FRENCH

Paper 7156/12
Listening

Key messages

- Candidates were usually aware of the requirements of the examination.
- As intended, there was a gradient of difficulty on the paper.
- There were cases of candidates ticking an incorrect number of boxes on **Question 16**.
- Candidates needed to cross out clearly any material which they did not wish the Examiner to consider.
- Full sentences were not required in responses and if answers were long, there was the danger that extra distorting details were included which often invalidated an otherwise correct answer.
- The format of the Listening test will change in 2021.

General comments

The candidature overall performed in a satisfactory way on the first two sections of the paper. Most candidates attempted the final section but only the strongest candidates were successful on this last section.

Candidates were usually familiar with the rubrics and were aware of the requirements of the test types. A few candidates seemed unsure as to the correct number of boxes to be ticked on multiple-choice exercises and, in particular, on **Question 16** where some ticked more than six and others only four boxes. The exercises discriminated appropriately across the gradient of difficulty in the paper. The examined topics and contexts were accessible to all candidates.

The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and density and featured both monologues and conversations. The emphasis of the questions moved from targeting the candidates' ability to pick out information contained in short factual pieces, to testing their ability to understand specific factual information, as well as opinions and explanations, in longer narrated accounts and conversations. Longer extracts featured a variety of register and references to both past and future events.

Most candidates understood that full sentences were not required in response. Brief answers were preferable as candidates did not run the risk of extra distorting material being added which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer.

There were cases of poor handwriting which made it very difficult to read answers. If Examiners could not read the spellings of individual words, they could not award the mark for an answer.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–8

Candidates usually performed well in this opening exercise which was intended to give them a confident start to the paper. The extracts were straightforward and short. The vocabulary areas tested numbers, travel, leisure activities, food and items of clothing.

Question 1 was attempted well by most candidates. On **Question 2**, many candidates did not recognise *consigne automatique* or the visual in option **A**. On **Question 3**, most recognised the word *fromage*. **Questions 4** and **5** were well done by most and very high numbers recognised *barbecue* on **Question 6**. **Questions 7** and **8** were also attempted well by most candidates.

Exercise 2 Questions 9–15

Candidates heard a longer extract which featured tourist information about a village festival in France. Questions tested days of the week, leisure activities, shop names, entertainment and animals. Candidates generally approached **Question 9** well with the majority giving an acceptable spelling of *samedi* but some attempted to write another day or a month. **Questions 10** to **15** were also attempted quite well.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 16

Candidates were, mostly, well accustomed to the exercise type and its requirements, but some candidates ticked more than six boxes or four boxes only. Six of the twelve boxes needed to be left blank.

Candidates heard four young people from a variety of francophone countries or regions talking about their leisure time. This topic area was generally accessible to candidates. Even weaker candidates were able to score 1 or 2 marks. The most frequent incorrect answer was option **(g)** about Margaux. Some did not identify that Margaux lived in an air-conditioned house or that Yves would like to continue living in Tahiti.

Exercise 2 Questions 17–21

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview in two parts with Pierre, a young roller skater champion, who talked about his sporting life and his competitions. In the first interview, candidates were required to correct an incorrect detail in each of five statements, a question type with which they were clearly familiar. The missing words were all items which appear in the vocabulary lists of the Defined Content. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test and the extract heard was longer than the one heard in the previous exercise.

On **Question 17**, about half the candidates gave an acceptable spelling of *roller* and few candidates gave an acceptable spelling of *spectateur* on **Question 18**, often rendering this as a version of *spectacle* or giving the spelling *spectator*. On **Question 19**, few candidates gave an acceptable version of *entraîneur*. Better attempts were made on **Question 20** with over half the candidature making an acceptable attempt at *apprendre.* Incorrect attempts were often a result of mishearing this as *attendre*. On **Question 21**, very good attempts were made at *classique* which was widely recognised with nearly all candidates scoring the mark.

