



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In French (WFR03) Paper 01
Understanding and Spoken Response

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for all papers can be found on the website at:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

Summer 2019

Publications Code WFR03_01_1906_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2019

In this unit, candidates are tested on their ability to use the spoken word.

The first part of the test (5 minutes) takes the form of a debate. Candidates are required to take a clear stance on an issue of their choice which they present for one minute, and then defend, when challenged by the teacher/examiner. Section A should last five minutes only. Candidates have a free choice of subject which does not need to relate to the general topic areas studied and they are required to conduct their own research and need to refer to written sources (and may also refer to other suitable authentic sources) during the debate. They are expected to use the language of debate and argument to discuss the issue and to defend their point of view.

Once again, this year, it was pleasing to see that the tests in many Centres produced a lively debate with the teacher/examiner robustly challenging the candidate's views. Many candidates were well prepared in the use of the language of argument and debate; they were able to disagree politely and firmly and to then reject the teacher/examiner's challenge. In this test, spontaneity plays an important role and Centres need to guide students away from reliance on pre-rehearsed material, the use of which inevitably means that the discussion between the teacher/examiner and the candidate lacks spontaneity. Many Centres are now producing genuinely spontaneous exchanges but there are still some where the candidates are trying to use pre-learnt material which the teacher/examiner does not attempt to challenge or interrupt. This was true in both sections of the test.

It was pleasing to see more variety this year in the choice of topics for Section A (debate); the most popular this year were for or against the legalisation of cannabis and for or against bull-fighting as well as the more predictable topics of abortion and euthanasia. However, it was good to see that some Centres had encouraged their candidates to offer something different, such as surrogacy, the right of gay couples to adopt, vegetarianism and animal testing. The chosen topic needs to be something that can be debated, with two opposing viewpoints, and it is the role of the teacher/examiner to challenge the candidate's points of view so that the candidate has the opportunity to use language that is relevant for use in a debating situation. It is important that the debate is spontaneous in order for the candidate to be able to access the top mark bands; candidates should be looking to produce a genuine exchange which shows an individual response. A minority of candidates chose to debate more unusual topics, such as the reintroduction of the wolf in Switzerland and a woman's right to breast-feed in public. However, care should be taken to avoid topics that lead only to a discussion rather than a debate (such as Formula 1 racing); guidance should be offered by the Centre.

In addition, in Section A, candidates are required to provide evidenced research to support their arguments in order to reach the higher bands of the *Reading and research* grid. Candidates should mention specific written target-language sources, as well as giving facts and figures, and they may also refer to other authentic

sources they have used, such as online audio-visual material. Unfortunately, at present, this is only being done in a minority of centres.

In this section, the best candidates showed excellent critical analysis and spontaneous responses to examiner questions, and were able to deliver convincing support for their stances.

In the second part of the test (6-8 minutes), the areas chosen for discussion should be unpredictable elements of the test. It is up to the teacher/examiner to choose at least two further topics for discussion; these should be unknown to the candidate and should provide the opportunity for two very different areas of discussion. It is not appropriate to offer the candidate the opportunity of selecting the topic to be discussed.

Section B requires the introduction of *at least two further issues for discussion*; an attempt to cover too many topics will inevitably lead to a superficial discussion which does not give the candidate enough opportunity to develop his/her ideas and which should therefore be avoided. Section B differs from the first section in that it requires a discussion, not a debate. Both the teacher/examiner and the candidate should address the points made by the other in order to create a genuine discourse. The teacher/examiner should respond to the candidate's views, thus causing the test to contain an element of unpredictability; there should also be an appropriate level of challenge, both conceptually and linguistically, to allow the candidate to reach his/her potential.

In this part of the test, most teacher/examiners chose to focus on topics from the iA2 general topic areas, all of which focus on the French-speaking world; unfortunately, the large majority of candidates who discussed these topics failed to make any mention of France or a French-speaking country and this affected their marks for critical analysis. Even if the teacher/examiner puts the question in the context of an issue in a French-speaking country, it is up to the candidate to follow this up; a mention by the teacher is not enough for the candidate to be credited with having placed the issue into context.

In the majority of Centres, candidates still seem unaware of this requirement and, as a result, the discussions remained too generalised or evidence was offered from the candidate's home country or elsewhere in the world, such as the USA.

In this Unit, candidates are being assessed on their ability to respond to the spoken language and they should have the opportunity to show the breadth and depth both of their knowledge but also of their linguistic competence. This year, many candidates used the language well, offering a range of lexis and complex structures, and showed a good level of accuracy. Better candidates used a range of complex structures such as object and indefinite pronouns, more complex tenses such as the future perfect and the conditional perfect, dependent infinitives and the subjunctive mood. However, weaker candidates often made basic errors in

adjectival agreements and verb endings, which made the overall message more difficult to understand. Accurate pronunciation and intonation are also very important as, if the pronunciation is unclear, the message cannot be conveyed; Centres should stress to their candidates the importance of speaking clearly and at a moderate pace.

On the whole, the tests were well-conducted. Many teacher/examiners make clear the moment of transition from debate to discussion and also from one topic to another in Section B; this is good practice, as it makes it clear to the candidate that the topic is changing, and it is also helpful for the marker. This year, the timing of most of the tests was accurate and conformed to the demands of the Specification. However, teacher/examiners should remember to vary the topics covered in Section B; it is not appropriate to ask all candidates similar questions or to focus on the same topics.

Centres are again reminded of the importance of selecting a suitable venue for the tests where noise will not be a problem at any time of the day. Background noise can be unsettling for the candidate as well as making the marker's task difficult. Centres should be sure to conduct a sound check before the tests begin and also to check the recordings once they have been completed before submitting them to Pearson. It is impossible for the marker to award a fair and accurate mark if the test is inaudible.

Centres are reminded once again that submission of the audio files and the interactive OR3 forms should be via secure file transfer to Pearson; tests should not be submitted to the examiner by post on CDs or USB sticks. It is not appropriate to upload scanned versions of the OR3 forms; only the interactive version should be used. Similarly, there is no requirement to send the Attendance Register by post; this can be scanned and uploaded via secure file transfer.

Overall, it is pleasing to see so many iAL candidates using the spoken language with confidence and fluency, offering and developing a genuinely personal response in both the debate and the discussion and using a range of linguistic structures to express their ideas.