



GCE AS EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**FRENCH
AS**

SUMMER 2023

Introduction

Our Principal examiners' reports offer valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. They are written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and detail how candidates have performed.

This report offers an overall 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 goes on to look in detail at each question/section of each component, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.ⁱ

The information found in this report can provide invaluable 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 annual 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 6 months after the examination.	www.wjecservices.co.uk or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the overall subject, rather than for each component/unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries (eduqas.co.uk)

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	www.wjecservices.co.uk
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.	www.wjecservices.co.uk or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with Eduqas.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with invaluable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Exam Marking jobs Examiner & Moderator Vacancies From Eduqas

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Subject Officer's Executive Summary

The 2023 set of examinations were well received by centres.

Facility factors show that the suite of examinations was more accessible than in 2018 and of similar accessibility to 2019 and 2022.

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 very 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 lexis.

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

FRENCH

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Summer 2023

COMPONENT 1: 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 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 and B) cover both AS themes and their sub-themes: being a young person in French-speaking society and understanding the French-speaking world. Candidates need to be well informed and 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.

This year's cohort was the first to sit GCSE examinations since the pandemic.

The number of entries this year was lower than last, continuing the downwards trend of the past few years. This is a pity as the AS examination is a great opportunity to gauge progress halfway through an A Level course as well as being an excellent stand-alone qualification. It also gives candidates the chance to speak and practise French with an examiner under exam conditions. As the number of entries per centre was low, not all the card combinations were used.

Thank you to all the centres that accepted visiting examiners this year. Centres were well organised and welcoming. The centre-conducted assessments were professionally conducted and the recordings were clear. Most were uploaded onto Surpass on time.

Examiners were very impressed by how positively candidates approached this assessment and how well-prepared they were, both in terms of linguistic ability but also knowledge and understanding of the themes at AS. Many demonstrated in-depth knowledge across the themes and sub-themes and were able to communicate effectively and accurately.

This year, although there was a combination of visiting examiners and centre-conducted tests, the standard was very high across the board and the performance across the assessments objectives was remarkably consistent.

Most candidates were able to access marks in the top bands and many performed particularly well at AO3 and AO4. Of those candidates who performed particularly well, they all had an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the situation in France or in the French-speaking world. They were able to give detailed and culturally specific examples and discuss the sub-themes in-depth using a variety of lexis and structures accurately. Those few candidates who were less successful, 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. A few candidates did not have the linguistic tools to express themselves effectively.

The majority of candidates responded very well to most questions in detail and engaged readily and enthusiastically with the examiner, with some excellent interaction. Most candidates were able to ask two relevant questions, many without prompting and they were able to sustain the discussion for the duration of the test. Many candidates were able to demonstrate a very good understanding of the stimulus materials and could convey their thoughts and opinions with ease. Only very few candidates struggled to express themselves fluently or accurately.

Comments on individual questions/sections

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

All the candidates this series were willing and able to engage positively and readily with visiting examiners or their teacher-examiners. Most were able to respond effectively to most questions they were asked. Most were also able to ask the examiner two questions and for the most part, these questions were pertinent and well-formulated. Some candidates needed prompting, but many asked their questions as part of the discussion.

Fewer candidates relied on excessive notetaking this series. This is a good thing because relying solely on notes made during the preparation time can often limit natural face-to-face interaction and on occasions, stifle spontaneity. These candidates, who tended to struggle more on the unseen questions, were the ones who were less adept at thinking on their feet and responding without notes.

Some candidates found formulating questions challenging, and on a few occasions, the questions posed were not always totally relevant to the topic under discussion. This occurred when the candidate prepared questions in advance of the test and asked them, even though they may have had little bearing on the discussion they were having. However, candidates should be reminded that there is no one correct way to ask a question and a simple *que pensez vous de ...* or *vous êtes du même avis que moi?* can be just as effective as a more complicated structure. Candidates should also be reminded to have a response ready for their own questions as often examiners will ask them the same question in return. It was obvious that some candidates were not expecting to have to answer their own questions.

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

All the candidates were aware that they had to refer directly to the written passage on the stimulus card, but a few candidates did not fully explore the content of the passage and their responses were more superficial and lacking in detail. However, many candidates referred to all aspects of the written passage in detail and were able to demonstrate a full understanding of the issues and discuss their implications and interpret the ideas behind them.

