



Questions matter



GCSE

**French**

8658/LH Paper 1 Listening Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

8658

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## General comments

There were many positive aspects this year. Firstly, many students were able to gain marks in most questions throughout the paper, regardless of the question type. Secondly, there were very few instances of students not attempting questions including those requiring non-verbal answers in both sections A and B. Lastly, it was evident that students were prepared well to tackle the range of questions and question types.

On the other hand, there were similar issues to previous series particularly with questions requiring verbal answers in English. At Higher tier, these questions, especially those targeting the highest level of demand, required answers of precision and clarity. However, in some cases, answers were too vague and/or ambiguous. Furthermore, some of the topic-specific vocabulary items tested did not appear to be known by students.

Teachers should continue to remind students of the following tips:

- identify the questions which have more than one part (e.g., 6.1 and 6.2).
- listen to the whole utterance once before writing down your answer. This is particularly useful in P/N/P+N questions, A/B/A+B questions as well as in multiple-choice questions.
- listen out carefully for negative words (e.g. it is *not* fun).
- pay particular attention to the words which have been emboldened on the question paper (e.g., **two** hobbies).
- write down option letters carefully and neatly, ideally using capital letters.
- cross out clearly the answers/letters you do not want to be marked.
- only write answers which are possible (e.g.: A, B or C in an ABC multiple-choice question).
- avoid at all costs giving alternatives and/or unnecessary additional information.
- spend part of the 5-minute reading time on Section B looking at the questions and options in the Target Language.

## Section A

### Question 1

This question proved very accessible with almost every student scoring at least two out of three marks. Options D and F were widely identified correctly. Option E was often chosen over Option C. This suggested that students who incorrectly chose Option E based their decision solely upon hearing the word *travail* rather than listening to the whole utterance.

### Questions 2-4

This section discriminated well.

Questions 2.1 and 2.2 were of medium demand. In Question 2.1, *planche à voile* was not well known. As such, this question proved more challenging than anticipated. Question 2.2 was done very well.

Questions 3.1 and 3.2 achieved their expected outcomes. In Question 3.2, many confused *noix* with *noir* which led to many answers around the colour black. As this question was targeting the highest level of demand, it was expected that very few would be able to answer this correctly.

Questions 4.1 and 4.2, both high demand, proved a lot more accessible than expected with over a third of students scoring a mark for each question. In 4.1 some just wrote ‘ID card’ which was rejected as it lacked clarity. It might be worth reminding students that answers should follow on from the prompts on the paper. In this case, it was clear that a verb was required as part of the answer.

### Questions 5-7

This section contained a mixture of medium and high-demand questions. It was therefore pleasing to see so many students scoring very highly.

Questions 5 and 6 proved widely accessible despite targeting the highest level of demand at this tier. 5.1 and 6.2 were done exceptionally well with over three-quarters of students scoring the mark on each. This was particularly pleasing given that both these questions were two-part questions containing some challenging vocabulary.

Question 7 produced the intended outcome with 7.1 being done marginally better than 7.2. It was pleasing to see that 7.2 discriminated well at this tier.

### Questions 8-9

Although this overlap section proved more accessible than at Foundation, it still posed a challenge to many at this tier which was not what had been anticipated.

The first key idea in Question 8 was generally rendered well. Answers at this tier tended to be less vague or ambiguous. For the second key idea, although *vide* was better known at this tier than at Foundation, it still was unfamiliar to many.

Question 9 presented some challenges still at this tier. As per Foundation tier, the majority of students either misunderstood what they had heard (e.g., Ghada’s father was watching / The team wants to win) or rendered the key idea incorrectly (e.g., It was her last ever match / she will not play football anymore).

### Questions 10-11

This section was done well with over half of students scoring at least one mark for each question. These high-demand questions therefore proved more accessible than anticipated. This was particularly pleasing given the complexity of the language and plausibility of the options.

In Question 10, option E was correctly identified the most whilst option D discriminated more between students. Option C was a commonly chosen distractor, most likely because *cinq ans* was heard in the recording.