Exercise 2 Questions 22–25

The second part of the exercise was attempted a little better than the first part. On **Question 22**, nearly all were able to identify *quatre/4* and scored the mark. Answers such as *quart* did not score the mark. On **Question 23**, only the stronger candidates were able to identify *nerveux.* Here, some invalidated their answers by also giving *ravi*, which was heard a little later in the recording. Better attempts were made at identifying *prix* on **Question 24** and *forts* on **Question 25** with about half the candidates gaining the marks on these questions.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26–31

Candidates heard an interview with Nabila talking about her time spent helping to renovate a school in Portugal. Questions tested not just specific factual information but also gist understanding over the longer extract. Candidates needed to identify attitudes and emotions in some questions and be able to understand a narrative which, in places, depended upon them understanding a sequence of events. Candidates should listen to **all** the relevant information before making their choice for each question as some answered too quickly and did not always think about ruling out incorrect options. The reading time for candidates should be used well here so that they are certain about what is being asked in the question.

On **Question 26**, candidates heard *lycée technique* and many opted for option **A**, thinking that Nabila had gone to Portugal to study rather than to repair school buildings. On **Question 27**, the stronger candidates were successful in identifying that the relevant text heard was *Ils étaient tous bénévoles et très sympa.* From this they then needed to recognise the synonym *gentils* in the correct option. Here, many instead chose option **C** showing only partial understanding of both the text and the wording of the question. Some did not perhaps realise that the *certains* ruled out the *tous* in option **C**. On **Question 28**, few candidates recognised that *la mairie* had helped Nabila financially. Better attempts were made on **Question 29** with about half the

candidates using gist understanding skills and being able to identify that Nabila and her friends had been disappointed. On **Question 30**, the stronger candidates identified *les électriciens … faisaient très attention*. Candidates often chose option **B** as they had heard *ils ne voulaient pas faire d'erreurs* and had not realised the importance of the negative. On **Question 31**, only the strongest candidates recognised the comparatives in the options and understood that Nabila was now less selfish. There was no obvious pattern in the incorrect option chosen by candidates here.

Exercise 2 Questions 32–40

This was an appropriately demanding and challenging exercise at this stage of the paper. Some questions were only answered well by the very best candidates. Many weaker candidates, however, were able to score a few marks.

The questions were designed to make short responses possible and only a few candidates seemed unaware of this. Candidates needed to avoid writing long answers as sometimes such answers added extra detail which was not on the recording. This then distorted and invalidated an otherwise correct answer. Candidates also needed to make good use of the reading time and to make sure that they read the questions carefully so as to understand exactly what was being asked.

Candidates heard an interview with Thomas, the owner of an African lion sanctuary. Most candidates started the exercise very confidently on **Question 32** and were able to give an acceptable spelling of *malades.* On **Question 33**, only the strongest candidates identified *plus d'espace.* Many candidates invalidated answers by combining words inappropriately or offering *plus de space*. On **Question 34**, slightly better numbers identified that residents had become cross as the lions were dangerous. Here, part of the verb *se fâcher* was enough to gain the mark. Performance by candidates on **Question 35** was similar with some candidates not able to render *furieux* often writing instead *furious* or *fureus(e).* On **Question 36**, only the most able wrote an acceptable version of *(à) plein temps.* Incorrect answers often featured the invalidations *bénévoles* or *10 employés.* Candidates did better on **Question 37** with about half scoring the mark for *région.* In **Question 38**, some missed out the verb *donner* and others did not give an acceptable spelling of *viande.* On **Question 39**, candidates did a little better and those answering with both elements *centre* and *touristique* gained the mark. **Question 40** was best answered by the word *liberté* and the most able candidates did this. Here, to score the mark candidates needed to understand that the concept was the lions being free. Some distorted their answers by trying to write very long answers and included material which invalidated their answer, such as freeing the lions in or near a village.

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Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:
- select carefully only the information from the text that answers the question, in particular in the last two exercises
- look carefully at when material needs to be manipulated to answer the question
- remember that questions follow the order of the text.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper, and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination. There were few instances of candidates leaving more than a couple of questions blank.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–5

Overall, this exercise was answered well, but some candidates did not recognise *carrefour* in **Question 3** or *commissariat* in **Question 5**.

