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Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2018

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary in French (WFR02) Paper 1
Understanding and Written Response

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January 2018

Publications Code WFR02_01_1801_ER

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Introduction

WFR02/01 is a unit from the brand new IAL French specification which does not supersede a previous one.

Assessment across Unit WFR02/01 relates to following General Topic Areas:

General Topic Area	Sub topics
Youth matters	Family relationships and friendships Peer pressure and role models Music and fashion Technology and communication
Lifestyle, health and fitness	Food and diet Sport and exercise Health issues Urban and rural life
Travel and environment	Tourism, travel and transport Natural disasters and weather Climate change and its impact Energy, pollution and recycling
Education and employment	Education systems and types of schooling Pupil/student life Volunteering and internships Jobs and unemployment

Assessment

The assessment for this unit has three sections.

Section A: Listening (20 marks)

Students will be required to listen to a range of authentic recorded target language material and to retrieve and convey information given in the recording by responding to a range of target language questions.

Students will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and short answers in the target language.

Section B: Reading and Grammar (30 marks)

Students will be required to read authentic target language printed materials and to retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of test types in the target language. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and target language answers.

Questions are linked to a range of reading comprehension exercises. Students will also need to understand and manipulate grammatical structures in the target language by selecting the most appropriate word form to fit a gap and by manipulating sentences that appear in a previous exercise from the section and reforming the sentence around a given word.

Section C: Essay (40 marks)

Students will write a 240-280 word essay in the target language, in response to a short target language stimulus and four related bullet points. The assessment rewards learners for communicating relevant information effectively as well as for the quality of the language produced.

Comments relating to individual questions from the January 2018 series:

Section A: Listening

Question 1. Multiple Choice Students were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response, and three distractors). Question 1 was taken from the sub topic of pupil/student life. Examples of student performance:

Q1(a) Most students were able to establish the link between *gagné* in the recording and *prix* in the response options, successfully ruling out the three distractors.

Q1(d) A significant majority of students made the link between *négatif* and *refusé*. The three incorrect responses were ruled out by close reference to the recording. As this recording is relatively brief, distractors may even be conveyed within a single word, such as *vite* in one instance.

Question 2. Multiple Choice: Students were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 2 was taken from the sub topic of food and diet. Examples of student performance:

Q2(b) Despite all four potential responses being very plausible, the vast majority of students succeeded in identifying young people's motivation for eating at fast-food outlets. This was a clear indication that students are being taught to base responses uniquely upon the evidence within the recording, rather than on personal observations.

Q2(c) Whereas the majority of students successfully identified the connection between *beau* and *presentation*; many were inclined to opt for distractors, which may have seemed more plausible in the context of young people.

Q3. Summary completion: Students were required to complete a summary, choosing from a list of eight words. There was a mixture of word types. Question 3 was taken from the sub topic of family relationships and friendships. Examples of student performance:

Q3(b) A significant majority of students were successful in identifying *difficile* as the correct response, even though it was necessary to process an extended section of the recording. This indicates that students are listening for themes, rather than just individual words and phrases.

Q3(d) In contrast to item 3(b), this item required slightly less reflection, but students did need to understand both *dérangeaient* and *embêtaient*. Although a small majority of students were successful in this, there is a need for additional work on synonyms, in some cases.

Across Q3(a) to Q3(d), incorrect albeit grammatically accurate responses were offered by some candidates. There were however, other instances where an adjective was offered where a verb was required and vice versa.

Q4. Short Answer Questions: This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 4 was taken from the sub topic of tourism, travel and transport. In a number of instances across Q4, students made grammatical errors which did not impede communication. These responses are only marked on the basis of communication, rather than accuracy of language.

Examples of student performance:

In the case of Q4(a), the verb *changer* was conveyed using various tenses. The mark was nevertheless awarded, provided that it was clear why Adele has a negative attitude towards tourism. For example:
Le tourisme changera la vie traditionnelle.

In Q4(b), students were required to offer two responses. A small number of students seem to have overlooked this requirement. In most cases, students responded well to both elements, particularly the second. In the case of the first element, there was some misinterpretation of *attire/attireront/attiré/attirant*. *Les touristes n'attireront plus la région* was incorrect.

Q4(c) required the idea of *seulement/uniquement* within the first element. For example: *De s'intéresser seulement au bénéfice*.

Q4(e) Most candidates clearly conveyed the principle of access to schools for children. In those cases where a mark was not awarded, it was often because there was no reference to school or even education. For example, *Ça aide les enfants* was rather too vague.

4(f) Many students wrote a correct response, whilst using their own words. In some instances, such attempts did lead to ambiguous responses, usually relating to the choice of verb. For example:
Les touristes rentrent.