In Question 11, option F was widely identified correctly. Option A discriminated well as students were required to draw a simple conclusion. Option D was the most popular incorrect chosen option perhaps unsurprisingly given that *étonnée* was heard in the recording. It discriminated well as only those who listened to the whole utterance and identified the use of a negative word before it were able to reject this option.

**Questions 12-14**

The first part of this section (Questions 12 and 13) discriminated well.

Question 12 proved to be more challenging than anticipated. The main issues seemed to stem from the words *gratuit* and *association caritative* which were not well known. Many thought *gratuit* meant ‘grateful’ and mistook *caritative* for ‘creative’. Furthermore, some answers lacked clarity or were ambiguous and could therefore not be credited (e.g., ‘the charity provided equipment to those in needs’).

Question 13 was a high-demand question. Of the two required answers, ‘reduce inequalities’ was by far the one which most students were able to identify correctly. The most common issue with the second answer was surprisingly not with *soigner* but with students confusing *gens* and *jeunes*.

The second part of this section (Question 14) produced two different outcomes. Question 14.1 was done unexpectedly well despite being high demand. Question 14.2 was done less well but still in line with its expected outcome. This was a challenging question with some difficult vocabulary and which relied on listening carefully to the whole utterance. As such, it was pleasing that a quarter of students were able to be rewarded for answering this question correctly.

**Questions 15-17**

This section contained a range of medium and high demand questions.

Questions 15 and 16 produced the expected outcomes. Both were medium-demand questions. In Question 15, option J was the one most students identified correctly. *Boutons* and *peau* were less well known. In Question 16, option C was correctly identified by many and option G proved to be a good discriminator. Option H was the most common incorrect chosen option. In such cases, it was clear that students had based their answer on hearing the word *fume*, disregarding the first part of the utterance *mon mari*.

Question 17 proved a lot more accessible than anticipated despite being of a high level of demand. It was pleasing to see students using the clues from the recording to identify the correct options.

**Questions 18-22**

This overlap section was done well at this tier with a significantly high proportion of students scoring in Questions 21 and 22. As at Foundation tier, those students who singled out individual key items of vocabulary rather than listening to the whole utterances generally misunderstood the key opinion and therefore tended to lose the mark. This was the case in Question 19 for instance where N was incorrectly chosen because students had ignored the use of the negative before *compliquée*.

## Section B

### Question 23

This first question in Section B produced the expected outcome for the level of demand it was testing.

Question 23.1 proved accessible whilst 23.2 proved slightly more challenging. In Question 23.2 the majority of students incorrectly chose option A. This suggests that they did not make the connection between *appelez-nous* in the recording and *téléphone* in option B.

### Questions 24-25

This section has traditionally proved to be a challenge for students at this tier. It was therefore pleasing that students have done well in this section this series.

Question 24.1 was done really well with almost half of students scoring the mark. A range of recognisable spellings was accepted as detailed in the mark scheme. Alternative acceptable answers (e.g., *règlement*) were also added to the mark scheme to reward those students who had clearly understood the key idea.

Question 24.2 performed as expected and therefore was a good discriminator in this section.

Question 25.1 proved a lot more accessible than anticipated. As this question was very high demand, it required careful lifting from the recording. It was therefore pleasing to see that this question was done so well overall.

Question 25.2 proved to be the most challenging question in this section. As *permis* was rendered in more ways than originally expected, the mark scheme ensured that answers which showed that key phonics had been correctly identified were credited.

### Questions 26-27

This final overlap question was answered successfully by most students at this tier.

Questions 26.1 and 27.1 were the best answered questions in this section. This was particularly encouraging given that 27.1 was testing the relationship between tenses which students often find challenging.

As per Foundation tier, Question 27.2 was not done as well in comparison to the other questions in this section. One would expect that this might be for the same reasons mentioned at Foundation tier ie, that students did not appear to know *mairie* and/or *hôtel de ville* and that these were synonyms. It is nonetheless worth noting that both *mairie* and *hôtel de ville* featured in last summer's paper and that the report on the examination had raised this as an issue at the time.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.