multiple-choice questions. Overall, candidates performed well in the paper and most attempted all questions. Candidates should take care when they transfer their answers onto the answer sheet and shade **one** letter only for **Questions 1 to 34**, and **two** letters for **Questions 35 to 37**.

The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and complexity and featured simple transactional exchanges, short monologues, conversations, and interviews. The emphasis of the questions moved from assessing the candidates' ability to identify information contained in short factual pieces to testing their ability to understand specific information, descriptions of events, opinions, emotions, and explanations in longer extracts. The paper differentiated well.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1–8

The extracts were short, straightforward exchanges. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

In **Question 1**, many candidates knew the word *valise* and selected the correct answer, **A. Manteau**, option **B**, was the most frequent incorrect answer. In **Question 2**, most candidates recognised *biscuits* and chose **C**. In **Question 3**, most candidates were familiar with *tasse de thé* and successfully chose **A**. Option **D** was the most frequent incorrect answer. In **Question 4**, most candidates identified the correct shop, *la poissonnerie*, **D**. In **Question 5**, many candidates successfully chose **B**, *avec une barbe*, and in **Question 6**, many chose the correct item, **C**. In **Question 7**, most candidates understood *le marché* and selected **D**. In **Question 8**, most recognised *un match de foot*, **B**. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers for **Questions 4–8**.

Questions 9–14

Here, candidates heard a longer extract which featured information about a cycling race in the Pyrenees, in France. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

For **Question 9**, many candidates selected the correct month, **A**. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers. In **Question 10**, over three quarters of the cohort understood the number and chose **C**. In **Question 11**, most candidates understood *soleil* and chose **C**. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers. In **Question 12**, just over three quarters of the candidates knew the word *mairie* and selected **D**. Option **C** was the most frequent incorrect answer. **Question 13** was attempted well, and many candidates successfully selected **B**, *un livre*. Those who answered incorrectly often chose **C**. In **Question 14**, over three quarters of the cohort selected the correct answer **D**, *feu d'artifice*. Those who answered incorrectly chose the other three options in equal numbers.

Questions 15–19

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard a conversation between Gilles and his wife, who were choosing a campsite for their holidays. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

In **Question 15**, over three quarters of the candidates successfully matched *le prix des emplacements est beaucoup plus élevé* with **B**. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers. In **Question 16**, over three quarters of the cohort understood *immense / trop de monde* and chose the correct answer **F**. Statement **A** was the most frequent incorrect answer. In **Question 17**, nearly three quarters of the candidates successfully matched *des repas tout prêts* with **E**. Statement **C** was the most common incorrect answer. In **Question 18**, nearly half the candidates were familiar with *de l'ombre* and successfully matched *pas d'arbres / plein soleil* with **A**. Over a third incorrectly chose statement **D**. In **Question 19**, two thirds of the cohort successfully chose **C**. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers for this question.

Questions 20–28

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview in two parts, first with Nina, then with Mme Durand, about a school radio in Paris. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

Many candidates answered **Question 20** successfully and chose **C**. Those who answered incorrectly mostly chose distractor **B**. In **Question 21**, over two thirds of the cohort successfully selected **B**. The most frequent incorrect answer was distractor **C**. Candidates needed to listen carefully as Nina explained that they have a few followers in their region, not the whole of France. In **Question 22**, over three quarters of the candidates understood *un jeudi sur deux* and successfully selected **C**. Distractor **B** was the most common error. In **Question 23**, nearly three quarters of the cohort understood *la dernière émission* and correctly chose **A**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *école* and chose distractor **C**, a likely topic for a school radio

but not the one they had discussed. In **Question 24**, two thirds of the candidates understood *être maquilleuse professionnelle* and successfully chose **B**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *télévision* and chose distractor **A**, although Nina explained that she would rather work in the cinema industry.

Question 25 was the most demanding in this exercise. Over a third of the cohort successfully matched *aime savoir ce qui se passe dans le monde* with **B**. Over half the candidates heard *en cuisinant* and incorrectly chose distractor **A**. **Question 26** was attempted well and over three quarters of the cohort chose the correct answer **A**. Most of those who answered incorrectly perhaps assumed that the teacher would vet the content of the programmes and chose distractor **C**. In **Question 27**, two thirds of the candidates successfully chose **C**. Most of the others heard *parler librement* and incorrectly chose distractor **B**. In **Question 28**, over half the cohort understood *tout ce matériel coûte cher* and successfully chose **A**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *élèves* and chose distractor **B**, assuming perhaps that it would be the teacher's main concern.

Questions 29–34

In this extract, candidates heard an interview with Kaleel, about a breakdancing festival in Toulouse. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

In **Question 29**, nearly two thirds of the cohort chose the correct answer **D**. Distractor **B** was the most common incorrect answer. Candidates needed to listen carefully as Kaleel mentioned *des démonstrations de skateboard*, not roller-skating. In **Question 30**, over two thirds of the candidates successfully matched *j'ai appris dans la rue* with **B**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *professionnels* and chose distractor **D**, although Kaleel explained in the previous sentence that he is not a professional dancer with *les amateurs comme moi*. Over two thirds of the cohort answered **Question 31** successfully and chose **C**. Distractor **B** was the most frequent incorrect answer, although Kaleel explained that there are as many girls as boys in the school. In **Question 32**, half the cohort chose the correct answer **A**. Distractors **C** and **D** were the most frequent incorrect answers. In **Question 33**, over half the candidates successfully chose **B**. Here candidates needed to select what Kaleel enjoys the most, which was introduced in the passage by *ce que j'aime surtout*. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers. In **Question 34**, over half the cohort successfully chose **C**. Distractors **A** and **D** were the most frequent incorrect answers. Candidates needed to listen carefully to the whole section as Kaleel explained that, in his opinion, the sense of freedom that people get with breakdancing would never change. The final sentence, beginning with *au contraire*, negated distractor **D** and the assumption that the sport would become less popular with young people.

Questions 35–37

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview with Mélanie about the organisation *Unis Terre*, in Quebec. For each question in this exercise, candidates had to identify **two** correct statements from a choice of five. This was an appropriately demanding and challenging exercise at this stage of the paper.

In **Question 35**, two thirds of the cohort successfully selected **A** and over half correctly chose **C**. Over a third of the candidates missed *on en donne un tiers aux bénévoles* and incorrectly chose distractor **D**. They needed to listen carefully as Mélanie went on to explain what the organisation did with the rest of the food. In **Question 36**, nearly two thirds of the candidates correctly selected **A** and three quarters chose the correct answer **E**. Distractors **B** and **C** were the most frequent incorrect answers: candidates needed to listen carefully as Mélanie said that they occasionally gave out recipes but did not mention a cookery book. She also explained in the next section that the number of volunteers had doubled that year. **Question 37** was the most demanding in this exercise. Over half the candidates successfully chose answers **B** and **D**. A third heard *parfaits* and incorrectly chose distractor **C**, an opinion that Mélanie dismissed with *même s'ils ne sont pas parfaits*. Over a third incorrectly chose distractor **E**. Candidates needed to listen carefully to the verbs in the final sentence as *nous espérons obtenir des aides pour acheter des appareils* clearly stated that the organisation had not received the money yet.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/12
Listening

Question Number	Key
1	C
2	A
3	B
4	D
5	B
6	C
7	A
8	D

Question Number	Key
9	D
10	C
11	A
12	C
13	D
14	B

Question Number	Key
15	F
16	B
17	D
18	E
19	A

Question Number	Key
20	B
21	A
22	C
23	A
24	B
25	A
26	B
27	C
28	A

Question Number	Key
29	C
30	B
31	A
32	C
33	A
34	D

Question Number	Key
35	B / C
36	C / D
37	A / E

General comments

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The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and complexity and featured simple transactional exchanges, short monologues, conversations, and interviews. The emphasis of the questions moved from assessing the candidates' ability to identify information contained in short factual pieces to testing their ability to understand specific information, descriptions of events, opinions, emotions, and explanations in longer extracts. The paper differentiated well.

Questions 1–8

The extracts were short, straightforward exchanges. Overall, candidates performed very well in this exercise.