Exercise 2 Questions 6–10

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

Exercise 3 Questions 11–15

This exercise was answered well, but option **B** was often chosen for **Question 13**, which were the activities undertaken in the afternoon rather than the morning, and option **C** was a common choice in **Question 14**.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 16–20

For this exercise, candidates completed statements in French, choosing words from a list. Some candidates did not use the grammatical markers in the sentences to assist with narrowing down their options. Some candidates chose the correct five words, but in the wrong places. In **Question 19**, many candidates chose the distractor *ville* instead of *ligne*.

Exercise 2 Questions 21–29

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text in which Mathis wrote about his stay with his cousin's family in Lyon. The text was mostly straightforward and the vocabulary covered familiar topics. Although long answers are not required, and often only a few words would answer the question, some candidates chose to copy a couple of sentences from the text for each question. For this exercise, extraneous material and incorrect tenses were often ignored as long as they do not in some way invalidate the candidate's correct response.

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Most candidates scored well on this exercise. For **Questions 22** and **27**, candidates were not always clear which boy was being referred to in their answer, so the mark was given unless the answer was clearly wrong. In **Question 23**, candidates did not always select the right part of the text for their answer. For **Question 24**, the answers were accepted in either order. *Dimanche* was a common incorrect answer for **Question 26**.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 30–34

In **Section 3**, Examiners are expecting a higher level of attention to detail and for candidates to be more selective of the information they take from the texts. In this exercise, candidates should not just write the opposite of the statement but need to look for the alternative information.

Many candidates scored well on the true-false responses. There was a discernible pattern of wrong answers. **Question 31** was incorrectly ticked as being true by several candidates, and this usually led to them choosing **Question 34** as false. Candidates could not gain mark for a justification if they had ticked *VRAI* for the statement.

For the justifications, there was a mixed response from candidates. Candidates generally answered **Question 30** well, but candidates who wrote too much or not enough did not gain the mark. In **Question 31**, candidates often wrote *se* instead of *le*, and could not gain the mark. In **Question 33**, some candidates did not find the right part of the text, with *Paul a commencé à s'ennuyer un peu* being a frequent incorrect answer.

Exercise 2 Questions 35–41

This final exercise was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. Candidates did not gain the marks if they included information that was not necessary to answer the question. Weaker candidates often targeted the wrong information.

Question 35 was answered well, but in **Question 36** candidates chose to write their own answer rather than taking the part of the sentence from the text. This was also the case on **Question 39** where a straight lift from the text would have answered the question.

In **Question 37**, some candidates did not realise that a manipulation was required from first to third person. Other candidates stopped their answer at an inappropriate point, such as adding the word *grâce* to their answer. With **Question 40**, some candidates tried to paraphrase the text to write their own answer and thought that *cela l'énerve* was linked to *nerveuse* and framed an answer using that adjective. In **Question 41**, some candidates wrote too much and introduced material that did not answer the question or did not manipulate the text to answer the question.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/03
Speaking

Key messages

- Candidates were usually well prepared for the role play tasks, but some Examiners deviated from the script and this disadvantaged candidates.
- Timings in most centres were correct but, in some centres, the tests were extremely short or very long in the conversation sections. In some cases, the Topic conversation section was missed out. Marks can only be awarded for sections if they are attempted.
- Topic coverage was satisfactory in most centres. Some centres needed to cover a wider range of topics across their candidature in the Topic conversation section.
- Most Examiners were aware of the need to ensure that past and future tenses were tested in **both** conversation sections.
- The best work was heard in centres in which spontaneous and natural conversations developed.
- In centres with more than one Examiner it was not always clear how the internal moderation had taken place as details were not included with the sample.
- **All centres should note that the format of this test will be different from 2021 onwards.**

General comments

Most Examiners were familiar with the format of the test and conducted the examination appropriately. Candidates were generally aware of the demands and had prepared well. Examiners were usually sympathetic to their candidates and helped them to work for the marks and gave them the opportunity to show what they knew and could do.

In the Conversation sections, Examiners who included unexpected questions in a spontaneous, natural way went beyond the straightforward "closed" questions and gave their candidates the possibility of scoring in the Good band or above on Table B, Communication. It is essential to include questions which will elicit past and future tenses in both conversation sections as candidates need to show they can use both of these tenses accurately for a mark of more than 6 to be awarded on Table C, Language.

Examiners in centres usually applied the mark scheme fairly and consistently.