Many candidates were also able to give additional examples to further explore the issues in the written passage and fully demonstrate a full understanding of the theme. For example, many candidates explored the idea of *le PACS* on card A1 or referred to all aspects of *le festival de Solidays* on card B1. Many candidates were awarded marks in the top band for this AO, which is in contrast to previous years.

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

Many of the candidates possessed the vocabulary and a sound knowledge of grammatical structures required to sustain a lively discussion. The more able candidates manipulated the language with greater ease and confidence, including the use of more abstract and erudite lexis and complex structures. There were many examples of the correct use of the subjunctive, *si* clauses, a wide range of less commonly used connectives (such as *puisque, quoique, malgré ...*) and different timeframes. These candidates were also more agile at manipulating irregular verbs (such as *pouvoir, devoir, savoir, vivre, faire, dire...*) as well as using pronouns (such as *dont, lui, leur, y, en*) more frequently. A few weaker candidates required a little more prompting and tended to use a more restricted vocabulary and stuck to one or two timeframes only (mainly the present and the perfect tenses). However, no candidate with a strong linguistic ability struggled to maintain a conversation due to a lack of depth of knowledge of AO4, which was very encouraging. There were also many fine examples of idiomatic use of the language (for example, *se sentir bien dans sa peau, être bouc émissaire, c'est tiré par les cheveux ...*), demonstrating a considerable range of expressions. Many candidates showed many traits of A Level candidates in both their breadth and depth of knowledge of idiom and vocabulary. On the whole, many candidates demonstrated very good pronunciation and intonation with only the occasional anglicised pronunciation slipping through.

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 some candidates can find the most challenging as even some of the more linguistically able candidates have historically been less successful at AO4. To gain marks in the top bands, 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 give and argue their points of view and their opinions coherently and back them up with specific and relevant examples based in the target culture. They also need to be able to draw logical conclusions and evaluate issues convincingly.

Candidates who performed well at AO4 this year, were all 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 (examples this year of evidence being drawn from Québec, Tunisia and Belgium). Those candidates who were less successful, tended to have a more superficial knowledge of France or a French-speaking community and were generally unable to refer to specific examples in the target culture. For example, some candidates were unable to give any other examples of a festival in a French speaking-country on card B1 or could not give the name of a French medium newspaper on card B4. Their answers were more generic or were based on their own experiences here in the UK as opposed to the experience of people in France or in French-speaking countries and communities. To be able 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 this year's cohort has been relatively small and not all the cards have been used in this year's examination, it is not possible to comment specifically on each of the twelve stimulus cards. However, candidates had a generally very good grasp of the issues of families and citizenship, although their knowledge and understanding of the benefits and disadvantages of *le PACS* compared to a traditional marriage were a little superficial on occasions as was their understanding of *familles recomposées*. Otherwise, the theme was generally well discussed, although again some candidates had trouble relating their discussion specifically to France or a French-speaking community.

Not all candidates who had card B4 on media were able to give detailed answers or quote examples of French newspapers or broadcasters or those of other French-speaking countries, so this may be an area of focus for some centres in the future.

Taken as a whole, the discussions based on the second theme were generally relevant and many candidates were able to give specific examples and draw more readily on their knowledge and understanding of France or a French-speaking community. Candidates seem to engage successfully with this theme and were confident in their answers. The discussions based on festivals were generally relevant and candidates engaged enthusiastically and provided suitable examples (such as *la fête du citron*, *le festival de Cannes*, several festivals in Brittany etc.) and maintained a good level of discussion. When it came to the sub-theme of media, some candidates struggled to relate the discussion specifically to France or a French-speaking community and seemed to feel more comfortable talking about online news in general than broadcast news or the written press in particular.

Taken as a whole, many candidates performed well across all four assessment objectives and examiners were impressed by both the breadth and depth of their knowledge but also their ability to communicate effectively and idiomatically in French.