In **Question 1**, most candidates understood *limonade* and in **Question 2**, most recognised *chien*. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers for these two questions. In **Question 3**, three quarters of the candidates were familiar with *bureau* and successfully chose **B**. Option **A**, *l'armoire*, was the most frequent incorrect answer. In **Question 4**, most candidates were familiar with *hockey sur glace*. In **Question 5**, many candidates chose the correct answer **B**, *pommes de terre*. In **Question 6**, most candidates knew the word *parc d'attractions* and successfully chose **C**. In **Question 7**, many candidates selected the correct answer **A**, *une clé USB*. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers for **Questions 4–7**. In **Question 8**, over three quarters of the cohort understood *sandales*. Option **B** was the most frequent incorrect answer.

Questions 9–14

Here candidates heard a longer extract which featured a news bulletin from a local radio, Bainville FM. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

For **Question 9**, many candidates chose the correct date, **D**. Options **A** and **B** were the most common incorrect answers. Most candidates understood *dessin animé* in **Question 10**. In **Question 11**, over three quarters of the candidates recognised *déserts* and successfully chose **A**. Most of those who answered incorrectly selected **C**, although there was no mention of animals. Nearly all the candidates answered **Question 12** successfully. In **Question 13**, most candidates selected the correct time, **D**. Those who answered incorrectly mostly chose option **B**. In **Question 14**, nearly three quarters of the candidates understood *boucle d'oreille* and chose **B**. Options **C** and **D** were the most common incorrect answers.

Questions 15–19

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard a conversation between Dimitri and his sister, who were choosing a book for a friend. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

Question 15 was the most demanding question in this exercise. Just over half the candidates successfully matched *le roman policier le plus vendu de l'année* with **F**. Statements **C** and **D** were the most common incorrect answers. In **Question 16**, over two thirds of the candidates understood *écrivain* and chose the correct answer **B**. Statements **C** and **D** were again the most common incorrect answers. In **Question 17**, nearly two thirds of the candidates successfully matched *elle n'en lit plus depuis longtemps* with **D**. Those who answered incorrectly mostly chose statements **C** and **F**. In **Question 18**, over three quarters of the cohort successfully matched *elle en a parlé avec son club de lecture* with **E**. **Question 19** was attempted well, and many candidates successfully chose **A**.

Questions 20–28

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview in two parts, first with Armande, then with Valentine, about an itinerant theatre group. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

Nearly three quarters of the candidates answered **Question 20** successfully and chose **B**. Those who answered incorrectly heard *directeur technique* and chose distractor **C**. In **Question 21**, two thirds of the cohort understood *nous donnons l'occasion à un plus grand nombre de gens d'aller au théâtre* and successfully selected **A**. Most of the others heard *salles traditionnelles* and chose distractor **C**. In **Question 22**, three quarters of the candidates understood *ce qui est difficile, c'est de ne pas voir ma famille le soir* and successfully chose **C**. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers. **Question 23** was attempted well, and many candidates correctly chose **A**, *les comédies*. Most of the others incorrectly chose **C**, plays that the theatre company performs, but not the public's favourites. In **Question 24**, many candidates successfully chose **B**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *spectacles* and chose distractor **C**, although there was no mention of *marionnettes*.

Nearly two thirds of the candidates answered **Question 25** successfully and selected **A**. Those who answered incorrectly often chose distractor **C**. In **Question 26**, many candidates successfully matched *ont adapté la pièce avec beaucoup d'imagination* with **B**. Distractor **A** was the most frequent incorrect answer and candidates needed to listen carefully as Valentine praised the simplicity of the costumes, not their lavishness. In **Question 27**, many candidates understood *plutôt qu'une chaise en bois* and successfully chose **C**, whilst most of the others heard *après-midi* and chose distractor **B**. In **Question 28**, three quarters of the candidates selected the correct answer **A**; most of the others heard *le week-end* and incorrectly selected distractor **C**.

Questions 29–34

In this extract, candidates heard an interview with Rémi, a student in Montpellier in France, who talked about the organisation *Toit Partagé*. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

In **Question 29**, nearly two thirds of the cohort chose the correct answer **C**. Distractors **A** and **B** were the most common incorrect answers. Candidates needed to listen carefully to understand that the organisation offers cheap, not free, accommodation and that Rémi had moved in with Mme Dumont on the 1st of September. In **Question 30**, over three quarters of the candidates matched *personne agréable* and *gentiment* with **B**. Distractor **A**, which referred to the house, and distractor **D**, which referred to Rémi, were the most frequent incorrect answers. **Question 31** was the most demanding question in this exercise and under half the cohort chose the correct answer **A**. Nearly a third of the candidates missed the negative in *je n'ai pas besoin de faire ses courses* and incorrectly chose distractor **B**. The others chose distractor **D**, although Rémi went on to explain that Mme Dumont employed someone to do the housework. In **Question 32**, many candidates chose the correct answer **C**. There was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers. For **Question 33**, just over half the cohort understood *je n'ai pas vraiment de vie sociale* and successfully chose **A**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *habitudes de vie différentes* and chose distractor **C**, which Rémi did not in fact see as a problem. In **Question 34**, three quarters of the candidates successfully chose **D**, whilst distractor **C** was the most frequent incorrect answer. Candidates needed to listen carefully as Rémi welcomed the fact that he would be less dependent financially on his parents, not spend more time with them.

Questions 35–37

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview with Cécile, a young French woman who talked about her trip to New Caledonia. For each question in this exercise, candidates had to identify **two** correct statements from a choice of five. This was an appropriately demanding and challenging exercise at this stage of the paper.

In **Question 35**, over half the cohort successfully selected **B** and nearly half correctly chose **C**. As many incorrectly chose distractor **D**: candidates needed to listen carefully to understand the sequence of events - travelling solo from Paris and meeting the group in Nouméa. Over a third incorrectly chose distractor **A**, although Cécile explained that it was after watching a documentary, a year ago, that she had decided to go to New Caledonia. In **Question 36**, under half the candidates successfully selected **C** and three quarters chose the correct answer **D**. Distractor **B** was the most frequent incorrect answer as candidates perhaps assumed that Cécile's parents would have wanted to go to the airport with her. They needed to listen carefully to understand that Cécile's parents liked the idea of Cécile being met at the airport, on arrival. In **Question 37**, over half the candidates understood *ils étaient tous plus âgés que moi* and successfully chose **A**. Over three quarters chose the correct answer **E**. Nearly a quarter of the candidates heard *les hôtels* and incorrectly chose distractor **C**, although Cécile said that some of the hotels were not comfortable rather than noisy. Similar numbers heard *les marchés* and incorrectly selected distractor **D**.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/21
Reading

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:

- avoid giving additional information that is not required to answer the question
- remember that questions follow the order of the text
- avoid leaving answers blank.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper, and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination. Some candidates paraphrased their answers instead of copying directly from the text. This was not necessary and led to errors as candidates chose vocabulary that was not precise enough to be credited. It also introduced grammatical errors.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Overall, candidates performed very well on this question, but **B** was often incorrectly chosen to answer **1(e)**.

Question 2

Candidates performed very well on this question and many scored full marks. For **1(a)** and **1(c)**, some candidates incorrectly chose **C**.

Question 3

Overall, candidates performed well on this question. For **3(f)**, a few candidates incorrectly chose **C**.

Question 4

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text about Paul who wrote about a camping trip. The text used largely familiar vocabulary.

The text was written in the first person, and the questions used the third person. Most questions could be answered by lifting a small number of words from the text, but some answers also required a minor manipulation. If candidates choose to lift more than is required to answer questions, they must make any manipulation needed in the extra material, for example replacing *je* with *il* and changing the verb if necessary. Candidates are therefore advised to answer with the minimum number of words.

Overall, candidates performed well on this exercise. In **4(c)**, some candidates misunderstood the question and answered with *vélo*. In **4(e)**, candidates often missed out the auxiliary in their answer or answered with the wrong part of the text, usually relating to playing with a ball in the water. Some candidates thought that *temps* in **4(f)** meant time rather than weather or answered with the distractor which appeared earlier in the text (*un temps splendide*). The addition of *après* sometimes invalidated candidates' answers to **4(g)**. With **4(h)**, some candidates answered with the description of the food (*super*) rather than the campsite, and others stopped at *bien* rather than writing *bien équipé*. For **4(k)**, candidates kept the word *nos* in their answers instead of *leurs* or *les*.