Examiners must adhere to the script of the role plays and not change tasks. If cues were missed out or changed, candidates were disadvantaged. Short responses in the role plays, if appropriate, earned a mark of 3. If there were two parts to a task then Examiners were free to split the task, but when only one part of a task was completed by the candidate, the maximum mark which could be awarded was 1. If a candidate used a verb to complete a task and made an error of tense or conjugation, a mark of 2 and not 3 was appropriate. Apart from the task in Role Play A, which required the candidate to listen to two options and then choose one, candidates could not be awarded marks for material given by the Examiner which was then repeated by the candidate.

In the Conversation sections, the marking tended to be generous in a number of centres. In such centres, marks were often awarded in the higher bands when there was no evidence that candidates could respond in a spontaneous way to unexpected questions or that they could communicate consistently and accurately in past and future tenses. Candidates could not be awarded high marks if they could only respond to very closed straightforward questions which did not enable them to develop and justify their points. It was crucial for Examiners to differentiate the level of questioning according to the ability of the individual candidate.

Impression marks were usually awarded fairly in centres.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Please remember to check the number of the candidate's card before starting the test and to enter the number of the card on the working mark sheet. Once started, the whole of the test, including the links between the different parts of the tests, should be conducted in French.

Where a short but appropriate response to a task was given, a mark of 3 could be awarded. If verbs were used by candidates, they needed to be correctly conjugated for a mark of 3 to be appropriate. Overlong answers which did not address the set tasks did not gain the marks for the task. Examiners should always query unclear pronunciation if the meaning of the utterance is unclear.

On all the Role Play A situations, there was a task which required candidates to listen and choose from the two options offered by the Examiner. If one of these options was not chosen by the candidate the appropriate mark to award was 0. Likewise, there was one task which required candidates to respond to an unexpected question on all the Role Play B situations.

A Role Plays

Candidates generally found these role plays to be accessible and even the weakest candidates were usually able to score at least one mark on each task.

Visiting an aquarium

This role play was attempted quite well by candidates. On **Task 1**, nearly all were able to greet appropriately and say they wanted to buy tickets, but many mispronounced *tickets.* On **Task 2**, most were able to opt for one of the choices offered by the Examiner. On **Task 3**, most candidates were able to communicate a time successfully and, on **Task 4**, were able to give a correct number. Good attempts were also made on **Task 5** with many able to formulate a correct and appropriate question. Candidates who asked where the toilets were often mispronounced *toilettes* or gave a singular verb such as *Où est les toilettes ?*

In a pâtisserie

This role play was approached well. Candidates were generally successful on **Task 1** but often mispronounced *tartes aux fruits*. On **Task 2**, most were able to opt for one of the choices offered by the Examiner. On **Task 3**, most candidates were able to give a correct number. On **Task 4**, some seemed unfamiliar with the word *croissant.* Good attempts were made on **Task 5** but some candidates asked *Combien de prix ?* when asking the price.

In a café

Candidates generally made good attempts at this role play set in a very familiar context. On **Task 1**, nearly all were able to greet appropriately and say where they wanted to sit but some mispronounced *table* or *fenêtre.* On **Task 2**, some asked for a specific type of salad (which was accepted) rather than just a salad. On **Task 3**, most were able to opt for one of the choices offered by the Examiner. Most were able to say what kind of drink they wanted on **Task 4** but some did not understand *boisson* in the cue. Good attempts were also made on **Task 5** with many able to formulate a correct and appropriate question. Those who asked where the toilets were often mispronounced *toilettes* or gave a singular verb such as *Où est les toilettes ?*

B Role Plays

These role plays were deliberately more demanding than the A Role Plays. They required the ability to use different tenses, to explain or give an opinion. They differentiated well, but even the weakest candidates could usually score some marks on some of the tasks when the Examiner kept closely to the script.

