



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

**Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Subsidiary
In French (WFR01) Unit 1: Spoken Expression and
Response**

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Introduction

The student is rewarded for the ability to demonstrate understanding of a target language stimulus based on one of the General Topic Areas (GTA) of the Pearson IAL French specification, and to discuss that same General Topic Area. Students need to demonstrate that they can engage in a discussion in French that relates to a chosen GTA and allied subtopics. Students will be expected to give relevant and appropriate information, convey opinions, interact and respond to a range of questions. Further information about the preparation of students, the conduct and the administration of this test can be found in the "Administrative Support Guide – Conducting Oral Examinations" which is found under the "Forms and Administration" tab of the IAL French page on the Pearson website, and the "Oral Training Guide" found under the "Teaching and Learning" tab of the same page.

Up to 40 marks are awarded positively as follows for this test:

- 10 marks for Quality of language (5 marks for Accuracy of language and 5 marks for Range of lexis)
- 16 marks for Spontaneity and development
- 4 marks for Understanding of the prescribed stimulus card
- 10 marks for Knowledge and understanding of the General Topic Area

The criteria for awarding these marks can be found in section 1.4 (Assessment Criteria) of the Pearson IAL French specification.

Before the test, the student prepares **two** of the four following General Topic Areas (GTAs):

- Youth matters
- Lifestyle, health and fitness
- Environment and travel
- Education and employment

The student is free to choose **any two** of these four areas, depending on his or her preference and/or areas of interest. The student informs the teacher/examiner of the two GTAs he or she has chosen in advance of the test via a completed OR1 Oral Topic Form, no more than three weeks in advance of the assessment.

On the day of the test, the student will be tested on only **one** of these GTAs. The GTA on which the student is tested is determined according to the allocation grid in the teacher/examiner WFR01 booklet.

Unit 1 tests, in the form of a short stimulus text in the target language, are set on each of the four topic areas. Two different stimulus texts are set on each of the four GTAs. Two sets of questions are provided for each text (A and B). In

total, therefore, there are 16 stimulus cards, i.e. 1A, 1B, 2A and 2B for each of the four GTAs.

15 minutes before the test the student is given, according to the random allocation specified in the teacher/examiner WFR01 examination booklet, one of the stimulus cards for the GTA on which he or she will be tested.

Pearson issues the teacher/examiner booklets and the stimulus cards to centres before the examining session. These materials are confidential until the end of the examining session for this unit. The dates for the examining session are published in the Pearson examination timetable.

The student has 15 minutes supervised preparation time to study the stimulus text on the WFR01 card before the exam. He or she may not use a dictionary or any other resources during this time, but may make notes (up to one side of A4 paper). The student must not write on the stimulus card. The student takes both the stimulus card and any notes into the examination, and may refer to both during Section A of the test.

The WFR01 test comprises two sections:

Section A

The teacher/examiner begins the test by asking the four questions on the stimulus card about the text prepared by the student. These questions are printed only in the teacher/examiner WFR01 examination booklet; the student is not aware of the questions in advance of the test. The first two of these four questions ask the student to demonstrate factual understanding of the stimulus text and the second two ask the student to express opinions about or reactions to the subject matter of the stimulus text.

Students should be aware that **three** pieces of information are expected in response to question 1 for each card. Therefore, during the preparation time, students must be sure to become very familiar with the text and all its content so that they can identify three pieces of information in response to the teacher/examiner's first question.

Please note that, in the interests of comparability across different languages and for the purposes of assessment, the teacher/examiner **may not rephrase** these four questions (apart from changing the "vous" form of address to "tu"), nor add to or expand them. **If the teacher/examiner rephrases a question, then the student's response to that question will be ignored when assessing his or her performance.** It is therefore essential that the teacher/examiner **does not rephrase** any of the four set questions. The question may be repeated if necessary, but if repetition of a question is needed, then this may be

reflected in the mark awarded for "Spontaneity and development". Please see below (Advice to Teacher/Examiners) for further clarification.

Section B

The teacher/examiner develops a discussion about the General Topic Area chosen by the student. The topic of the stimulus card may be used as a starting point for this discussion, but the teacher/examiner moves away from this topic to more general discussion of the topic area and to discussion of at least one other subtopic of this General Topic Area.