Question 5

In this question, candidates had to match a series of descriptions with statements from people looking for an unusual outing. Candidates had five people and eight descriptions to choose from. Candidates had to process a variety of information and match several requirements whilst eliminating responses that did not fit. The question is aimed at the higher grades, and candidates with a wide range of vocabulary and knowledge of synonyms performed well on this section.

Each person's statement gave specific requirements for the sort of outing they were looking for, such as the type of experience they wanted and how long they had to spend. It is important for candidates to note that these details excluded all answers except the correct one. Candidates need to ensure they consider all the information given as this is not a gist comprehension question and a global understanding of the texts will not be sufficient.

5(a) and **5(c)** were answered well. For **5(b)**, candidates often chose **8**, missing that the couple wanted to fly. For **5(d)**, candidates often chose **3**, missing that Luc did not like flying and particularly liked railways. There was no obvious pattern of incorrect answers for **5(e)**.

Question 6

This final exercise about Aurélie was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. About half the questions could be answered with a careful lift from the text and the others needed a small manipulation of the text. Few candidates achieved full marks.

Minor spelling errors were usually ignored unless they formed a different word in French. Verbs do not necessarily have to be correct to score a mark, but the tense chosen must usually be appropriate to the question.

In **6(a)**, candidates sometimes answered with where Aurélie goes to university instead of what she studies. In **6(b)**, many candidates wrote *moi* or *moins* instead of *mois* and invalidated their otherwise correct answer. Overall, candidates answered **6(c)** well. In **6(d)**, many candidates successfully answered by using *à Aurélie*, avoiding having to manipulate the pronoun (e.g. *elle a fait visiter les locaux à Aurélie*). Other candidates could not manipulate the pronoun correctly and wrote *elle s'a fait visiter les locaux*. Some candidates saw *qui* in **6(e)** and incorrectly answered with *la directrice*. Others thought that it was the *formation* itself rather than the promise of training that persuaded Aurélie to take the job. **6(f)** and **6(g)** were generally answered well. Many candidates missed out the reflexive pronoun in *elle s'occupe* for **6(h)**. For **6(i)**, some candidates missed out the subject of the verb and could not gain the mark. Others did not always know how to change *mon* to *son* or *le* to form the answer.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/22
Reading

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:

- ensure that they answer all questions: marks are not deducted for incorrect responses.
- remember that answers in the first person in **Questions 4** and **6** are unlikely to be correct.
- ensure that their response answers the question asked.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper, and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination. A few candidates left some answers blank on multiple-choice questions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Overall, candidates performed well on this question.

Question 2

Many candidates scored full marks. For **2(c)**, some candidates chose **G** or **H** instead of **C**.

Question 3

Overall, candidates performed very well on this question. For **3(c)**, some candidates incorrectly chose **B**.

Question 4

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text about Alain who spent a couple of days in a safari park in France. Overall, candidates wrote concise answers, which helped them avoid grammatical inaccuracies, but some candidates did not show sufficient understanding and lifted too much of the text.

The text was written in the first person, and the questions used the third person. Most questions could be answered by lifting a small number of words from the text, but some answers also required a minor manipulation. If candidates choose to lift more than is required to answer questions, they must make any manipulation needed in the extra material, for example replacing *je* with *il* and changing the verb if necessary. Candidates are therefore advised to answer with the minimum number of words.

For **4(b)**, some candidates missed a verb before *vétérinaire*. For **4(c)**, candidates had to manipulate *mes* to *ses* to answer correctly. Some candidates misunderstood the question and said what the present was. **4(e)** required two answers to give details about the accommodation. Both present and past tenses were acceptable. For **4(h)**, some candidates did not successfully manipulate the direct object pronoun *nous* to *les*.

Question 5

For this exercise, candidates had to match a series of descriptions with statements from people looking for cookery lessons. Candidates had five people and eight descriptions to choose from. Candidates had to process a variety of information and match several requirements whilst eliminating responses that did not fit. The question is aimed at the higher grades, and candidates with a wide range of vocabulary and knowledge of synonyms performed well on this section.

Each person's statement gave specific requirements for what they were looking for, such as the type of dishes they wanted to cook or when they wanted the lessons to take place. These details excluded all answers except the correct one. Candidates need to ensure they consider all the information given as this is not a gist comprehension question and a global understanding of the texts will not be sufficient.

For **5(a)**, candidates often answered with **2** instead of **6**. For **5(c)**, candidates often answered with **3** instead of **8**.

Question 6

This final exercise about Marise who decides to take a gap year in Europe was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. About half the questions could be answered with a careful lift from the text and the others needed a small manipulation of the text. Few candidates achieved full marks, and the questions seem to have discriminated appropriately.

Some candidates paraphrased the text and tried to provide synonyms, but they were not always successful as their responses often distorted the correct messages.

For **6(d)**, most candidates could locate the correct information, but they often included extra details which compromised the clarity of their answers. For **6(e)**, candidates who included the article *une* in their answer (*elle était une fille unique*) could not score the mark as it had a different meaning. For **6(f)**, candidates were expected to remove the *de* before the verbs *nettoyer des sentiers* and *planter des arbres*.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/03
Speaking

Key messages

- Centres had generally prepared candidates well for the Speaking test.
- Role plays were usually well conducted by examiners.
- In the topics section, some examiners needed to make greater use of extension questions to elicit fuller answers from candidates. Sometimes the topic conversations, and particularly the first topic, were too short.
- Most examiners understood the need to read the script exactly as printed and observed any pauses indicated.
- Most examiners also understood the need to ask **no more than 2 further questions** of their own if timings were short on topic conversations.
- Centres need to ensure that, in the topics, if a question is not understood or an ambiguous response is given by the candidate, the question must be read again before the alternative question is used.
- The randomisation grid in the Instructions for Teachers/Examiners was usually followed correctly.
- The quality of recordings was usually very good, and centres uploaded their work promptly.

General comments

Most examiners are now familiar with the format of the test and conducted the tests efficiently. The Speaking test is intended to be a test of **spontaneous** communicative ability. A wide range of performance was evident across the candidature and examples of performance at all levels of ability were heard.

Examiners greeted candidates using the prompts provided and nearly all examiners read the scenario for the role plays, as instructed, in French. Most centres correctly followed the instructions concerning the randomisation grid and understood the need to test candidates according to the prescribed order of the cards and conversation topics. **Centres are reminded that the cards should be distributed according to the grid provided on pages 14–15 in the Instructions**, with Card One given to the first candidate who takes the test and so on.

Role plays were usually conducted well. Centres are reminded that questions can be repeated (but not rephrased) **once** if the candidate does not answer a question or gives an ambiguous response. Occasionally, some examiners did not repeat the question and consequently removed the opportunity for the candidate to work for the available marks. It is important for examiners to read the role play tasks **exactly as printed** to ensure that they are not changing the nature and level of difficulty of the set tasks. It is useful to note that the role plays (unlike the topic conversations) are **not** timed. Centres are reminded that extension questions should **not** be asked in the role plays. It is worth stressing to candidates that their role play responses should be as **concise as possible** and be relevant to the set task. Long development of answers is **not** required to score 2 marks provided that the message is fully communicated. In a few instances, candidates answered the question correctly but then went on to add extra detail which contained a time frame error or added ambiguity into what had previously been a clear and relevant answer. This then prevented a mark of 2 from being scored.

When there was a PAUSE between two questions in the script, examiners usually gave candidates the time to answer the first question before asking the second one. The PAUSE is there intentionally to give candidates the time to process the questions and think best how to answer relevantly. When there are two parts to a task it is harder for candidates to retain all the required information and may confuse them if the PAUSE is not left by the examiner.

In the **Topic conversations**, timings were not always correct. The time allocated to each topic should be approximately 4 minutes. In some centres, topics were sometimes much too short, especially on the first of

the two topics and in some cases too long. In cases of short timings, examiners needed to make greater use of extension and further questions. If tests are too short, candidates do not have the opportunity to show that they can develop their answers. To access the higher marking bands, candidates need to show they can develop their ideas and opinions and add extra relevant detail.