Consulting a dentist

Candidates usually approached this situation well. On **Task 1**, most were able to explain that they had toothache, but many candidates mispronounced *dents.* **Task 2** required candidates to recognise the use of *depuis.* Here, short answers such as *hier* gained the mark but weaker candidates often needed prompting as they did not fully understand the cue. On **Task 3**, candidates needed to formulate a question about opening

times. Many could not offer a correct interrogative formulation of the verb *ouvrir.* Some were more successful as they chose to ask *Quelles sont les heures d'ouverture de la pharmacie ?* On **Task 4**, the majority could say that they were not happy, but some missed out this first task and went straight to sub-task **(ii)**. Others did not say that they were going out to a restaurant. In both cases only 1 mark could be awarded for partial completion of the set tasks. On **Task 5**, some said they were celebrating a birthday or another event, but this did not address the set task. Better attempts were made on the second part of the task with most able to say how long they were going to spend in France.

In a clothes shop

Candidates made a confident start to this role play but on **Task 1** some mistakenly used the verb *retourner* (seen in the rubric) instead of the verb *échanger* when trying to say they wished to exchange a jacket. **Task 2** was approached quite well with most able to say when they had bought the jacket and that they had kept the receipt. Here, many candidates pronounced *caisse* as *casse* which distorted the message and made the utterance ambiguous. **Task 3** was done much better and most were able to communicate what the problem with the jacket was. Most candidates said that it was too small or too large or that they did not like the colour. On **Task 4**, most candidates were able to express that they were returning home the next day, but some omitted to express their disappointment and consequently only scored 1 mark for partial completion of the task. On **Task 5**, candidates who kept to the given wording *être remboursé* were more successful than those who tried to ask if they could have a *remboursement.* Some candidates did not understand the verb *rembourser* and asked to be reimbursed for a *blouson* which lost the meaning of the set task. Others also omitted the notion of possibility which was also part of the task.

Organising a trip to the cinema

Candidates usually made a confident start on **Task 1** and most could explain that they were ringing to arrange a trip to the cinema, but some confused *sortie* and *sortir* in their opening statement. **Task 2** required them to say they could not go out tonight and most gave a convincing reason such as homework or revising. **Task 3** only required the naming of a category of films preferred by the candidate. Most gave their favourite type of films as *films d'action, comédies* or *films d'horreur.* Some needed careful prompting to elicit a film type. Mispronunciation was sometimes left unqueried by some Examiners. On **Task 4**, candidates needed to express that they were happy about eating at a fast-food restaurant and say why. Some missed out the first part of the task completely and consequently only scored 1 mark for partial completion of the task. Some gave their reason for liking that kind of food as *c'est délicieux* but some rendered this as *c'est delicious.* On **Task 5**, some gave a suggestion of a meeting time such as *Je vais rendez-vous à 7 heures*, rather than formulating a correct question such as *À quelle heure est-ce qu'on va se retrouver/se rencontrer ?* or *À quelle heure ?* which was appropriate in the context of the given cue.

Topic presentation & conversation

A full range of performance was heard on a variety of suitable topics and candidates had usually prepared their presentation material well. The best presentations were presented at a reasonable speed, were not rushed and were of the appropriate length of between 1–2 minutes. The total timing (including the presentation timing) should be 5 minutes. The best examining heard did not require candidates to repeat material already heard in the presentation.

There was frequently a drop in performance when candidates moved away from their prepared material and had to converse more freely on their chosen topic. Some candidates chose topics which were very challenging at this stage of study and which relied on statistical, over factual or background general knowledge. It was important that candidates chose a topic in which they were interested and about which they could express and justify their opinions. The most able candidates were usually capable of sustaining a consistent performance in the Topic conversation. Such performances were characterised by opinions, justifications and routine explanations and made use of a wide range of vocabulary, structures and accurate language.

Many candidates talked about a particular pastime or sport, health and wellbeing, life at school and online learning, the environment, their family, their ambitions, life in another country or a holiday. The best examining kept the questions clearly focused on the topic being presented and avoided asking questions which would elicit material already heard in the presentation. This part of the test was intended to give candidates the opportunity to go into depth on one topic rather than cover several topic areas. Centres also needed to ensure that they covered a good range of topics across the centre as a whole. The range of presentation topics in a few centres was rather narrow.

Poor pronunciation of key words and fast delivery of material sometimes made messages confusing. The best performances heard from candidates were ones in which an interesting lead was followed up by the Examiner which allowed the conversation to develop in a natural way. Some Examiners asked very few questions in this part of the test and sometimes did not ask questions to elicit past and future tenses. To score a mark of more than 6 for Language, candidates had to show that they could use not just the present but also past and future tenses.