Section B: Reading and Grammar

Q5. Multiple Choice Questions: Students were provided with four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response and three distractors). Question 5 was taken from the sub topic of sport and exercise. Examples of student performance:

Q5(a) A significant majority of students succeeded in understanding *encore moins que*, in order to discriminate between the correct response and one of the three distractors.

Q5(b) The response being targeted was *sensible* which for some students represented the use of a *faux ami*. One can conclude that excellent work has taken place in centres on the subject of *faux amis*.

Q5(e) Students were required to establish a link between *courant* and *populaire*, whilst circumventing three other plausible distractors. Two thirds of students were able to navigate this item successfully, indicating a clear awareness of synonyms.

Q6. Short Answer Questions This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 6 was taken from the sub topic of technology and communication. Examples of student performance:

As per the previous examination series, students were mindful to avoid the use of untargeted lifts from the associated text. Students are asked to express responses in their own words, as much as possible. Equally, most students addressed the questions very specifically. For example, Q6(d) required students to indicate what pupils must avoid doing. There were some excellent responses, where students approached both elements of the question from an appropriate angle, using their own words. It must be remembered that comprehension, rather than grammatical accuracy, is being assessed. For example, two marks were awarded for the following:
Trop utiliser Internet. Prendre l'idée d'une autre personne.
For the first element, the idea of excessive use of the Internet was needed, so the following was not credited: *Trop utiliser les nouvelles technologies.*

Q7. Short Answer Questions: This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 7 was taken from the sub topic of volunteering and internships. Examples of student performance:

Q7 attracted some use of untargeted lifts and some responses contained large sections of the associated text. As per Q6, students are asked to

express their response in their own words. The use of ambitious structures occasionally led to ambiguous responses. For example, in Q7(d), students who offered a single word response such as *positive* tended to be successful. Similarly, in Q7(f), some students simply offered: *tous/tout le monde*. These responses were accepted, as this information was inferred within the text. Longer answers often contained a degree of irrelevant information.

Q8. Sentence Transformations: Students were required to write out the correct form of each targeted word. Question 8 was taken from the sub topic of volunteering and internships. Examples of student performance:

Q8(a) Most students were successful in their use of the infinitive form of *passer*.

Q8(b) Many students seemed unsure of the gender of the noun *culture*, so were not typically able to apply the correct adjectival agreement needed to arrive at the response: *différentes*.

Q8(c) Students needed to be able to identify the subject of the verb within this sentence, in order to offer the correct conjugation: *organise*.

Q8(d) Although the auxiliary verb was already presented on the question paper, many students seemed unfamiliar with the past participle: *permis*.

Q8(e) Where students recognised that *chantiers* was a masculine noun, they attempted the masculine plural agreement of the adjective: *internationaux*. Many students found this quite difficult, leading to a number of almost correct responses.

Q8(f) Some students were mindful to be very thorough in choosing the correct tense, whilst equally taking account of gender: *suis rentrée*.

Q8(g) Students were required to use the present participle, triggered by the use of *en* in the text: *conseillant*.

Q8(h) The masculine plural form *tous* was required.

Q8(i) The presence of the pronoun *les* may have led certain students to offer the third person plural form of the verb, whereas the third person singular *concerne* was required.

Q8(j) Many students noted the requirement to offer the masculine singular version of *important*, following the use of *quelque chose de très*.

Section C Writing

Q9 Essay This section requires students to write an essay. The recommended length is 240–280 words, the essay being based on a short printed stimulus. Question 9 was taken from the sub topic of natural disasters.

Comments relating to the four bullet points:

Bullet point 1 – This was well addressed by most students, although some responses lacked exemplification concerning climate.

Bullet point 2 – The majority of responses conveyed the potentially positive effects of climate upon people and some responses balanced this against potentially negative effects.

Bullet point 3 – Some of the clearest responses made specific examples to how populations are directly affected by natural disasters. This sometimes included reference to people losing their homes as a result of storms, flooding or earthquakes.

Bullet point 4 – Most responses addressed the bullet point. Some students did however offer a rather general response relating to environmental issues.

Q9 What students did well:

- Most essays addressed all four bullet points
- Responses were typically of between 240 and 280 words
- Most students attempted to develop bullet points
- Many essays offered a wide range of complex structures and lexis
- Exemplification of bullet points, based upon personal experience
- Many students restricted the response to just relevant material

Q9 How some students could improve upon performance:

- Address all four bullet points
- Be prepared to write an essay on any of the prescribed topics
- Avoid digression from the required content
- Avoid the use of over-ambitious structures
- Remember that an essay of 240 words can attract full marks

General summary

Based on their performance on this paper, students should:

- Ensure that handwriting is always clearly legible
- Avoid the use of untargeted lifts from texts
- Base all comprehension responses upon evidence from the text/recording
- Use their own words, as much as possible
- Be aware of grammatical structures associated with this specification
- Address all elements of each question, especially Q9

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