Timing of WFR01

The WFR01 test should last between 8 and 10 minutes in total (Sections A and B combined). This time should be divided equally between Sections A and B. However, if the student completes the answers to the questions in Section A in less than four minutes, the teacher/examiner should ensure that the discussion in Section B is extended, in order that the total test time is not less than eight minutes.

Performance summer 2018

The most popular GTAs were "Youth matters" and "Lifestyle, health and fitness". A significant number of students chose "Education and employment". Relatively few chose "Environment and travel". The student, of course, has a free choice of the two GTAs he or she wishes to discuss in the test. The GTA to be tested and the stimulus card to be given to the student is determined according to the random allocation grid in the teacher/examiner booklet for WFR01.

All eight stimulus cards made similar demands of the students. Nearly all students were able to attempt the first two Section A questions, the ones based purely on the text, whereas the level of response to the second two Section A questions proved to be good discriminator between performances.

Students should know that it is perfectly acceptable to use vocabulary and language from the text in answer to questions 1 and 2. However, the text and the questions are devised in such a way that it is not possible to "lift" correct answers directly from the text; some manipulation of the language or paraphrasing will be necessary. Targeted lifts from the text are permissible, see below for clarification of what is meant by this.

Some students answered a set question so fully as to cover another. Where this happens, the teacher/examiner should still ask all the questions, in the interests of comparability between students, and most did so. Please see below (Advice to Teacher/Examiners) for further clarification.

Many students had clearly prepared well for this test. They were able to offer a wealth of ideas and opinions on their chosen topic area, to use a varied range of lexis appropriate to the chosen GTA and to demonstrate command of a wide range of linguistic structures.

Many students had clearly thought about their chosen topic areas and were well-prepared, offering statistics and facts to support their ideas. In order to access the highest marks for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)", students must show "excellent knowledge and understanding of the general topic area". In order to do this, students need to offer detailed knowledge **including facts and examples** that demonstrate research into the chosen GTA. A number, however, had clearly not thought about their chosen topics and although the performance of students on the "Lifestyle, health and fitness" and "Environment and travel" topic areas was usually satisfactory, they often showed insufficient evidence of research into the "Youth Matters" and, to a certain extent, the "Education and employment" topic areas.

Some teacher/examiners asked supplementary questions in Section A. This is not allowed. Please see below (Advice to Teacher/Examiners) for further clarification. In some instances, in Section B of the test the teacher/examiner failed to move away from the topic of the stimulus card to discuss other subtopics of the GTA chosen by the student. In these cases, the marks awarded to the student may be restricted. On occasion, the teacher/examiner asked questions in Section B which did not relate to the GTA; this can adversely affect the mark awarded for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)".

The test should last 8-10 minutes. A 30 second tolerance is allowed where a test is shorter than the minimum required eight minutes, so that if the test is shorter than 7 minutes 30 seconds, the student is unable to access the entire range of marks available for the test. The teacher/examiner should begin timing the examination from the time when he or she asks the first of the prescribed questions on the stimulus. Where a test exceeds 10 minutes and the student is speaking as 10 minutes elapses, the examiner listens to the end of the student's response, or to the next sense break in what he or she is saying, and then stops marking. If the teacher/examiner is speaking as the 10 minutes elapses, the examiner stops listening at that point.

This year many centres uploaded scanned PDF versions of the OR1 for to the Pearson secure site. From January 2019 and from then on, a **digital version** of the completed Unit 1 Oral Form (OR1) for each student should be uploaded to the Pearson secure site along with the recording. Care should be taken to ensure that the work of each student has been clearly recorded and that the OR1 forms are completed correctly.

Comments on students' performance in Section A

Youth matters

Stimulus cards: For all cards (1A, 1B, 2A, 2B) students coped well with the first two questions, showing a good understanding of the text on the card. For card 1B, some students, in response to question 4, did not pick up on the need to answer the question "à part les parents et les amis..." and repeated ideas already used in the response to question 3. With this exception, most students were able to offer considered responses to questions 3 and 4 on all cards; they had clearly thought in advance about issues relating to relationships with friends and family and technology, and gave a range of ideas and information in their responses. Their range of vocabulary when talking about this topic was generally good.