Here are some areas for consideration for next year:

- Candidates should be reminded that they need to refer specifically and in detail to the whole of the written passage on each stimulus card to access top marks at AO2.
- Candidates should be discouraged from rote learning pre-prepared answers, as this does not prepare them to answer a whole range of possible questions. These candidates tend to regurgitate pre-learnt material even if it is not relevant to the question being asked. These candidates also struggle more with the unseen questions and do not access top bands at AO4.
- Candidates must be able to give specific and relevant examples that relate directly to France or a French-speaking country or community. They should avoid generic comments and examples. Candidates have to demonstrate that they have a good and up to date understanding and knowledge of the target culture for marks in the top bands at AO4.
- Candidates must ensure that they can draw conclusions and give detailed analysis of the examples they give. It is not sufficient to just give an example, candidates need to be able to analyse or explain its relevance or significance.
- Some candidates need more practice formulating and asking relevant questions as well as being able to answer them themselves. Examiners will often ask the candidate for their opinion in return.

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COMPONENT 2: LISTENING, READING AND TRANSLATION

Overview of the Component

Component 2 is divided into three sections and the assessment objectives are as follows:

- Listening (30 marks) AO1
- Reading (30 marks) AO2
- Translation (40 marks) AO3

The exam was very accessible to candidates with all questions being attempted. All candidates were able to complete the paper within the allocated time. It is clear that candidates were well prepared for the demands of the paper and are fully aware of the mechanics in answering the different styles of questions.

Detailed answers to questions 1-8 are given in the published mark scheme as well as possible correct alternative answers.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A – Listening

Q.1 Candidates fully understood the mechanics of this question. All candidates were able to select six responses. The most common error was failing to understand that undertaking charity work did not lead to a job, it was helpful for job searches.

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. Minor spellings which did not detract from the answer were permitted. Most candidates wrote full sentences with correct verb use.

(b) This gap-fill exercise was very well done by all candidates. The most common errors occurred in 4 and 6.

Q.3 (a) Summary of main points in response to listening in French. Candidates did not need to write full sentences and could use words from the extract. This was generally well answered. Several candidates struggled to communicate that the grandmother was not talkative whilst very few candidates understood *grincheux*.

(b) This was a response in French to a listening extract style question. Candidates could use words from the extract but could not copy whole sentences.

- a. Using words from the text would have been beneficial for many candidates who wrote *camera* instead of *appareil*.
- b. Very well answered by most candidates.
- c. Most candidates understood the two advantages.

- d. Candidates were expected to mention that the adopted grandparents were part of the extended family of the narrator rather than just part of a family.

Section B – Reading

- Q.4 (a)** Most candidates coped well with this multiple-choice task. The most common errors occurred in 1 and 3. It was noted that (j) was most often selected wrongly for 1 indicating some confusion between the concept of editor and author.
- (b)** For this question candidates read a text and had to find a word to fill the given gap in the text. (d) and (e) were correctly identified by most candidates. *Crée* was a given as an answer by different candidates for (b) and (c) and *reste* was sometimes given for (a). Candidates must read over the text ensuring that the words they have chosen are synonymous with the context of the passage.
- Q.5** This was a gap-fill exercise where candidates were asked to complete the text by choosing the correct word from a choice of twenty words. Candidates must not use the same word twice. Overall, this was generally very well. However, there were some incorrect choices. Several candidates did not associate the verb *trier* with *déchets*. The main errors in this question were for (9) and (10). Although candidates identified an object pronoun was needed for (10), many candidates used *y* instead of *en*. Candidates must ensure that the words they choose fit in with the context of the text. When using pronouns, they must be clear what the pronoun is referring to or replacing in the text.
- Q.6 (a)** Summary of main points in response to a written text.
- Most candidates identified the correct response in the text and were able to produce a description.
 - Most candidates identified that reporters had to be under 25 but lost marks for grammatical errors, e.g. *être moins de 25 ans*. Some candidates misunderstood that reporters are based in Francophone countries and answered that they had to travel to them.
 - Several candidates struggled to express the correct answer without grammatical errors and this detracted from their response. Candidates are permitted to use words from the text, but not whole sections.
- (b)** Responses in French to a written text.
- Most candidates provided the correct answer.
 - Most candidates did not provide both options; journalists and musicians/poets/rappers. Candidates must read the entirety of the text before answering the questions.
 - The duration was correctly identified by nearly all candidates.
 - Most candidates were able to substitute *l'avenir* for *futur* although some candidates understood it to be within the countries of Libya and Quebec rather than throughout the Francophone world.

