



GCE AS Examiners' Report

French
GCE AS
Summer 2024

Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.¹

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.²

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

¹ *This is the full and final report. There is no interim report for this qualification.*

² *Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.*

Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
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Executive Summary

The 2024 set of examinations were well received by centres.

Facility factors show that the suite of examinations was of similar accessibility to 2019, 2022 and 2023.

In Component 1, the standard of candidate performance was very high with many candidates able to access marks in the top bands of AO3 and AO4. Candidates who performed well had an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the situation in France and/or the French speaking world.

Component 2 was accessible to candidates with nearly all questions being attempted. As in previous years, the translation activity continues to be a challenge for candidates.

For Component 3, overall, the essays were well-constructed and showed a good knowledge of the film or text and of critical/analytical lexis.

Due to low candidate numbers, it is not possible to comment on performance trends.

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SPEAKING

Overview of the Component

The NEA speaking assessment at AS Level consists of two picture card-based discussions over a period of 6-7 minutes per card, a maximum of 14 minutes in total. The assessment is marked out of 60 and both cards and they both have equal weighting. In speaking, all four assessment objectives are tested. This component represents 30% of the marks available at AS.

- AO1 Understand and respond in speech to spoken language including face-to-face interaction. This is worth 5 marks per card.
- AO2 Understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources. Again, this is worth 5 marks per card.
- AO3 Manipulate the spoken language accurately using a range of lexis and structures. 10 marks per card are allocated for this, which represents overall a third of the marks for this component.
- AO4 Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically to, different aspects of the culture and society of France and/or the French-speaking world. Again, 10 marks per card are allocated for this assessment objective.

The two sets of picture stimulus cards (sets A white and B green) cover both AS themes and their subthemes: being a young person in French-speaking society and understanding the French-speaking world. Candidates need to be well informed and also be able to analyse and evaluate relevant issues for both these themes about life in France or other French-speaking countries or communities across the world. There are six cards per set.

Thank you once again to all the centres that accepted external examiners this year. All the centres visited were well organised and welcoming. Thank you also to centres who chose teacher-led assessments, all of which were professionally conducted and all the recordings were clear. All centres uploaded their sound files onto Surpass on time.

The number of entries and the number of centres were both slightly up on the previous two years, which is an encouraging trend after two consecutive years of decline. There was also an increase in the number of teacher-led assessments. It is hoped that numbers at AS will continue increasing as this examination at the end of Year 12 is both a great opportunity to gauge progress halfway through an A Level course as well as being an excellent stand-alone qualification. AS also gives candidates the opportunity to speak and practise French with an examiner or their teacher under exam conditions, so it is a very valuable preparation for the A Level examination in year 13. However, as the number of entries per centre is relatively low, once again not all the card combinations were used this series.

Examiners were very impressed this series by how positively and often enthusiastically candidates approached this assessment and how generally very well-prepared they were. Most candidates demonstrated in-depth knowledge across the themes and sub-themes and they were able to communicate very effectively and accurately in French. The very few who performed less well in speaking, tended to be held back more by their lack of knowledge and understanding at AO4 than their ability to speak French.

As in 2023, the standard was very high across the board and the performance across the assessments objectives was remarkably consistent for both candidates with a visiting examiner as well as those, who were examined by a teacher at their centre.

The majority of AS candidates were able to access marks in the top two bands and performed well at AO1, AO3 and AO4. These candidates had an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the situation in France or in other French-speaking countries. They were able to give relevant and culturally specific examples and discuss the sub-themes in-depth using a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures accurately. Those few candidates who were less successful overall, were generally less able to refer directly to France or the French-speaking world and discussed the sub-themes in general terms only, with less analysis or without mentioning specific or culturally relevant examples to back their arguments and opinions. Only a tiny minority of candidates did not have the linguistic tools to express themselves effectively in French.

Most candidates responded very well to most questions and engaged proactively with the examiner, with many examples of excellent interaction. Most candidates were able to ask at least two relevant questions, many without prompting and most were able to sustain the discussion with ease. Many candidates were able to demonstrate a very good understanding of the stimulus materials and could convey their thoughts and opinions effectively. Only very few candidates struggled to express themselves adequately. There were, however, a few candidates who scored less well at AO2, because they failed to refer to the text directly or did not demonstrate adequate understanding of the stimulus material.