GTA: Students cope well with questions on the GTA, with technology being an area where many students have good knowledge. Students were also able to respond to questions related to music and relationships, but with a varying amount of detail. Students should be aware that in order to access the higher marks for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)" they need to offer facts and figures and/or other evidence of research into the chosen GTA.

Lifestyle, health and fitness

Stimulus cards: Students generally coped well with understanding both cards 1 and 2. Some weaker students struggled with the numbers "60 à 70 %" in Cards 1A and 1B. This was not an essential element of the answer (it was possible for students to paraphrase, and many did) but students at this level should expect to encounter numbers and percentages on stimulus cards. Students were generally able to offer full answers to questions 3 and 4 on all cards.

GTA: Students coped well with this GTA overall. They had many ideas and students were generally able to show that they had researched their topic in depth, backing their ideas with fact and statistics. As for all GTAs, students should be aware that, in order to access the higher marks for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)", they need to offer facts and figures and/or other evidence of research into the chosen GTA.

Environment and travel

Stimulus cards: Students seemed to cope well with both cards for this GTA and, although the content of Card 1A/1B seemed slightly more challenging for some students, the vast majority understood all the questions well. Particularly encouraging were the answers to questions which are slightly more abstract in nature, such as question 4 on Card 2A; students were generally able to give thoughtful and considered answers to this question, using examples from their own experience and their study of the GTA.

GTA: Though this was not a very popular topic, many students who had prepared this topic generally did well. They were able to talk about environmental issues at length and show a wealth of knowledge backed with concrete fact and statistics, in addition to using an appropriate range of topic-specific vocabulary.

Education and employment

Stimulus cards: Students coped well with both cards and demonstrated good understanding of the texts. In response to card 1A, many students gave comprehensive answers in response to the question about the importance of studying a foreign language. In response to Cards 2A and 2B, most students were able to formulate convincing arguments, often using examples from their own experience or their wider study of the topic, when answering questions 3 and 4 on both cards.

GTA: Many students choosing this GTA had an excellent knowledge of educational systems (in different Francophone countries) and were able to discuss ideas on education and employment at some length. Some students showed less knowledge of the GTA, just talking about their own experience on a more general level.

Comments on students' performance in Section B

The majority of students were able to discuss a wide range of areas relating to the GTA about which they had chosen to speak. As previously mentioned, the Section B discussion should move away from the topic of the stimulus card to cover other subtopics of the same GTA.

In order for the student to be able to access the full range of marks available, it is essential that Section B be a discussion, not merely a string of questions and answers. The teacher/examiner should pick up on what they student says, using this to inform further questions, and encourage the student to develop the points made where this is possible.

It is essential that teacher/examiners give students the opportunity to deal with questions suitable for AS level, i.e. to show that they have moved on from GCSE level. Where all or some of the Section B discussion centres around GCSE level questions and there is insufficient evidence of the level of challenge expected at AS level, the student may not be able to access the full range of marks for "Spontaneity and development".

On occasion the teacher/examiner asked questions which could not be seen to fit in any of the subtopics of the student's GTA. An example might be a question

about which subjects the student is studying at school, where the student's chosen GTA is "Lifestyle, health and fitness". On such occasions, the student's ability to access the full range of marks for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)" may be restricted. A list of the subtopics relating to each of the four GTAs is to be found on page 11 of the Pearson IAL French specification and is repeated below in the "Advice to Teacher/Examiners" section for reference.

In Section B, where the discussion widens out to other related topics in the same General Topic Areas, students usually wanted to offer ideas and opinions and there were some informative, lively discussions. However, students do need to be reminded of the advantage of developing their ideas and exemplifying their points. In particular, it was noticeable that students who showed evidence of wider reading or research by referring to an article they may have read or a video that they may have seen in a particular publication or on a particular website (e.g. "Selon un article que j'ai lu récemment dans *Le Monde*,") were in the minority. To achieve high marks in the "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)" section of the mark scheme, students need to demonstrate that their studies have led them to research and read about topics, so that they can go beyond personal, anecdotal information and/or information gleaned through general knowledge.