Section C – Translation

Q.7 The translation into English was very well attempted by all candidates. Some candidates scored highly here as they were able to carefully transfer the meaning across. Although some candidates failed to translate single words, there were no sections omitted. Errors sometimes occurred through poor grasp of sentence structure in English. Candidates must ensure that what they write makes sense in English.

Common errors included:

- misunderstanding that it was the environment that worried French people the most, rather than it was worrying most French people.
- incorrectly translating *richesses*.
- incorrectly translating *malgré*.
- translating *ces peurs* as “their fears”.
- not recognising the conditional tense *seraient*.
- misunderstanding that it is their future job that teenagers want to align with their moral values.

Q.8 Translation into French. There were some excellent translations from candidates whose knowledge of grammar is secure and can write idiomatic French with accuracy. Candidates attempted all sections and there were few gaps.

The main challenges were as follows:

- Several candidates did not recognise “integral” as a cognate and attempted to use words such as *primordial* or *important*.
- Translating “a few talented artists” was a challenge for some candidates with many candidates choosing to use *peu*. Several candidates omitted the initial *de* when translating more and more. Many candidates mistakenly took “exhibitions” to be a cognate and failed to use the more appropriate word, *les expositions*.
- “works” was often wrongly translated with many candidates choosing *travails*. There were good examples of alternate words used such as *art*, *créations*, *oeuvres*. *Vendre* was not very well known and “large sums” proved problematic.
- The possessive “its” was a challenge for some candidates as was the correct spelling of “walls” – *mures*, *meurs*. The reflexive verb proved most problematic and *se* was omitted by many candidates when conjugating *transformer*. Several candidates were able to use *seront transformer* correctly. Candidates were inventive in translating “open air museum” although care is needed with spellings (*oeuvre*).

Summary of key points

- Candidates are familiar with the demands of the paper and the mechanics of the tasks. Very few marks were lost for incomplete answers or for answering with too many details.
- Questions requiring non-verbal responses were generally very well answered by the candidates.
- There was very little “lifting” of material from the provided texts as candidates are becoming more adept at manipulating language using a range of lexis and structure.
- There was evidence of sound grammatical awareness from several candidates. However, some candidates need to be able to conjugate verbs accurately and to recognise and use tenses correctly. More awareness of gender, pronouns and adjective agreements would enable candidates to have a more in-depth understanding of texts as well as aid their written responses.

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COMPONENT 3: CRITICAL RESPONSE IN WRITING

Overview of the Component

Component 3 assesses both AO3 and AO4

The majority of candidates answered questions on *Intouchables*.

Some candidates opted for *No et moi*.

A small number of candidates opted for *Les choristes*.

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

Comments on individual questions/sections

Candidates opted mainly for Question 7 dealing with Driss's acceptance of the job offered by Philippe.

Better candidates produced responses analysing Driss's situation and Philippe's challenge. A few responses lacked focus and described Driss's background, failing to draw appropriate conclusions.

Better candidates who opted for question 8 looked at the use of language in the film and how it serves as a catalyst in the relationship between Driss and Philippe but also how it serves to highlight differences in French society.

Candidates who opted for *No et moi* produced good answers showing a good understanding of characters and themes within the novel.

Question 1 dealt with a salient theme of the works and proved most popular. Responses focused on the title, although some candidates failed to remain focused on the theme of adolescence.

Candidates who opted for *Les choristes* responded to question 9. A few candidates produced high-quality pertinent responses dealing with the theme of isolation.

Common issues included:

- handwriting and countless insertions (via stars) of additional-mostly irrelevant-information and word count (some essays exceeded 500 words)
- misspelling of basic and theme specific vocabulary, characters and place names, for example, a candidate kept referring to "les aristocats"
- incorrect quotations
- confusion between personnage and caractère/character
- poor use of possessive and demonstrative adjectives
- adjectival and verbal agreements were often incorrect
 - incorrect use of the infinitive

- past participle with missing accents e.g. il a travaille
- poor use of indirect pronouns e.g., Philippe le donne/ donne il
- confusion between “a” and “à”
- incorrect use of "cela montre que" (que often missing)
- widespread use of anglicised structure e.g. “pour faire lui...literal translation of to make him”.

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.

A better understand of common grammatical rules should further improve overall performance.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team are on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: **029 2240 4295**

Email: languages@edugas.co.uk

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

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

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ⁱ *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.*