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AS

**FRENCH**

Paper 3 Speaking  
Report on the Examination

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### **Administrative issues (T option)**

Recordings were mostly of reasonable to good quality, although there were a few cases where sound levels fluctuated somewhat and the teacher-examiner's voice was frequently louder and clearer than that of the student. It is again stressed that recordings should be saved in .mp3 format and that file-names for individual student recordings should comply with the format set out on page 12 of the *Instructions for the conduct of AS level examinations*, which can be found in Secure Key Materials. A considerable number of teachers did not provide the information on pages 11 and 12 of the Instructions when sending memory sticks and CDs. This meant there was frequently no indication of the teacher-examiner's name, which is required for completing mark forms and Teacher Tester Performance Records. The letters of the stimulus cards chosen by the student should also have been indicated on the CD or memory stick insert or tag.

Teacher-examiners should always follow the procedure detailed under Conduct of the test for introducing the tests as succinctly as possible (see page 14 of the Instructions). In some cases a lot of unnecessary information was given including the title of the card and the theme and sub-theme covered. Candidate numbers and card letters were occasionally recorded incorrectly.

There is still some confusion as to what paperwork should be sent to the AQA examiner. Attendance Lists should be enclosed but the Additional Answer Sheets with students' notes for Part 1 should be retained securely by the centre. Candidate Record Forms are not required for the AS tests.

Timings were generally quite good, although more attention needs to be paid to dividing the timing equally across the two discussions. Teacher-examiners should ensure they have both cards chosen by the student ready before beginning the test. Timing starts with the asking of the first question and does not stop at the end of the first discussion while the card and questions for the second discussion are sorted out.

### **Conduct of the examinations**

Overall this year both teacher-examiners and students seemed to have a much better understanding of exactly what the mark scheme rewards and, where students were well-prepared and their tests well-conducted by teacher-examiners, they were able to realise their full potential and to score highly in all areas. However, there were still a number of centres where the requirements of this component had not been fully understood, and some recurring issues still remain to be addressed by teacher-examiners if they are to become confident in fulfilling its demands and enabling their students to access the highest marks possible in each assessment objective.

The advice for teacher-examiners to stagger the asking of the printed questions across about the first 3 minutes of the test, thereby ensuring they focus on and follow up responses to the questions, thus creating the necessary unpredictable elements, was still frequently ignored. Some teacher-examiners and their students seemed to be working from a set of pre-prepared questions with no attempt to pick up on any points made and explore these more fully before moving on to the next question. Students were sometimes allowed to deliver long monologues on the relevant sub-theme, though not always relevant to the printed questions, which again presented no opportunities for them to demonstrate an appropriate response to unpredictable elements. Such approaches have a negative impact on the marks that can be awarded for AO1.

Students should be reminded of the importance of considering all the printed information on the card and of using this as the basis for their response to the first printed question. In both the T and V tests there were cases where students chose to draw from their own knowledge on a sub-theme in response to the question *Que dit-on ici sur ...?* Teacher-examiners have a critical role to play in prompting and guiding students to respond to any key details that may have been overlooked or misunderstood. Questions or statements based on the visuals on the card are not appropriate: AO2 marks reward the understanding of all of the printed text on the card and not just the printed questions.

The requirement that the student ask the examiner a question on each card was not always met, thus reducing the mark for AO2. Teacher-examiners must remember to prompt the student to ask a question before the end of the discussion if one is not forthcoming. When questions are asked after 7 minutes they cannot be credited. Once this requirement has been fulfilled students should not be asked for further questions. In several cases teacher-examiners seemed to think that two questions per card were required from their students, which occasionally unsettled those who had only prepared one. Teacher-examiners should appreciate the importance of their responses being as brief as possible.

### **Stimulus Cards and Discussions**

There was more evidence in this year's discussions of knowledge gained from a study of sub-themes in a France-based or French-speaking context to support views and opinions and develop arguments. This, however, was generally more successful with the sub-themes linked to artistic culture. Knowledge and understanding of cultural heritage, contemporary francophone music and French cinema were demonstrated with a wide range of examples, some of which were still drawn from the rather limited range presented in course books but many of which were supplemented with areas of interest that students had chosen to pursue themselves. While this is not a requirement, the variety of examples it affords does make for some interesting and engaging discussions.

The sub-themes linked to current trends within aspects of French-speaking society are *la famille en voie de changement*, *la « cyber-société »* and *le rôle du bénévolat*. Where a card focuses on a particular aspect such as single-parent families, cyber-bullying, or voluntary work in Quebec, the discussion does not need to be restricted to this single strand of the sub-theme. Questions that broaden the perspective to take in the full scope of the sub-theme will generate more opportunities for AO4 knowledge and understanding to be used in support of views and opinions.

Teachers are advised to look carefully at the allocation of marks across each discussion and to note that for AO4 there are as many marks available as for AO1 and AO2 combined, and so opinions and views that enable students to draw on their knowledge and understanding of sub-themes within a French or French-speaking context must be favoured over questions that merely seek personal opinions.

### **Assessment Objective 3**

Most students showed a reasonable grasp of grammar and in some cases demonstrated an impressively wide range of vocabulary and complex language. However, the application of grammar was sometimes quite inaccurate, with common and sometimes serious errors being much in evidence. The following errors were often heard.

Conjugation of verbs: *elle dise*, *ils grandir*, *vous pouvez*, *ils est bénéficié*, *il devenira*

Incorrect use of the infinitive: *ils veulent d'apprendre, ils peuvent grandissent*

Incorrect use of the subjunctive: *bien qu'il y a, il faut qu'ils savent, je pense que leur musique soit*

Use of the passive: *ils influencés par, si on élevé, je n'ai surpris pas*

Use of negatives: *elle n'a changé pas beaucoup, ils ne rien savoir, rien de personnes*

Pronouns: *je il aide, pour leur élever, avec ils, tu peux s'amuser, la musique qui ils écoutent*

Adjectives and adverbs: *un rythme vite, le travail gratuitement, la bien musique, une seulement raison*

Comparisons: *comme populaire que, plus bien, les mêmes films de nous, plus intéressant comme*

Confusion between *parce que* and *à cause de*; *choquant* and *choqué*; *surprenant* and *surpris*; *penser à* and *penser de*; *connaître* and *savoir*; *temps, fois* and *heure*; *chose* and *choix*; *assez* and *aussi*; *très, trop, plus* and *beaucoup*

Invented words and phrases: *promoter, projeter, performer, attracter, reconniser, acter, expérencier, especialement, enjoyable, rester en touche*

Numbers were frequently a major stumbling block, particularly where a four was involved:

*trente-quarante, trente-quatorze, quarante-vingt-treize, quarante dix* and *quatre cinq millions* were all heard.

On that point, students are not expected to produce any and every statistic that features on a stimulus card. To do so takes far too much time and really does little to show what the student has understood of the main message on the card. Some students made a very good job of summarising statistical information using terms such as *Presque la moitié...*, *un peu plus de 10 pour cent* and so on.

### Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.