It helped candidates when the end of this section of the test was indicated with a phrase such as *Maintenant, on passe à la conversation générale*. Centres are reminded that all such transitions and links between different sections of the test should always be in **French**.

General conversation

Timings were usually correct for this part of the test, but there were instances of General conversations which were too long or too short. Correct timings meant that candidates were given the opportunity to develop ideas and show they could use a range of linguistic features. Correct use of past and future tenses was only awarded within the stipulated timing.

The best examining featured an announcement as to which topic was going to be discussed and then, at the end of this topic, an indication as to which topic was going to be discussed next. Concentrating on two or three topics enabled the Examiner to go into depth on fewer topics rather than cover more topics superficially. With some candidates, it was sometimes necessary to cover more topics in less depth in order to keep the conversation going.

Questions which were very straightforward, and which required simple short responses did not give candidates access to the upper mark bands for both Communication and Language. The best examining asked logically related questions on a topic and featured some open-ended questions which invited candidates to develop or explain an answer. This meant that candidates could try to develop their answers in a natural way.

A very full range of performance was heard. Many candidates communicated competently on familiar topics such as family, holidays, life at home, school routine and online learning, technology, life in the town/country, future plans and ambitions, the environment, leisure activities, food and drink and healthy lifestyle. Work heard illustrating standards at the lower end of the marking bands for Language showed some manipulation of structures and some awareness of verbs and a limited vocabulary. Work illustrating the performance in the middle bands for Language showed the ability to produce some accurate examples in past and future tenses and usage of key vocabulary together with some key adverbs of time and common adjectives. The more able candidates could go beyond speaking in the first person and conjugate verbs with different subjects with greater control and consistency. At the top end of performance, candidates communicated ideas more spontaneously in longer utterances and made consistent accurate use of a range of structures, appropriate tenses, adverbs, conjunctions and a range of appropriate vocabulary.

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Key messages

- In **Question 1**, candidates must be sure that they have understood the context of the task.
- In **Question 2**, candidates must address all the individual tasks and not respond simply to the title.
- There is always a task in **Question 2** that requires a change of tense.
- Candidates should respond to each task in **Question 3** in the tense indicated.
- Candidates aiming for the highest grades should make sure that they check their work carefully for basic errors.
- In **Question 3**, to access the top bands for Other linguistic features, candidates had to demonstrate that they could use the complex structures which are detailed in the specification.
- The word count is a recommendation and not an absolute requirement.
- Candidates should always aim for a high standard of legibility and presentation.

General comments

The control of verb forms is not critical for success in **Question 2**. However, in **Question 3**, control of verbs is much more important and candidates must respond in the tense indicated in the task.

The ablest candidates were able to demonstrate, among other things, varied sentence patterns using subordinate clauses (e.g. *quand*, *si*, *parce que*, *car*, *qui*), object pronouns, linking words/conjunctions (e.g. *donc*, *cependant*), strong negatives (*ne…jamais*, *ne…plus*), comparative/superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs, prepositions (e.g. *depuis*, *pendant*, *pour*) and were familiar with some less common vocabulary, pertinent to the subject matter.

It is important for all candidates to show control of basic structures, including correct spelling, gender, adjectival agreement, possessive adjectives, expressions of quantity and common prepositions. Without this they will not access the top most bands

The word count is a recommendation and not an absolute requirement. If candidates write over the word limit, they should not indiscriminately remove parts of their response. The act of editing a piece on completion is quite difficult, especially if there is little time available. Some candidates crossed out details which were vital for the successful completion of the task.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1: La rentrée des classes

This was a very accessible topic: *crayon, livre, sac, stylo, trousse* were the words most commonly given and correctly spelled.

There were acceptable items, other than those illustrated, e.g. *gomme, ordinateur, règle, mallette, plume, plumier, souliers…* The word *chaussures* was often misspelt.

Question 2: Mes vacances

Communication

The question focused on how candidates generally spend their holidays: a present tense was indicated but many responded using either past or future tenses.