Questioning technique in the Topic conversations

The best examiners set candidates at ease from the start of the examination and maintained a calm but purposeful pace throughout. They adhered to the correct timings and used the alternative, extension and further questions effectively, supporting the less able candidates and challenging the more able candidates. Some examiners asked thoughtful **further questions** that enabled candidates to develop and justify answers. However, in a few cases, examiners tried to ask further questions which they devised in the exam room and these sometimes were too hard for less able candidates or did not stretch the more able candidates. During the preparation prior to the speaking tests period, examiners should be encouraged to prepare a set of differentiated further questions to use with candidates of different abilities on each of the seven set topics. Such further questions should not repeat material which has already been covered in the set questions. It is good practice to use different further questions on a topic with different candidates.

Some examiners needed to ask more **extension questions** such as *Tu peux me donner plus de détails ?* so that candidates were given the opportunity to develop their answers and go beyond brief or incomplete answers which did not communicate clearly. Candidates need to understand and be familiar with the wordings of these extension questions so that they know when they need to give more detail as some clearly did not recognise the wording of such questions. **When asking extension questions, examiners should not rephrase the set questions themselves as this can change the nature and level of difficulty of the set task.** Examiners must also not provide vocabulary or ideas to the candidate. It is important to try to use the full 4 minutes available for each topic and to try to cover the five set questions within 4 minutes. In the topics, *Décris* and *Parle-moi* are common cues that indicate open questions which require more than a minimal response and this needs to be emphasised to candidates. When responding to such questions, candidates should try and put in as much relevant detail as possible as they are being invited to develop and go beyond straightforward short answers. Accurate but brief and undeveloped answers do not give candidates the chance to access the higher marking bands.

A few examiners seemed unsure as to how to use **alternative questions** in the topic conversations. **Alternative questions** give candidates another opportunity to understand the task and use easier language to test the same points. In this way, candidates have another opportunity to work for the marks. If a candidate does not understand the first version of the question or gives an ambiguous response which does not communicate clearly on **Questions 3, 4 or 5**, the examiner should repeat this first version of the set question. Then, if the candidate still does not understand, the examiner must go on to ask the **alternative question**. In some cases, a few examiners asked the first question which was responded to quite well, but then also asked the alternative question on the same task. There were also cases of the alternative question being used as an extension question. This was very confusing for candidates as they thought they had already answered the task. The alternative question should always be read exactly as printed. Examiners are reminded not to announce to candidates when they are using an alternative question and not to announce the question numbers as they go through the topic as this removes the spontaneity of the test.

If a topic lasts 3½ minutes or less, examiners can ask up to 2 further questions of their choice on the same topic to take them to the limit of 4 minutes. **No more than 2 further questions should be asked**, even if timings are still short of 4 minutes. These questions should be prepared before the test so that they are not made up on the spot in the exam room. Stronger candidates should be given further questions which are open in nature, and which give them the opportunity to develop their answers. Sometimes, quite able candidates were given closed questions which required little more than a *oui* or *non* response, and this added nothing to their performance.

Nearly all examiners remembered to introduce the topic area in French at the start of each topic conversation and linked the different sections of the test in French.

Clerical checks and sample size

In most centres, the clerical work had usually been completed efficiently, and moderators found few clerical errors. It is essential that all clerical work is checked very carefully to ensure that candidates receive the correct mark. The mark recorded on the centre's Working Mark Sheet must match the mark uploaded to the Submit for Assessment portal. When marks have been internally moderated, it is the internally moderated mark that should be uploaded to the Submit for Assessment portal.

Centres are reminded to consult the Samples Database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples to check how to submit their sample and the correct format of files to be submitted. Please also remember to label all sound files correctly and to indicate with an asterisk on the Working Mark Sheet which candidates form part of the sample for the centre. It is very helpful to moderators to receive Working Mark Sheets from each examiner which list the candidates in their candidate number order.

Some centres submitted anonymous Working Mark Sheets. The full name of the examiner must be printed clearly on the centre's Working Mark Sheet. If several examiners are used in a centre, please make sure that the names of the different examiners are printed clearly on the relevant Working Mark Sheets.

Comments on specific questions

Role Plays

Examiners generally read the scenario as instructed. The nine role plays were accessible to candidates and set at an equal level of difficulty. They were all set in situations in which candidates could find themselves with a speaker of French and were transactional in nature. Contexts such as arranging leisure activities and outings, arranging a trip to a hotel, buying clothes, talking about being ill, and holiday jobs featured across the cards.

Candidates need to give relevant, concise answers to the tasks and do not need to develop role play answers at length. Most centres are now aware of this but in the few cases where candidates developed answers beyond the requirements of the task, they sometimes ran the risk of introducing ambiguity into an otherwise creditable response. Most candidates approached the role plays confidently and many went on to score good marks. The weakest candidates were also usually able to score a few marks for partial achievement on one or two tasks.

The first two tasks on each card were of a very factual nature and gave candidates the opportunity to answer briefly. Candidates mostly answered these two opening questions quite well. It is essential for candidates to be familiar with questioning formulations such as *À quelle heure ? Qui ? Combien ? Quand ? Où ? Quel ? Comment ?* Weaker candidates generally did not always understand these well and consequently gave irrelevant information which did not answer the task. Skilful examiners repeated the question once if incorrect information had been given by the candidate which meant that candidates were given the opportunity to attempt the task again and work for the marks. The vocabulary used in the role play questions was straightforward and, usually, notions of time and place were quite well understood. Centres are reminded that the correct pronunciation of key vocabulary should be clearly recognisable if the message is to be communicated fully.

On each card, the last three tasks were more challenging and gave candidates the opportunity to show that they could use past and future time frames correctly and give opinions and simple explanations. Examiners and candidates should remember that on the role plays, brief answers can be awarded full marks if they answer the task clearly. A useful technique for candidates to adopt in the 10-minute preparation time is to think very carefully about useful vocabulary and structures which could occur in their given role play scenario. Candidates should also think about the person with whom they are talking, the country they are supposed to be in and the role that they are playing.

Many candidates understood the key question *Pourquoi ?* and were usually ready to give simple relevant reasons and opinions. **If a candidate uses a verb, the time frame of the verb must be a correct for a mark of 2 to be awarded.** Likewise, pronunciation of key vocabulary should be clearly recognisable if the message is to be communicated fully and awarded 2 marks. Sometimes the form of register heard in questions is different according to the nature of the interaction and whether it is informal with a friend, or formal with a stranger when purchasing goods or obtaining services. On cards using the formal *vous* form of address, candidates heard conjugations of verbs which they then sometimes repeated inappropriately in their answer, for example a question such as *Quelle taille désirez-vous ?* was sometimes answered as *je désirais/désirer* which led to some ambiguity of time frame and prevented a mark of 2 from being scored. Frequent practice on past role play cards can help candidates to identify time frames used in cues. Careful and precise listening to the task is a prerequisite to answering relevantly.

Generally, centres tended to assess role play tasks involving longer responses and/or incorrect time frames too generously. The whole response of the candidate is assessed for each task. The message must be clearly communicated for a mark of 2 to be awarded. Examiners are reminded that they may repeat a question once if the first response is unclear or has been misunderstood by the candidate.

Card 1 was generally approached well by candidates. On **Task 1**, most were able to give a time, but weaker candidates needed to distinguish better between *dix* and *deux* as some messages were ambiguous and a clear time could not be heard. Also, in some centres, the pronunciation of *tennis* was problematic. **Task 2** was generally answered well. For **Task 3**, many candidates realised that a brief answer was enough to answer the task and were able to produce appropriate time phrases such as *la semaine dernière*. The second part of the task was very well done. If candidates chose to answer more fully and use a verb it was essential that it was in a past time frame in both parts of the task to communicate fully. On **Task 4**, most understood that they needed to give a simple opinion about why they liked playing tennis. The first part of **Task 5** was usually answered well, but some said what they wanted to eat rather than the type of restaurant. On the next part of the task, some could not use a future time frame to say what they wanted to do afterwards.

On **Card 2, Task 1**, weaker candidates did not recognise *quand*. Overall, candidates answered **Task 2** and **Task 3** well. **Task 4** was an open task and differentiated well between candidates. Weaker candidates often confused time frames and needed to realise the importance of the *dernière fois* as a past time frame marker. Stronger candidates were able to say what they had done at the hotel. For the second part of the task, most were able to give a simple positive opinion in a past time frame. On **Task 5**, candidates could avoid using a verb and many answered briefly and relevantly giving one or two items of clothing which they intended taking away.