In addition, it was noticeable that many students were liable to deliver stereotypical or narrow views on topics such as the older generation and new technology, drugs and alcohol, *la pression du groupe* etc.; teachers would be well-advised to encourage students to think more laterally and develop their own ideas rather than merely offering up those presented to them in class. There were some centres that clearly had done so and the performance of these students was refreshing.

Language

Many students spoke well with some fluency, using a good range of lexis and structures. On occasion a student's performance was hindered by poor pronunciation, which made it difficult to understand the message he or she was trying to deliver; teachers in some centres would be advised to focus on the need for pronunciation that allows the student to communicate successfully.

In some centres, the use of more complex structures like the subjunctive, *en* + present participle, *si* clauses etc. was on show whereas, in others, the students stuck too closely to repetitive simple language which did not therefore allow them to reach the higher bands in the mark grids for "Quality of language (Range of lexis)".

In addition, there were examples of basic errors that students should not be making at AS level such as incorrect subject-verb accord in the present tense; this

was particularly evident in irregular verbs like *vouloir*, *dire* and *faire*. Many weaker students struggled with emphatic pronouns (e.g. *avec ils* in place of *avec eux*), direct and indirect object pronouns, adjectival agreements, articles (e.g. *de les parents* in place of *des parents*) and inappropriate use of tenses.

On the positive side, there were excellent performances from students in some centres which were a pleasure to hear; these offered accurate and varied language which was used very successfully.

Advice to Teacher/Examiners on the conduct of the WFR01 examination

It is essential that the teacher/examiner is aware of the requirements of WFR01, as incorrectly conducted tests can adversely affect the student's mark. The following advice is offered in the light of this and previous examination series.

Timing

The WFR01 test should last 8-10 minutes in total. If Section A takes less than 4 minutes, then Section B should be extended so that the total test time is not less than 8 minutes. There is no need to extend Section A to last 4 minutes; once the student has answered the four set questions the teacher/examiner should begin Section B. It is in the student's interest to allow the full 10 minutes of test time, in order that he or she might demonstrate as wide a range as possible of ideas and opinion on the GTA being tested. If a test is too short, the student is not able to access the full range of marks available for the test. If it is too long, the examiner stops marking as soon as is appropriate after 10 minutes, i.e. at the end of the next sense-break in what the student is saying, or at the end of the student's answer, whichever comes first. If the teacher/examiner is speaking at the 10 minute point, the examiner stops marking immediately.

The timing of the test begins as the teacher/examiner begins to ask the first of the four questions set on the stimulus card.

Conduct of Section A

In the interests of comparability between tests, and so that the student is not disadvantaged, the four questions set on the stimulus must be asked **exactly** as they are written in the teacher/examiner WFR01 examination booklet. The only exception to this is that the formal form of address may be changed to the more familiar where that is appropriate, that is "vous" may be changed to "tu", and "à votre avis" to "à ton avis", etc. In the summer 2017 series, this was not strictly

enforced, but teacher/examiners should note that for the January 2018 series and subsequently, it is a requirement that the questions must not be rephrased (except for allowing change between "vous" and "tu" as mentioned above) in any way.

All four questions must be asked, even if a student has already partially answered a subsequent question in a previous response. Again, this is in the interests of comparability.

Where a teacher/examiner inadvertently adds an interjection to the beginning of a question or at the end of a student's answer, and this addition adds nothing to the question, and does not change the body of the question in any way, then this is ignored when assessing the student's work. An example might be where the teacher/examiner says "alors" at the end of an answer before asking the next question, or "question numéro un / numéro deux" etc. before the questions.

It is very important that teacher/examiners are aware that, as of the January 2018 session, if the teacher/examiner changes or rephrases the question in any way, then the student's response to that question is ignored when assessing his or her work. It is essential, therefore, that the teacher/examiner asks the questions **exactly** as they are written in the teacher/examiner WFR01 examination booklet.

Additional questions must not be asked in Section A.

Section A questions can be repeated, but where the teacher/examiner does repeat a question in the interests of keeping the conversation going, this is taken into account when assessing the student's mark for "Spontaneity and development". Students should be taught an appropriate way to ask, in French, for the question to be repeated.