Task 1 invited candidates to state where they like to spend their holiday. Some mentioned particular countries or continents, e.g. *j'aime aller en Afrique du sud, j'aime partir aux États-Unis*, and others focused on the type of area, e.g. *j'aime aller en montagne, nous allons à la plage*. There were other types of response, e.g. *j'aime retourner dans mon village, je vais chez ma grand-mère.* All of these interpretations were rewarded.

Task 2 required candidates to write about how they spend a normal day. There was a good opportunity here to gain a number of marks. Typical details included *je joue au football, je fais du shopping, je visite des monuments historiques.* Some candidates mentioned how they help their grandparents: *je fais du jardinage, je prépare des repas*. Some candidates had forgotten that this question related to how they spent their holiday time and there were numerous references to school routine.

For **Task 3**, candidates had to say what they like to do in the evening, e.g. *je lis un livre, je regarde la télé, j'écoute de la musique.* Candidates did not always make it clear that this was an evening activity and, as a consequence, they were awarded marks for **Task 2**. This meant that there was no response to **Task 3**.

Task 4 provided another opportunity to gain multiple marks through stating their preference for holidays with family or friends, and reasons for their choice. Here is an example of a candidate who made the most of the opportunity: *j'aime les vacances en famille car je m'entends très bien avec mes parents mais je préfère les vacances avec mes amis parce que je m'amuse.*

Task 5 asked what candidates would like to do during the next holiday. For some, this meant their destination, e.g. *je voudrais aller au Canada, j'aimerais aller au bord de la mer.* For others, it was their activities, e.g. *je voudrais jouer au tennis, j'aimerais faire un pique-nique avec mes amis.*

Language

Candidates showed the ability to present their answers in sentence form. Most gained at least 3 marks, which reflected the predominant use of infinitives, past participles and unclear verb forms. Those who gained 5 marks accurately used a conditional tense in response to the final task.

Section 2

Question 3(a): Mon petit job dans un centre sportif

Just over 55% of candidates attempted this question.

Communication

Task 1 invited candidates to state how they got the job. For some, it was a matter of research, e.g. *j'ai fait des recherches sur Internet, je suis allé au supermarché et là j'ai vu une annonce, j'ai utilisé mon ordinateur pour trouver un petit job en ligne.* For others, they had help from someone, e.g. *j'avais un voisin qui travaillait dans un centre sportif et il m'a aidé, mon père m'a trouvé le job.*

For **Task 2**, candidates had to give a detail about what type of work they did. A past tense was expected in the answer, e.g. *je devais aider les enfants à jouer au volley, je devais répondre au téléphone.* Candidates who used the present tense gained only 1 mark. The misspelling of *travailler*, e.g. traviller, traivaller, travaier, was very common and resulted in lower marks.

Task 3 asked for the advantages for young people of having a job. Some candidates wrote *un petit job est très utile pour les jeunes, il les aide à devenir plus responsables, les jeunes peuvent gagner de l'argent.* Here, a specific detail, rather than a general one, gained only 1 mark, e.g. *j'ai gagné de l'argent.*

Task 4 asked for the disadvantages for young people of having a job. Candidates usually wrote: *on est trop fatigué pour faire les devoirs, on n'a pas de temps libre*.

Task 5 asked candidates to state where they would like to work. Some chose to mention a continent, a country or a general location, e.g. *je voudrais travailler en Allemagne, je voudrais travailler près de la mer,* but, generally, they mentioned a particular work place: *je voudrais travailler dans un restaurant, j'aimerais travailler dans un bureau d'avocats*. Candidates who gave only a specific job, e.g. *je voudrais travailler comme médecin,* only gained 1 mark.

Verbs

The topic required the use of familiar verbs: *aider, chercher, étudier, faire, gagner, pouvoir, travailler, trouver,* as well as *avoir, être* and *il y a.* Candidates who used the tenses appropriate to the different tasks gained a good mark in this category.