On **Card 3**, most candidates understood **Task 1** well and made good attempts at *j'ai mal* but were less successful when it came to pronouncing the relevant part of the body and mispronunciations of *ventre* and *estomac* were common. Candidates understood **Task 2** quite well, but the correct use of *depuis* was challenging for some. Those answering briefly with responses such as *hier soir / deux jours* fared best on the task. Others who chose to use *depuis* sometimes confused it with *il y a* and introduced ambiguity. **Task 3** was done well. Many chose to use a verb and were able to use a past time frame of *manger* well in the first part of the task but were not always as confident about using *j'ai bu* on the second part. Food and drink items were generally quite well known but not always well pronounced. On **Task 4**, weaker candidates did not recognise *quand* and often needed the question repeated. Those choosing to use a verb were not always able to use the present continuous tense and often said *je rentrer / je rentrais* which caused ambiguity. The second part of the task, especially if answered briefly, was done better with most opting for *en avion*. **Task 5** was approached more confidently but weaker candidates sometimes picked up the *aimez* heard in the cue and tried to use it in their response. The most common answers featured the people, the food, the museums, the beaches, the countryside and the Eiffel Tower. Reasons for liking these tended to be short and straightforward *c'est intéressant / c'est beau / les gens sont gentils*.

On **Card 4**, candidates heard the formal form of address *vous* used with an ice cream seller at a campsite. On **Task 1**, some gave a flavour rather than saying how many ice creams they wanted. In such cases, skilful examiners repeated the cue and redirected the candidate back to the task which required a number. **Task 2** required a flavour to be given. Most opted for *vanille* or *chocolat* but pronunciation was often not clear, and *vanilla* and *chocolate* were frequently heard. Some also heard *désirez* and used it in their own reply which caused a time frame ambiguity. **Task 3** was answered well. **Task 4** was a very open task and required candidates to use past time frames appropriately for a mark of 2 to be scored. The wording of the question deliberately stated *en France* to include any activities which could have taken place away from the camp site. Weaker candidates often found it hard to conjugate verbs in past time frames and often confused past with present and future time frames. **Task 5** was generally approached well.

Card 5 was approached well by candidates. It was set in a shopping context and candidates heard *vous* in the cues. **Task 1** was well done. On **Task 2**, some heard *désirez* in the cue and repeated it which meant that an inappropriate time frame was produced. On this task some produced answers in another language or gave a letter which did not communicate clearly. Moderators looked for a word such as *grand(e)/petit(e)/moyenne* or a number. Overall, **Task 3** was well done, but some could not use a past time frame appropriately. Others managed to avoid a verb and answered briefly but appropriately and gained 2 marks. **Task 4** required candidates to say why they liked shopping in large shopping centres. Weaker candidates found it difficult to give reasons and instead just said they liked such centres. Stronger candidates were able to cite a good choice of shops and products, the possibility of doing other activities and for some, the air conditioning was pleasant. Many tried to use the word *variété* but sometimes found it hard to pronounce. Overall, **Task 5** was done well.

Card 6 was approached well by most candidates, but weaker candidates could not use time frames correctly. **Task 1** was done well. The question requested a day so answers such as *le week-end* did not communicate fully. On **Task 2**, some did not understand the use of *comment* and sometimes did not realise that a method of transport was required. **Task 3** required candidates to say which wild animals they had

seen. Weaker candidates needed to recognise *dernière fois* in the cue and if using a verb they needed to use a past time frame. Many avoided a verb and chose instead just to name the animals. Moderators accepted any kind of animal as there are differences of wildlife in zoos and animal parks according to local geographical contexts. The second part of the task was well done. Weaker candidates often attempted to say it was interesting or amusing but could not use *c'était* with their opinion. **Task 5** was understood well.

Card 7 was generally approached well by candidates, but a few weaker candidates seemed unsure about the meaning of *patinoire*. Candidates are now familiar with the cue *où se trouve...?* and approached **Task 1** well. On **Task 2**, a few candidates seemed unfamiliar with *louer*, but nearly all could give a price which could be expressed in any currency. On **Task 3**, weaker candidates often needed this question repeated and did not recognise the past participle of *apprendre*. Some also wanted to say 2/3 years 'ago' but found the 'ago' hard to express. Only the strongest candidates were confident using *il y a* and a time expression. Overall, **Task 4**, was done well, but sometimes the pause between the two tasks was not observed by examiners and this made it hard for weaker candidates to retain and answer the two questions together. On **Task 5**, only the strongest candidates recognised the conditional tense of *pouvoir*. Weaker candidates had to rely on other vocabulary heard in the rest of the question to try to answer and they usually managed to name one or two other activities but were often unsure as to the time frame to be used in their answers.

Card 8, Task 1 was done well, but some weaker candidates were unsure as to the names of certain items of clothing or found it hard to pronounce them accurately and clearly. On **Task 2**, some did not understand the use of *comment* and sometimes did not realise that a method of transport was required. **Task 3** was approached quite well. Weaker candidates tried to say what they had done at work but found it hard to use past time frames. The second part of the task was approached more confidently with most able to give a time they finished work. Some needed to take greater care when using *deux* or *dix* as these were not always pronounced well. Any time was acceptable, but it needed to be clearly enunciated to communicate fully. On **Task 4**, most were able to give a simple opinion about the work. Weaker candidates tried to say it was interesting but could not always pronounce it well. **Task 5** was approached well with most able to recognise *tu voudrais* heard in the cue along with the idea of money.

Card 9 was generally approached well, and **Task 1** and **Task 2** were answered well. On **Task 3**, weaker candidates found it challenging to use past time frames appropriately. They often understood an opinion was required about the disco but then struggled to give an opinion in a past time frame and started their answer with *c'est* instead of *c'était*. On the second part of the task, many also struggled, if they chose to use a verb, to use a past time frame. On **Task 4**, some said they liked the music. Others said their friends went there and some just loved to dance. For the second part of the task, many answered briefly but relevantly with kinds of music played. On **Task 5**, the best answers used an appropriate future time frame such as a simple future tense or a present continuous tense.

Topic conversations

Examiners are reminded to introduce the topic area in French just before the start of each conversation and not at the beginning of the test. Centres are reminded that the grid for assigning the correct role play and topics to each candidate is given on pages 14–15 of the Instructions booklet.

The first three topics were based on one of the sub-topics of Areas A and B as listed in the syllabus. The last four topics were taken from one of the sub-topics in Areas C, D or E of the syllabus. All these sub-topics were familiar to candidates, and a full range of performance was heard across the different topics. The first two questions on each conversation were closed and straightforward in nature and were set at an easier level to start off the conversation. They could be answered briefly and with factual language, although stronger candidates readily took the opportunity to give more developed responses containing relevant details and this is something to encourage candidates to do. The time frame used in the first two questions was the present. The final three questions on each card were more open and required candidates to communicate relevantly in past and future time frames. Each topic conversation also gave candidates the opportunity to express opinions and give their reasons for their opinions. The topics were equally balanced in term of demand and each topic featured easier straightforward questions and others which were more challenging.

To help improve candidates' performance, candidates need to be reminded to listen carefully to the **whole** question and process it fully and carefully **before** answering to ensure that their answers contain **relevant** information. Some candidates started to respond too quickly and sometimes did not hear the full question. Centres need to encourage candidates to try to develop their answers in a spontaneous way and to try to develop a wider **range** of interesting opinions by learning useful structures and phrases. Many candidates seemed unaware that when expressing a basic opinion in the past *c'était* should be used, not *c'est*. The

acquisition of some set phrases for giving opinions would help weaker candidates to have a slightly wider range of opinions. It is also a good thing to encourage candidates to develop their use of subject pronouns other than *je* as many candidates limited their conversation to the first person. Centres also need to emphasise to candidates that it is important to listen for time frame “markers” and cues such as *récemment*, *la dernière fois*, *la semaine dernière*, *normalement*, *d'habitude*, *dans l'avenir*, *l'année prochaine*. One good revision technique for candidates could be to spot such time markers and match them to the correct parts of commonly met verbs in matching time frames.