Comments on individual questions/sections

AO1 (understand and respond in speech to spoken language including face-to-face interaction) 10 marks across both cards.

Most candidates this series engaged positively and interacted fully with visiting examiners or their teacher-examiners. The majority were able to respond fully to most questions they were asked. Most candidates were also able to ask the examiner at least two questions and for the most part, these questions were relevant and correctly worded. A few candidates needed prompting, but many asked their questions readily as part of the discussion. It was clear that most candidates had been very well prepared and had practised well for the speaking test. Most candidates made very good use of the fifteen minutes preparation time. Few candidates relied excessively on their notes, as had been the case on occasions in previous series. Candidates were for the most part, able to interact very well with the examiner and were generally very adept at thinking on their feet and responding without notes. They coped equally well with both predictable and less predictable questions and required very little prompting to sustain the discussion. Several examiners commented on how effortlessly many candidates were able to interact with them.

Most candidates were able to formulate questions correctly, although some seemed slightly surprised when the examiner asked them for their opinion to their own question. However, most had prepared for this eventuality and responded very well. It is clear, however, that centres have taken on board the comments made in previous reports and candidates this series seemed noticeably more comfortable and successful asking relevant questions and answering a whole range of questions in detail.

AO2 (understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources) 10 marks across both cards.

Most candidates understood they had to refer directly to the written passage on the stimulus card, but a very small minority of candidates were either reluctant to or did not fully explore the content of the passage and their responses were more superficial and lacked detail. To gain top marks at AO2, candidates must refer directly to all aspects of the written stimulus during the discussion.

The more able candidates were also able and willing to give additional information to further explore the issues in the written passage and demonstrate a full understanding of the text. For example, many candidates explored different types of addiction on card A3, referred to other festivals such as the Cannes film festival or *la fête du citron* on card B4 or referred to French films they knew or contrasted the online festival in the text with the Cannes Film festival on B5. Many candidates were awarded marks in the top band for this AO.

AO3 (manipulate the language accurately, in spoken forms, using a range of lexis and structure) 20 marks across both cards.

Examiners were generally very impressed by the linguistic competence of most candidates. Most candidates possessed the ability to manipulate a wide range and complexity of grammatical structures and vocabulary both accurately and with confidence. They communicated effectively and fluently and at times, idiomatically too.

Most candidates used a range of tenses beyond just present and perfect and many candidates were able to use the subjunctive and the passive correctly and in context, without making it sound forced or unnatural. Many candidates were also able to use common irregular verbs correctly and a wide range of pronouns, connectives and prepositions effectively. There were many examples of candidates self-correcting. Most candidates' pronunciation and intonation were very convincing.

Unsurprisingly, weaker candidates needed more prompting and used a more restricted range of structures and vocabulary but even here, candidates were able to express themselves, albeit to a more limited extent.

There were also many examples of idiomatic use of the language (for example, *avoir du mal à, être accro à, en avoir marre, pas mal de ...*), and as last series, lots of candidates showed many traits of A Level candidates in both their breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of the topics but also in their ability to manipulate grammar and vocabulary accurately.

AO4 (show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically to, different aspects of the culture and society of countries / communities where the French is spoken) 20 marks across both cards.

This is the assessment objective, which candidates can find the most challenging. To gain marks in the top band, candidates must be able to demonstrate a very good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the sub-theme. They need to be able to argue their points of view and explain their opinions coherently and back them up with specific and relevant examples based in the culture of a French -speaking country or region. They also need to be able to draw logical conclusions and evaluate issues convincingly.

It was very pleasing to note that this year, many candidates performed very well in this AO. Most candidates were well-informed and were able to argue convincingly their points of view. They were able to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the sub-themes under discussion and were able to draw on their knowledge and understanding of France or a French-speaking community. Those candidates who were less successful, tended to have a more superficial knowledge of France or were generally unable to refer to specific examples in the target culture. To access marks in the top bands, candidates must be able to reference specific and relevant examples but also analyse the evidence and draw conclusions.