Other linguistic features

Success in the upper and middle bands depends on the candidates' ability to use extended sentences and complex language. There were few candidates who showed that they could use subordinate clauses, e.g. *un petit job est utile parce que les jeunes peuvent gagner de l'argent.*

Candidates who make errors of spelling and agreement will be awarded a mark which reflects this. The spelling and confusion in the meaning of *fatigué / fatigant* were common errors. There was also confusion between the plural noun *études* and the verb *étudier.*

Question 3(b): Mon nouvel internat

Just over 33% of candidates attempted this question.

Communication

For **Task 1**, candidates needed to give a reason why they had to change school. Common answers included *mon père a trouvé un nouveau job* or *je n'aimais pas l'école.*

Task 2 required a simple description of the new school. This was a straightforward task which most candidates managed, e.g. *ma nouvelle école est très grande, les bâtiments sont modernes*.

Task 3 invited candidates to state what differences they noted between the old and the new school. Many successfully used a comparative adjective/adverb, e.g. *j'ai remarqué que les étudiants aiment plus rire ici que dans mon ancienne école, mon ancienne école était plus petite que ma nouvelle école.* A past tense was expected here and an answer in the present tense only gained 1 mark.

In **Task 4**, candidates had to say what they do in the evening in the boarding house. Answers included *je fais mes devoirs, nous bavardons ensemble, j'envoie des textos à mes parents.*

For **Task 5**, an answer using the future tense was expected regarding whether they will like school and why: *je vais aimer ma nouvelle école parce que les élèves et les professeurs sont gentils, parce que je vais apprendre de nouvelles langues.* Not everyone was happy at the change of school: *je ne vais pas aimer ma nouvelle école parce que je ne peux pas avoir ma propre chambre, je ne vais pas aimer ma nouvelle école parce qu'il y a beaucoup de devoirs.*

Verbs

It was possible to respond using familiar verbs in the various tenses required by the tasks, e.g. *aimer, apprendre, jouer, lire, regarder, travailler.* However, a number of candidates only used simple descriptions which made repeated use of *c'est, c'était, il y a, il y avait.* In **Task 4**, some candidates wanted to express the idea of relaxing in the evening. The verbs needed to convey that idea are all reflexive, e.g. *le soir je me détends, je me relaxe, je me repose* and candidates often omitted the reflexive pronouns.

Other linguistic features

Some candidates wrote **mon** *nouvelle école*, which did not have an impact on the mark for Communication but this type of error affected the mark in this category. Much of the writing was simple and descriptive. Some candidates used the comparative adjective, e.g. *ma nouvelle école est plus grande que mon ancienne école.*

Question 3(c): Mon petit voisin

11% of candidates attempted this question. Not all the candidates had the consistent control of basic language and sentence structure necessary to maintain the narrative.

Communication

Task 1 asked for details about what the little boy was doing. Answers included *j'ai trouvé le petit en train de jouer avec son chat, le garçon était en train de manger son dîner*. Many candidates either did not understand what was required or omitted this task.

For **Task 2**, an explanation of how the boy reacted was required, e.g. *il est allé se cacher dans sa chambre, il a pleuré, il a ri quand il m'a vue.*

Task 3 invited candidates to state how they entertained the boy. Sometimes, this involved doing something together, e.g. *nous avons regardé la télévision, on a joué dans le jardin* or distracting him, usually with food and drink, e.g *je lui ai préparé un repas*.

A description of a fun or difficult moment was required for **Task 4**. Fun activities were often similar to those used for **Task 3**, e.g. *nous avons joué dans le jardin, nous avons joué aux cartes.* Descriptions of a difficult moment included *il a pleuré, il a refusé de manger, il ne voulait pas se coucher.*

Task 5 asked candidates to give their opinion of the evening. Typical responses were *la soirée était difficile, c'était fatigant, je me suis amusée, c'était une soirée agréable.*

Verbs

The challenge of this question was to maintain the storyline using appropriate past tenses. It was possible to produce an engaging account using familiar verbs. For candidates able to do this, the question was a realistic option, as they were free to use the verbs that they know.

Other linguistic features

Few candidates regularly produced complex sentence patterns. Those who did showed control of the grammar patterns mentioned in the specification, e.g. *il m'a dit qu'il avait plein d'amis à l'école, pendant qu'il faisait ses devoirs, je lui ai préparé un petit repas, j'ai dû l'occuper un peu en lui apprenant comment faire des crêpes.*