Stronger candidates were able to include in their work subordination and a good range of linking phrases, adverbs and conjunctions. They also had a good range of appropriate tenses in their answers and found it easy to switch between time frames spontaneously and appropriately. Such responses were spoken clearly and pronounced well.

In terms of assessment of the topics, there was a tendency for centres to assess these a little generously. Centres are reminded that to place work in the Very Good band for Communication the work should be **consistently relevant** across the two topics with frequently developed ideas and opinions. Such work also needs to show the ability to justify and explain some answers in a confident and spontaneous way and needs little repetition of words or phrases from the examiner. To place work in the Very Good band for Quality of Language, the work should show a **wide range** of structures and vocabulary, high levels of accuracy and be well pronounced.

Topic 1, *la nourriture et la forme*, was a familiar topic for candidates. On **Question 1**, even some able candidates did not hear the question properly to begin with. Some just named their favourite restaurant or said what they liked to eat or drink in their favourite restaurant rather than saying where it was. In such cases, some examiners did not always repeat the question so that the candidate could have another attempt at answering it relevantly. **Question 2** was generally answered well, but some weaker candidates responded with what they normally eat rather than with whom. Stronger candidates were able to develop their answers mentioning differences between weekday and weekend dinners. **Question 3** caused errors of time frame for weaker candidates. Although *récemment* was in the question many candidates began their answers with *normalement* or *d'habitude* and continued in the present tense. In such cases, not all examiners recued the question. **Question 4** was challenging for some. Although most candidates were able to give a simple reason why a healthy diet is important such as *c'est bon pour la santé*, many struggled to give an explanation beyond that. **Question 5** was well understood but weaker candidates often needed to hear the alternative question before attempting to answer. The majority could propose a few vegetarian dishes and use a verb in an appropriate future time frame but responses from weaker candidates were often restricted to a list of suitable food items for vegetarians such as *une omelette*, *une salade* or simply *des légumes*. Even the stronger candidates found it challenging to give a reason for their choice beyond the fact that it was a vegetarian dish.

Topic 2, *mon ami(e)*, was also an accessible topic and most candidates made a confident start and were able to name their best friend on **Question 1**. The more able candidates started to develop their answers and often described the physical appearance of their friend. Candidates understood **Question 2** well but despite hearing the correct part of the verb *avoir* in the question, many candidates went on to use part of the verb *être* rather than *avoir* when stating the age of their friend. **Question 3** was challenging for some because of the use of *depuis* with the present tense. However, the second part of the question was usually well understood by most candidates. Those who did not understand the verb *s'entendre* needed the alternative question. On **Question 4**, there was a need for candidates to listen very carefully to identify the time markers and time frame used in the question. Some candidates answered too quickly and gave their answers in inappropriate time frames which made their answers irrelevant. Past time frames were required in response to the invitation to describe a recent weekend they had spent with their best friend. Some found it hard to maintain a logical sequence of events in the past and were not always able to give a developed response to the second part of the task which required an opinion to be given about the weekend in a past time frame. **Question 5** needed careful consideration to answer the task relevantly. Some had clearly understood *fêter* and *anniversaire* in the question but answered too quickly and did not consider the *ton* *anniversaire* and instead answered about how they would celebrate their friend's next birthday.

Topic 3, *les vêtements*, was approached well. On **Question 1**, most candidates were able to say where they bought their clothes. Stronger candidates could elaborate further and once they had identified the place, they went on to add other details about their shopping habits with some also giving details about online shopping. Weaker candidates sometimes said who bought them their clothes rather than where they bought clothes. **Question 2** was done very well by candidates. On **Question 3**, candidates did not always understand *tu t'habillas* and needed to hear the alternative question. The strongest candidates were able to use the imperfect tense to give details about what they used to wear and what they thought of it. **Question 4**

was challenging, but most could say whether or not fashion was important to them and the strongest candidates went on to justify their opinion. **Question 5** was generally well understood. The strongest candidates gave very thoughtful responses which showed a wide range of relevant vocabulary and structures.

Topic 4, *la communication et la technologie*, was usually approached well by candidates. Nearly all candidates understood **Question 1**. **Question 2** was usually well done, but a significant number of candidates found it hard to conjugate *passer* in the present tense and responded instead *je passé/passer*. Once a number of hours was given, some candidates took the opportunity to say what they did during this time. **Question 3** was usually well done, but some candidates found it hard to sustain a description in past time frames and this created ambiguity in their responses. On **Question 4**, many did not take into account all the elements of the question and, consequently some answers became irrelevant. There was some confusion between *cours* and *courses* which led to some irrelevance and ambiguity as candidates proceeded to discuss online shopping. Some candidates responded with the advantages of the internet in general rather than focusing specifically on studying and having lessons online at home. **Question 5** was attempted better by candidates. A few candidates mistakenly referred to *un vélo électronique* rather than *un vélo électrique*. All were however familiar with the concept of electric bikes and could give the advantages and/or disadvantages of them.

Topic 5, *les pays*, was another familiar topic for candidates. **Question 1** was well understood with most candidates able to express their nationality, although some gave a country rather than a nationality. On **Question 2**, a number of years was enough to answer appropriately but some tried to combine the *depuis* heard in the question and use it alongside a verb which then introduced a time frame error. Some candidates who had always lived in their country of birth did not have the phrase *depuis toujours* or *depuis ma naissance* which would have helped them. A brief answer stating a number of years would have sufficed. **Question 3** was easily understood by candidates and was attempted well. On **Question 4**, some could not sustain a narration in past time frames. Some also took it to be a question about visiting another country and introduced some irrelevant details. This showed the need to listen carefully to everything said in the question. On **Question 5**, *séjour* was not always understood by the weakest candidates. The task was intended to cue a future time frame. The alternative question was helpful and even the weakest candidates were often able to say which country they would like to go to on holiday. Stronger candidates were able to use a future time frame and give a good reason for wanting to go to the country in question.

Topic 6, *l'éducation*, was an accessible topic. Overall, **Question 1** was answered well. On **Question 2**, some weaker candidates needed the question repeated as they did not immediately understand *cours*. Most were able to give a number and many also went on to say which lessons they had in the morning and the afternoon and some also gave opinions about the lessons. **Question 3** was generally well done. Weaker candidates sometimes needed the alternative question, but most managed this question well. Stronger candidates showed that they could use comparisons and adjectives well. On **Question 4**, some did not understand *faire partie de* and the use of the imperfect tense. The alternative question was very accessible, and even weaker candidates could name a club such as *foot* or *théâtre*. Candidates who tried to produce longer responses often found it difficult to use a verb in a correct time frame. Stronger candidates answered the second part of the task well. The alternative question was often used and was better understood by weaker candidates. On **Question 5**, some did not understand that they were being asked about future plans in general and thought that *projets* referred to classroom projects. This introduced irrelevance into their answers, and they often answered too hastily and did not consider the relevance of *l'an prochain*.

Topic 7, *les langues*, was approached well by candidates. **Question 1** was done well. **Question 2** was sometimes not understood by weaker candidates. Some gave reasons for learning French rather than saying where they learnt French. On **Question 3**, many were able to say what they had done during their French lessons, but some talked about going to the cinema or going on a school trip as they had interpreted the question in a more general way and this did not answer the task precisely. Weaker candidates experienced some difficulty in using past time frames correctly and appropriately. **Question 4** was usually answered well. Most candidates understood **Question 5**, but weaker candidates interpreted *travailler* as travel and answered irrelevantly. Skilful examiners who repeated the question and then went on to the alternative question enabled some candidates who had misinterpreted the question to attempt the task again and answer more relevantly.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/41
Writing

Key messages

Candidates are advised to:

- give a single response, either single word or short phrase, for each gap in **Question 1**
- respond to all parts of **Question 2** in the tense indicated
- use simple linking words in **Question 2**, for example when giving opinions/explanations
- choose the option in **Question 3** which allows them to show what they know
- give brief additional details in response to individual tasks in **Question 3**
- plan and organise answers into a coherent piece of writing, using extended sentences where possible.

General comments

Common errors resulted in some candidates not able to reach higher marks.