As in previous years, the cohort has been relatively small this series and not all the cards were selected and some were only examined a couple of times, so it is not possible to comment specifically on each of the twelve stimulus cards. However, candidates had overall a very good grasp of both themes at AS and were able to speak fluently about their chosen cards. Most candidates engaged successfully and enthusiastically with both themes and were confident in their answers. The cards that proved to be particularly successful were A2, A3, B4 and B5. Some candidates who had card B1 did not know of any Christmas markets in France and not all candidates who had card A6 seemed not to know enough about the Bac to provide details for a contrast with the Bac Pro in the stimulus text. Otherwise, all cards were accessible and were generally very well answered.

Overall, most candidates performed very well across all four assessment objectives and examiners were impressed by not only their breadth and in-depth knowledge of both themes but also their ability to communicate very effectively and idiomatically in French.

Here are some areas for consideration for next year:

- Ensure that candidates have relevant and up to date examples for all the sub-themes at AS.
- Ensure that candidates can draw conclusions and give analysis of the examples they give. They need to be able to explain their relevance or significance.
- Ensure that candidates refer fully to the stimulus text.

FRENCH

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LISTENING, READING AND TRANSLATION

Overview of the Component

This component assesses candidates' proficiency in listening, reading and translation. It is divided into three sections and the assessment objectives are as follows:

- Listening (30 marks) AO1
- Reading (30 marks) AO2
- Translation into English (20 marks) AO2
- Translation into French (20 marks) AO3

This component was accessible to all candidates, with every question being attempted to varying levels of success. It was observed that all candidates were able to complete the paper comfortably within the allocated time frame. The candidates demonstrated that they had been thoroughly prepared for the different types of questions included in the exam. Among the various tasks, the summary and comprehension questions, and the translation from English into French served as the main discriminating elements.

The published mark scheme provides detailed answers to questions 1-8, as well as possible alternative correct answers.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A – Listening

Q.1 This multiple-choice question was well answered, with the vast majority of candidates scoring at least 4 of the 6 marks available. The most common error was failing to understand that young people were more concerned about the future. Some candidates identified *une personne de cinquante ans* from the extract and incorrectly assumed that the answer was (c) *les adultes*. Candidates must be mindful that answers may be implicit rather than explicit.

Q.2 (a) This was a 'Vrai/Faux' question with corrections of 'Faux' responses. In general, most candidates identified the correct true/false answer and most candidates were successful in correcting the false statements. There were a few candidates who failed to make the necessary corrections. Single word answers are not acceptable. Many candidates wrote full sentences with correct verb use. Minor spellings which did not detract from the answer were permitted.

(b) The majority of candidates understood the mechanics of this exercise although a few wrote their answers in the gaps rather than ticked the correct box. Candidates need to take the time to fully understand the task as candidates are not expected to write the words they hear, but to identify the synonyms. The most common error was in 1 where several candidates failed to understand the word *lorsque*.

Q.3 (a) It is pleasing to note that candidates are becoming more adept at providing the correct information for the summary questions. Mistakes in spelling and grammar caused some candidates to lose marks despite identifying the correct response from the extract. Simple grammatical rules such as using the infinitive after *on peut* were ignored by a few candidates. Several candidates were unable to spell *la brique* correctly. Targeted lifting was used successfully by many candidates in (b) and (c).

Q.3 (b) Targeted lifting was used well by several candidates. Spelling and Grammatical accuracies detracted from answers that did demonstrate understanding of what was being asked. Several candidates could not write *dizaine* correctly. Since this was a comprehension question, the answer 10 would have been sufficient. Several candidates correctly understood that the minister had visited the school and correctly communicated this. Candidates were adept at identifying which key words to listen for in the extract but must not assume the answers will be linear. This is where repeat listening of sections is essential. Many candidates struggled with the correct spelling of *campagne* and *recrutement* which detracted from their response. Surprisingly, there were some candidates who did not understand the significance of Notre-Dame cathedral in the last question, this was an essential part of the answer.