As the teacher/examiner may not rephrase or expand the four questions set by Pearson, during preparation for this part of the test students should be coached to give full and developed answers to the set questions, giving reasons and explanations for their opinion.

Students and teachers should be aware that three pieces of information are expected in response to question 1 on each card (there will be at least three pieces of relevant information given in the text).

As mentioned previously, students may use vocabulary and language from the text in answer to questions 1 and 2. However, the text and the questions are devised in such a way that it is not possible to "lift" correct answers directly from the text; some manipulation of the language or paraphrasing will be necessary.

Targeted lifts from the text are permissible; this is where a student uses material from the text in his or her answer, but demonstrates that he or she has understood the text by selecting only the material needed to answer the question. To give an example from this year's exam:

Lifestyle, health and fitness Card 2A / 2B

Question 2: "Selon le texte, pourquoi est-ce qu'on a décidé de faire construire un terrain de football"

The text reads :

"Dans le village, il y a un endroit attiré à la pratique du football mais j'ai constaté que celui-ci n'était pas adapté. J'ai donc décidé de faire construire un nouveau terrain de foot ... "

A student who replies "Il y a un endroit attiré à la pratique du football mais j'ai constaté que celui-ci n'était pas adapté. J'ai donc décidé de faire construire un nouveau terrain de foot" cannot be considered to have fully understood the question.

However, a student who replies "Il y a un endroit attiré à la pratique du football qui n'était pas adapté. On a donc décidé de faire construire un nouveau terrain de foot" would gain credit for having understood the question and the text and being able to extract from it the information necessary to formulate a correct and appropriate response to the question. This is a targeted lift.

Conduct of Section B

The topic of the stimulus card may be used as an opening for the Section B discussion, but the teacher/examiner must move on to discussion which covers at least one more subtopic of the student's chosen GTA. For example, in this year's tests, the topic of the first stimulus card for Youth matters, "La pression des pairs – le rôle des parents", is "Peer pressure and role models". Therefore, the teacher/examiner must make sure that the Section B discussion predominantly deals with one or more of the other subtopics of this GTA, i.e. "Family relationships and friendships", "Music and Fashion" and/or "Technology and communication". If this is not the case, then the student cannot access the full range of marks available for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)".

A definitive list of subtopics linked to each of the General Topic Areas follows:

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

Environment and travel

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

It is in the interests of the student that the teacher/examiner asks questions which allow him or her to demonstrate the full extent of his/her knowledge of the structures and lexis expected at AS level. Pedestrian and GCSE-type questions often do not encourage the student to use AS level language and structures. The teacher/examiner should encourage the student to expand on answers, to provide detail and clarification.

In assessing the mark for “Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)”, the student is awarded marks for the range of ideas and opinions they offer about their chosen GTA. In practice, concrete examples and factual knowledge about the topics being discussed often add to the student’s ability to access the full range of marks available and students should be encouraged to include these. Students have a free choice of the two GTAs they choose to prepare for the exam, but should be advised to choose topic areas which they have prepared thoroughly and which they are ready to discuss in detail.

Recording quality

The quality of the recordings submitted this year was generally very good. It is the centre’s responsibility to submit the recordings in one of the formats accepted by Pearson; details of the permitted formats can be found in the “Administrative Support Guide – Conducting Oral Examinations” which is found under the “Forms and Administration” tab of the IAL French page on the Pearson

website. It is also the responsibility of the centres to ensure that the recording quality is sufficiently loud and of decent quality.

Administration

Many centres uploaded scanned PDF versions of the candidate OR1 form this series. From January 2019 and going forward, centres should upload a digital version of the OR1 form, with the centre and candidate details, and details of the stimulus card used for the test completed. One OR1 form should be provided for each student. Details of how to submit material to Pearson can be found in the "Administrative Support Guide – Conducting Oral Examinations" which is found under the "Forms and Administration" tab of the IAL French page on the Pearson website. The OR1 form is found in the same place. Under the "Teaching and Learning" tab of the same page is the "Oral Training Guide" which gives further information about preparing students for and conducting the test, together with a commentary on a sample WFR01 test.

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with its registered office at 80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL, United Kingdom