Candidates must answer questions in the tense used in each individual task. In both **Question 2** and **Question 3**, some candidates responded in a different tense from the one indicated and did not fulfil the requirements for *Task completion*. To convey their ideas, candidates must also use a correct subject/verb accord in an appropriate tense.

It is important to copy correctly vocabulary given in the rubrics. The misspelling or incorrect gender of *les activités, l'avantage, les cours, difficile, l'école, la langue, le public, la réaction, le spectacle* sometimes compromised communication. Nouns require an article, a possessive or demonstrative adjective. Candidates sometimes confused the definite and indefinite article.

Candidates are regularly asked to comment on advantages or disadvantages, and they should be able to recognise such tasks and adapt the rubric used, e.g. *l'avantage est / les avantages sont / l'inconvénient est / les inconvénients sont*.

When invited to say what they do, or did, candidates must answer with a verb of action. It is not sufficient to use the pattern *j'aime le tennis*.

Some candidates used *trop/plus* instead of *très*. These are not synonyms and can convey a different and sometimes ambiguous meaning.

Candidates should be able to write correct sentences and link them where possible using structures listed in the syllabus, e.g. conjunctions (*ou, qui, que, quand, lorsque, si*), verbal phrases (*après avoir/être, avant de, depuis, pour, afin de*), correct prepositional linkage of verbs. Object pronouns, strong negatives and uses of the comparative would also enhance the narrative.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Vous participez à un sondage en ligne sur les jeunes.

Overall, candidates answered this question well. For **Gap 3**, many candidates wanted to write *ingénieur* but the spelling was not recognisable enough to gain the mark. Some gave an area of work rather than a specific job. When there is an example, candidates should always follow the pattern of that example.

Question 2: Les activités sportives

For **Task 1**, candidates were able to name a sport which they do, e.g. *je joue au tennis, je fais de la natation, je pratique le golf, j'aime jouer au badminton*. Some only achieved partial communication for *je jouer au foot, je fait du vélo*.

Most candidates answered **Task 2** well and gave their opinion on sports at school.

For **Task 3**, candidates understood that they needed to explain the importance of sport, e.g. *le sport est très bon pour la santé*. Occasionally, candidates were too adventurous, and the meaning was compromised. In **Question 2**, success can be achieved by responding simply and directly. There were many references to health issues in answers to this task. The noun *santé* and the adjective *sain* were frequently confused, e.g. *c'est très santé* or *le sport est bon pour le sain*. Candidates should know the difference between *bon* and *bien*, but some confused them and wrote *c'est bien pour la santé*.

For **Task 4**, many candidates did not understand *célébrité* and wrote about their favourite sport. Successful candidates often added additional detail about their preferred sports person, describing their appearance, character and achievements, e.g. *ma célébrité préférée est Serena Williams; elle joue au tennis et elle a gagné beaucoup de matchs. Elle est très sympa*. Careful checking can make a difference to the marks awarded: candidates frequently wrote *il est jouer de football* rather than *il est joueur de football*.

Task 5 required a response in either the future or the conditional, but many candidates wrote their answer in a different tense.

Overall, candidates showed that they could link ideas using some simple connectors, e.g. *et, mais, qui, parce que, car*. Some candidates used language that was too complex and compromised the clarity of their answer.

Question 3

Task completion

All bullet points must be answered in the correct tense/time frame and in the correct person, and appropriate opinions/reactions/explanations must be communicated where required by the task in order to gain full marks for *Task completion*. A mismatch between the subject and the verb will result in ambiguity and the message not being communicated clearly.

Range

Overall, candidates organised their work well, beginning each paragraph or new idea with an appropriate adverbial or prepositional phrase, but there was a lack of variety of sentence structures. Candidates who limit themselves to clauses introduced by *parce que, car, qui, que* are unlikely to progress beyond the 5–6 band.

Some candidates were able to use more complex sentence patterns which gave them access to marks in the higher bands, e.g. *à la fin de la représentation, de nombreuses personnes sont venues vers moi pour me féliciter / cependant certains trouvaient que c'était trop long et ils commençaient à s'ennuyer / en travaillant en équipe, on apprend beaucoup de choses, comme par exemple qu'il ne faut jamais abandonner / il y avait une cantine où les étudiants pouvaient acheter à manger et à boire / nous avons commencé par nous présenter en espagnol : j'ai remarqué que tout le monde venait de pays différents / apprendre une langue est très important car c'est difficile de comprendre les autres cultures si on ne connaît pas la langue...*

To access high marks for *Range*, candidates need to include a greater variety of linking words, e.g. relative pronouns and conjunctions, and use more complex structures. The use of object pronouns, infinitives after prepositions or modal verbs, comparisons and adverbs would enhance the complexity of their writing.

Accuracy

In both options, there were answers which were either faultless or contained minimal error.

Control of basic grammar is essential for candidates to progress beyond the 3–4 band. The choice of the correct definite article, indefinite article or the appropriate partitive article was a problem for some candidates.

The accuracy of spelling, gender, use of the appropriate article, placing and agreement of adjectives and elision are all critical, as is the correct choice of verb tense and form. Candidates need to spend time checking the accuracy of their essay. Verbs are critical to the effective passing of information. It is vital that candidates show their ability to manipulate verbs consistently in a variety of tenses and persons.

(a) Un spectacle

There were some well-developed answers to this question, but some candidates misunderstood and described a visit to the theatre. Where possible, these candidates were rewarded for details relevant to any tasks.

Answers to **Task 1** ranged from descriptions of the show, e.g. *le spectacle était basé sur l'histoire de Roméo et Juliette* to simple adaptations of the rubric giving the timing, e.g. *j'ai organisé un spectacle le week-end dernier*.

For **Task 2**, candidates had to describe their involvement in the show. Candidates were credited with any information about the participants, e.g. *chacun avait un rôle à jouer, moi j'étais le narrateur / mon amie a dessiné les posters / nous avons chanté et dansé / j'ai écrit le texte*.

Reactions to the show varied in **Task 3**, e.g. *le public a rigolé / les adultes avaient l'air d'apprécier le moment / les parents ont applaudi / le public a été déçu*. Some candidates attempted complex expressions which did not communicate.

Overall, candidates answered positively to **Task 4**, e.g. *l'avantage c'est qu'on peut travailler plus vite / on peut partager les idées / c'est moins stressant*. Many candidates expanded their answers by giving more than one benefit.

Candidates who could use a conditional tense correctly found **Task 5** straightforward. Some adapted the rubric, e.g. *une carrière dans le spectacle ne m'intéresserait pas parce que cela ne paie pas bien / je voudrais travailler dans le spectacle car j'ai toujours rêvé de devenir acteur*. Other candidates stated a clear preference for a different type of employment, e.g. *je voudrais être avocate*.

(b) Un séjour dans une école de langues

For **Task 1**, candidates established the context of their visit with a simple statement, e.g. *j'ai participé / j'ai étudié / je suis allée en Italie*. Many gave very detailed information about the school, courses, teachers, facilities.

For **Task 2**, candidates who could form a correct perfect tense found describing their morning activities easy to record, e.g. *j'ai regardé un film français / j'ai parlé en espagnol avec le professeur / nous avons appris la grammaire*. Many candidates lost focus by describing getting up, showering and having breakfast. This was not expected, and candidates should always be mindful of the context established in the rubric.

Overall, **Task 3** was answered well and candidates proposed a range of ideas, some more complex than others, e.g. *ce que j'ai trouvé difficile c'était la langue / j'ai trouvé dur de parler aux autres parce que je suis timide / je n'ai pas compris les serveurs au café car ils ont parlé trop vite*.

Task 4 was also answered well and candidates were consistent in seeing the benefits of learning a language, e.g. *on peut découvrir de nouvelles cultures / c'est plus facile de voyager si on connaît la langue / ça offre l'occasion de trouver un bon travail*.

Candidates who could form a correct conditional tense verb found **Task 5** accessible and, in many instances, went on to explain the reasons for their choice of language e.g. *je voudrais apprendre le japonais parce que j'aimerais habiter au Japon à l'avenir / je voudrais apprendre le latin parce que j'aime beaucoup l'histoire ancienne*.