Section B - Reading

Q.4 (a) This multiple-choice question was well answered, with the vast majority of candidates scoring at least 4 of the 6 marks available. It was clear that candidates had been trained to use syntax and grammar to ensure that the matching sentences made sense. However, the answers must reflect the information in the source material and marks were mainly lost here for 2 when many candidates selected answer (g) or (e), and 3 when many incorrectly selected answer (g). Candidates linked the idea of 33 *spectateurs* in the sentence ending without considering the meaning of the verb provided. Good technique was shown by several candidates by writing provisional answers alongside the answer box. Candidates must ensure they clearly cross these out and clearly indicate which is the answer that they want marked.

Q.4 (b) This question was generally well done although it was surprising how many candidates failed to identify the correct synonym for *aussi*. *Au-delà*, *enfin* and *ainsi* were offered as replacements for this common word. *Elaborée* also caused some confusion with candidates choosing *pour aider* or *articulé*.

Q.5 This was a gap-fill text where candidates were expected to write in the correct word from the box beneath the text. Candidates are clearly using grammatical clues to help choose which word to use but they are not as consistent in considering the meaning. Gaps (6) and (4) were the most problematic. Where candidates selected *moins* for (6) it left them with no other correct word for (4). Several candidates chose *dont* for the last gap, correctly identifying that a relative pronoun was needed but failing to recognise the constraints on using *dont* with verbs that require *de*.

Q.6 (a) Most candidates were able to provide a description of the instrument. There was less success in correctly describing its functions. Some candidates lifted directly from the text with no manipulation. Whilst words can be used, no mark is awarded when whole sections are copied. Others lost marks due to grammatical mistakes. Candidates need to be secure in verb conjugations and the use of infinitives after modals.

Q.6 (b) There was evidence of excellent manipulation of the text in some responses. Copying whole sentences is not permitted although some candidates still persist in this and thus lose marks. The answers provided demonstrated that candidates had understood the questions. Again, grammatical mistakes lost them marks, particularly in (c) where candidates struggled to express the revival element of the answer.

Section C - Translation

Q.7 The translation from French to English was extremely well attempted with nearly all candidates scoring high marks. Candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge of vocabulary related to the topic. Sentence starters were more problematic. Surprisingly, a few candidates failed to correctly translate *de nos jours* and *de plus*. *Au bout du compte* proved tricky for many candidates. It would be advisable for candidates to have a solid foundation of adverbs, adverbial phrases and prepositions. This would not only enhance their comprehension skills but also their skills in writing.

A few candidates lost marks in the last sentence for not using corresponding pronouns when translating *il faut* and *son écran*. A few candidates mistakenly translated *prisonnier de son écran* as being a literal prisoner **in** the screen than of it. Candidates need reminding that what they write needs to be idiomatic and make sense in English. This was particularly important in the correlative negative sentence although happily many candidates did correctly use the “neither..nor” construction in their answer. Candidates must be reminded to not translate words in isolation; “weather” is not a valid translation of *le temps* in this context.

Q.8 The translation of 4 sentences from French to English was very well attempted with very few gaps. There were some excellent examples of translation from candidates with secure grammatical knowledge and a solid vocabulary base.

However, there were several common mistakes made by candidates. The phrase “Several recent studies” was problematic for many with several candidates not knowing the word for “study”. Very few candidates managed to convey “in a different way” correctly with many choosing the word *dans* as a direct translation. Candidates need to be aware of common phrases that have idiomatic rather than word-for-word translations.

“Platforms” was another difficult word for candidates to translate with the correct spelling and many gave *sites en ligne* as an answer. However, *plateformes en ligne* is more precise for referring to online platforms in a broader sense, including services and applications beyond just websites.

The word “vinyls” was not well known to candidates. *Disques rétros* was ingeniously used by one candidate, whilst not as accurate as *vinyles*, it does convey the idea of older, classic records which is in keeping with the context of the whole text.