FRENCH

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Writing

Key messages

Candidates are advised to:

- use single words or a short phrase in **Question 1**, and not to reuse examples
- respond to all parts of **Question 2** in the tense indicated
- use simple linking words in **Question 2**, for example when giving opinions/explanations
- choose the option in **Question 3** which allows them to show what they know
- give brief additional details in response to individual tasks in **Question 3**
- plan and organise answers into a coherent piece of writing, using extended sentences where possible
- edit and review work carefully to avoid removing important information.

General comments

Candidates must remember to frame their answers in the tense used in each individual task. In both **Question 2** and **Question 3**, some candidates responded in a different tense from the one indicated and did not fulfil the requirements for *Task completion*.

Candidates must refrain from writing extremely long essays for both **Question 2** and **Question 3**. Writing pieces in excess of 200 words is counter-productive as they tend to lack focus and often show an increase in inaccuracies.

Candidates must ensure that their writing is legible. There were several instances of barely readable answers as candidates had written over their first draft.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Pour votre fête d'anniversaire, vous passez une commande en ligne.

Overall, candidates answered this question very well.

Question 2: Mon quartier

To ensure that a task is fully completed, it must be in the correct tense and the verb ending must be correctly spelt.

For **Task 1**, candidates were asked to describe their district. Most were able to provide a correct adjective to complete the task. *Petit*, *grand* and *moderne* were often used. Others mentioned its location or the facilities which were available. For a task to be fully completed the subject must be accurate.

For **Task 2**, candidates had to indicate where they usually meet their friends. Many misspelt *je rencontre* and, therefore, only achieved partial communication. Some tried to use the *nous* form of the verb but without its reflexive pronoun.

For **Task 3**, the context, *dans le quartier*, and general comments about possible activities were required for the task to be fully completed. Many could successfully write *dans le quartier / ici, on peut aller au cinéma, manger au restaurant*. Candidates who wrote *je joue au football avec mes amis* had not fully addressed the task.

For **Task 4**, candidates had to describe what they dislike in their area. Overall, this task was very successful as many candidates were able to list several major issues. Their main complaint was the amount of pollution, e.g. *il y a trop de pollution car il y a beaucoup de voitures / les gens n'utilisent pas les poubelles*. Others complained about the noise, e.g. *mes voisins sont très bruyants*.

For **Task 5**, a verb in the conditional was required to complete the task. Most candidates could successfully use *je voudrais habiter* followed by a place. Towns, countries and areas were all acceptable. Candidates who used a verb in the present tense *j'espère / j'ai l'intention de...* only partially completed the task.

Some candidates misunderstood the key word *quartier* and wrote about their own house or bedroom. This misunderstanding had an impact on the messages being conveyed for **Tasks 1, 3 and 4**.

Question 3

Task completion

All bullet points must be answered in the correct tense/time frame and in the correct person, and appropriate opinions/reactions/explanations must be communicated where required by the task in order to gain full marks for *Task completion*. A mismatch between the subject and the verb will result in ambiguity and the message not being communicated clearly.

Range

Many candidates demonstrated that they could organise their answers using simple conjunctions e.g. *alors, donc, enfin, en plus, pourtant* and gave explanations using *parce que* and *car*. Such candidates reached the standard broadly outlined by the descriptors in the 5–6 band. There were few candidates who gained marks above that level and their work was characterised by frequent examples of complex structures often combined into longer sequences of language.

To access high marks for *Range*, candidates need to include a greater variety of linking words, e.g. relative pronouns and conjunctions, and use more complex structures. The use of object pronouns, infinitives after prepositions or modal verbs, comparisons and adverbs would enhance the complexity of their writing.

Accuracy

There were numerous incorrect spellings of *parce que* which compromised the intended meaning. Candidates should also remember that elision is sometimes required, e.g. *parce qu'il était en retard*. Candidates should copy carefully from the question paper (e.g. *l'avion, en avion, inconvénients, rencontre*) and they should be able to make simple adaptations of structures in the rubric. Other commonly misspelt words included *beaucoup, surpris(e), meilleur(e)*.

The accuracy of spelling, gender, use of the appropriate article, placing and agreement of adjectives and elision are all critical, as is the correct choice of verb tense and form. Candidates need to spend time checking the accuracy of their essay. Verbs are critical to the effective passing of information. It is vital that candidates show their ability to manipulate verbs consistently in a variety of tenses and persons.

(a) *Un vol retardé*

For **Task 1**, candidates were asked to explain why their plane was delayed. The question was phrased in a past tense and the same time frame was expected in the answer. The most common reasons for the delay were either the weather or the pilot. Many candidates found it difficult to use weather expressions in the past or whether to use *il faisait* or not. *Il pleuvait* or *il neigeait* were rarely used accurately. A few candidates who wanted to say that the weather was bad often used *mal* instead of *mauvais*, which distorted the message and therefore could not achieve full communication. The candidates who held the pilot responsible for the delay often misspelt *pilote*. Both the subject and the verb must be correct for the task to be fully completed.

For **Task 2**, candidates had to say how they felt when they heard that their plane was delayed. Many wanted to express their annoyance but did not know the required adjectives. Many used *j'étais ennuieux*, which did not convey the intended message. *En colère* and *furieux* were not widely known. However, many successfully wrote *à ce moment-là j'étais triste* which fulfilled the requirement of the task. Candidates who chose to use *réaction* in their response often made the noun masculine and used inappropriate adjectives such as *intéressante, drôle* or *mal*.

Task 3 was usually well done as candidates could list different activities they did while waiting. The most common answer was *j'ai joué à des jeux vidéo sur mon portable*.

For **Task 4**, candidates had to name some disadvantages of flying. To complete the task successfully, general comments were expected. Whilst many candidates could accurately copy part of the question *les inconvénients de voyager en avion*, some used *est* rather than *sont* as used in the question. Many were able to mention its negative impact on the environment or its lack of space/comfort. For others, the cost was their major issue. Candidates who detailed the problem they had experienced during their recent flight (lateness, poor food or noisy children) did not fully meet the requirements of the task.

For **Task 5**, candidates had to describe a trip that they would like to do in the future. A verb in the conditional or *je voudrais* followed by an infinitive was required to successfully complete the task. A vast variety of destinations was rewarded whether nearby or further afield. Many candidates provided extra details to explain their choice of destination, e.g. *j'aimerais / je voudrais aller au Japon car je voudrais découvrir sa culture*.

(b) Une rencontre inattendue

For **Task 1**, candidates had to explain how they had met their old friend. For many, the encounter took place whilst they were shopping or walking in the park. Where they had met was sufficient for full completion of the task, e.g. *j'ai rencontré mon ami(e) dans le parc / le supermarché*. Many candidates adapted the rubric but retained the *e* at the end of *vu* even though the friend was masculine. Some candidates misunderstood the task and described how they met at primary school.

For **Task 2**, candidates were asked to describe their reaction at that moment. Both perfect and imperfect tenses were allowed. This type of question is often used, and candidates should learn a few correct adjectives which can be used whatever the situation. Adjectives such as *surpris(e)*, *choqué(e)* and *excité(e)* were often misspelt. Candidates should be encouraged to learn *j'ai été / j'étais* followed by a variety of adjectives. Using *réaction* in their reply caused a few problems as the incorrect gender was often used. Many candidates wanted to say *when I saw him/her* but were insecure as to how to express it accurately. Many chose a subject pronoun *il* or *elle* or an indirect pronoun *lui* instead of the expected *le* or *la*.

The present tense was required for the successful completion of **Task 3** as candidates had to give details about the friend's present situation. Whilst many mentioned the friend's personal life, most chose to write about his/her profession. Many wrote about their friend being a teacher or a doctor. The use of *médecine* instead of *médecin* distorted the message and could not be credited. Some candidates chose to give a physical description of their friend, which did not meet the requirements of the task and could not be rewarded.

For **Task 4**, candidates were asked to say what they had done after meeting their friend. Some candidates gave details about their activities as soon as they had met their friend. Many described a meal in a restaurant or playing a sport together. Others chose to write about what they had done when they parted company. Some just stated that they went home. Both approaches were acceptable.

Task 5 was often partially completed as candidates often used a verb in a past tense when the conditional was required. *J'étais très contente de revoir cette personne* was a very common error. However, candidates were often successful when explaining their reason. It was either because *nous nous entendions très bien à l'école primaire* or *il/elle est amusant(e)/sympa*.