Many candidates incorrectly used the term *magazin* instead of the correct French word *magasin* for “shops.” This mistake likely stems from a misunderstanding or confusion regarding the correct spelling of the French word, influenced by the English pronunciation. Emphasis on spelling and lexical accuracy is necessary to prevent such errors.

The phrase “have had to adapt” was frequently mistranslated. Candidates struggled with conveying the perfect tense combined with the necessity implied by “had to.” This issue suggests a need for better comprehension and practice of complex tense structures and modal verbs in French.

Some candidates translated "this demand" as *cette demand* using the English word which does not correspond with the noun *demande*. This is an example of un *faux-ami* which candidates need to be aware of

Candidates often did not use the appropriate word for "surprised." This could be due to a limited vocabulary or reliance on direct cognates, which may not always be accurate. Enhancing vocabulary through extensive reading and practice can help candidates choose the correct terms.

The phrase "we predict that" was often not translated correctly. This may be due to a lack of familiarity with predictive expressions in French.

Very few candidates were able to correctly translate "past and present" within the context of describing French singers. Many candidates used the adverbial phrase *au passé et au présent* which does not function as an adjective describing the noun *chanteurs*. It needs to be clear that singers from different time periods are being referred to rather than actions or states which span across time periods.

Several candidates were unsure of how to translate "phenomenon" into French. This reflects a gap in specialised vocabulary knowledge. A broader and more in-depth study of specific terms, especially those used frequently in academic or formal contexts, is recommended.

Summary of key points

- Candidates are well prepared for the exam and understand the mechanics of the tasks.
- Questions requiring non-verbal responses are generally well answered by the candidates.
- Common errors highlight the need for practice in vocabulary enhancement and grammatical accuracy. Candidates need to focus on correct verb conjugation and adjective agreement to avoid losing marks in translation and comprehension tasks.
- Candidates need to be aware of idiomatic phrases and be provided with contextual explanations so they can accurately interpret and translate nuanced expressions.
- Candidates must ensure they grasp implicit meanings in listening and reading tasks, as answers may not always be explicitly stated.

FRENCH

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CRITICAL RESPONSE IN WRITING

Overview of the Component

- Component 3 assesses both AO3 and AO4
- The majority of candidates answered questions on *Intouchables*
- A small number of candidates opted for *No et moi*
- Overall, essays were well-constructed and showed a good knowledge of the film of text and of critical/analytical lexis.
- There were no responses for questions 2,3 and 6.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Candidates opted mainly for Question 4(a) dealing with which character inspires sympathy.
- Better candidates produced responses analysing Driss's situation and Philippe's challenges.
- A few responses lacked focus and described how Driss and Philippe are *sympa*, friendly, failing to address the question.
- Better candidates who opted for question 4(b) analysed how Driss is perceived and treated throughout the film. Few candidates focused on Driss's behaviour which does not answer the question set in full.
- Candidates who opted for *No et moi* produced very good answers to question 1(a), showing a good understanding of characters and themes within the novel.
- small number of candidates answered question 5(a) and produced excellent responses which focused on the key theme, demonstrating linguistic accuracy, knowledge and flair.

Common errors included:

- misspelling of basic and theme specific vocabulary, characters and place names
- incorrect quotations
- confusion between *le change* and *le changement*, *personnage* and *caractère*, *confiance* and *confidence*
- poor use of possessive and demonstrative adjectives
- adjectival and verbal agreements were often incorrect
- incorrect use of the infinitive
- past participle with missing accents i.e. *il a travaille*
- poor use of pronouns i.e., *Philippe le donne/ donne il*
- confusion between *a* and *à*, *et* and *est*
- incorrect use of *cela montre que* (que often missing)
- widespread use of anglicised structure ending with *avec*
- widespread use of anglicised lexis i.e. *experimenter*

Summary of key points:

Overall, this was a very encouraging series of the examination. There were examples of very good practice with candidates engaging well with the works. There was evidence of good analytical skills showcasing knowledge and flair.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 02922 404 295

Email: languages@eduqas.co.uk

Qualification webpage: [AS and A Level French | Eduqas](#)

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | Eduqas](#)

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

Regional Rep Team

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