GCSE
FRENCH

8658/LH Paper 1 Listening Higher Tier
Report on the Examination

8658/LH
June 2023

Version: 1.0

General comments

Changes were made to the 2023 papers to reflect the removal of the regulatory requirement to test vocabulary outside of the published vocabulary list.

There were many positive aspects to this year's paper. Firstly, many students were able to gain marks in most questions throughout the paper, regardless of the question type. Secondly, there were very few instances of students not attempting questions including those requiring non-verbal answers. Thirdly, there were very few answers in English in Section B of the paper. Lastly, it was evident that students were prepared well to tackle the range of questions and question types.

On the other hand, there were similar issues to previous series particularly with verbal questions requiring questions in English. Such questions at this tier often require precision and clarity, particularly when targeting the higher levels of demand. However, the answers given by students can sometimes be vague and/or lack clarity. In some cases, basic vocabulary items (eg, numbers, age, days…) and/or topic-specific vocabulary items do not appear to be known by students, thus preventing them from accessing the material and answering some questions correctly.

Teachers should continue to remind students of the following tips:
- identify the questions which have more than one part (eg, 6.1 and 6.2)
- listen to the whole utterance once <u>before</u> writing down your answer. This is particularly useful in P/N/P+N questions, A/A/A+B questions as well as in multiple-choice questions
- pay particular attention to the words which have been emboldened on the question paper (eg, **two** hobbies)
- write down option letters carefully and neatly, ideally using capital letters
- cross out clearly the answers/letters you do not want to be marked
- only write answers which are possible (eg: A, B or C in an ABC multiple-choice question)
- avoid giving alternative answers and/or unnecessary additional information
- spend part of the 5-minute reading time on Section B looking at the questions and options in French.

Section A

Question 1

This question proved very accessible with almost all students scoring at least two marks. Option E was widely identified as a correct answer. Option B was a popular incorrect answer suggesting that students who chose this option based their decision on hearing the word *voiture* rather than listening to the utterance which was asking them to leave their cars at home.

Questions 2 & 3

These two high-demand questions were done well and proved more accessible than anticipated despite the language use in the transcript and the plausibility of all the options.

In question 2, just over two-thirds of students scored the two marks available. D was the most commonly identified option whilst C discriminated more. F was a commonly chosen distractor here.

In question 3, just over half of students scored the two marks available. Option A posed no problem at all for most students. As expected, B proved to discriminate well at this level of demand due to the need to draw a simple conclusion. Option E was the most popular incorrect option here.

Questions 4-6

This section was designed to test a range of levels of demand with some medium and some high-demand questions. Overall, these questions discriminated well between students despite producing some unexpected outcomes at times.

Question 4.1 proved to be more challenging than anticipated with many surprisingly being unable to identify the vocabulary *an* and therefore writing incorrect answers such as 'a day and a half' or 'an hour and a half'. On the other hand, question 4.2 which was more challenging led to a much more positive outcome with over half of students answering this question correctly.

Similarly, question 5.1 proved harder than question 5.2 despite its targeted level of demand being lower. Less than half of all students were able to recognise the word *porte* meaning 'door'. Many confused this with the verb *porter* and therefore wrote down answers around wearing clothes. Question 5.2 was high demand because it required some manipulation of language. It was pleasing to see that well over half of the students scored the mark here.

Question 6 performed as expected. Both parts were high demand and discriminated well at this level. In question 6.1, many recognised the word *nouveau* but wrote incorrect answers about being around new people. *Déprimé* in question 6.2 was a high-demand item of vocabulary and so it was pleasing to see that one fifth of students were able to identify this correctly.

Questions 7-9

This section also discriminated well with most questions targeting the higher levels of demand.

Question 7.1 was high demand. As expected only those working at the highest level were able to identify the phrase *vient d'augmenter* and therefore choose option B. The most popular incorrect option here was option C. 7.2 was also high demand and performed marginally better than 7.1. The most popular incorrect option chosen by most was option A. As both these questions were targeting the highest level of demand, their outcome was as expected.

Question 8.1 proved much more accessible than anticipated with over three-quarters of students scoring the mark. This was pleasing given this was a very high demand question with a complex language being tested in an extended passage. Question 8.2 performed as expected for this level of demand.

Question 9 was done well with 9.1 proving more accessible than anticipated. As students sometimes tend to base their answers on the last thing they hear, this might explain why this question was done so well, given the complexity of the transcript.

Questions 10 & 11

This overlap section proved considerably more accessible at this tier than at Foundation tier.

In question 10, most scored one mark having correctly identified the part of the answer about the physics teacher being absent. Although the second key idea was identified by more students at this tier, their rendering in English sometimes led to a lack of clarity and their answers could therefore not be credited.

Question 11 presented some challenges still at this tier. As per Foundation tier, some lost the mark having misunderstood the transcript (eg, Rémi got lost on his way to school) or by rendering the key idea incorrectly (eg, Rémi was late to school).

Questions 12 & 13

In this section, questions 12.1 and 13.1 achieved their expected outcomes. Both these questions were targeting the highest level of demand due to the level of precision required in the answers. A range of acceptable alternative answers was included in the mark scheme for question 13.1.

Questions 12.2 and 13.2 proved challenging. In question 12.2 students' answers either lacked precision (eg, 'find information' as an answer on its own) or showed they had misunderstood entirely. In question 13.2, some confused the verb *garer* with the noun *gare* which led to a range of incorrect answers around finding the train station.

Questions 14 & 15

This medium-demand section proved accessible with over half of students scoring at least one mark in each question.

In question 14, most students had no problem identifying C as a correct option. Option G proved more challenging with many opting for F instead having heard the phrase *centre sportif* and not realising this was another clue to access option C.

In question 15, option A proved accessible whilst option D was more challenging suggesting the words *trajet* and *quelque part* were not known.

Questions 16-19

In this section, questions 16, 17 and 19 performed in line with expectations. Question 18 proved more difficult for some with an overwhelming majority having incorrectly chosen option C as the answer. As is often the case, students sometimes rely on a few isolated key words rather than listening to the whole utterance. This would also suggest that the word *incendie* was not known.

Questions 20-24

This overlap question was done well at this tier with a significantly high proportion of students scoring in questions 20, 21 and 23. As per Foundation tier, questions 22 and 24 underperformed in comparison to the others in this section. It was clear that those students who had singled out individual key items of vocabulary rather than listening to the whole utterance had misunderstood the key opinion and therefore did not gain the mark.

Section B

Question 25

This first question in Section B produced two distinct outcomes. Question 25.1 proved more challenging than expected. Most students chose B as the answer suggesting they did not know the word *lundi*. A significant proportion chose A as the answer suggesting that they might not have known the meanings of *mairie* and/or *hôtel de ville*. Question 25.2, on the other hand, was hugely successful with nearly every student scoring the mark available.

Questions 26 & 27

This section proved challenging for most students and produced a range of outcomes.

Question 26 was the least well-answered question in this paper. In question 26.1, *tempête* was not known and attempts at spelling this were mostly ambiguous, with many renderings having to be rejected completely. On a positive note, despite the difficulty of the question, very few students left this question blank and most tried putting answers which could have made sense (eg, *problème*, *retard*, *accident*…). As is expected of high-demand questions, only very few students were able to achieve a mark for question 26.2. The mark scheme allowed a number of alternative acceptable answers such as *voler*, *partir*.

Question 27.1 was done well overall. As *Climatisation* was rendered in more ways than originally expected, the mark scheme ensured that answers which showed the key phonics had been correctly identified were credited. This allowed for some minor spelling mistakes (eg, *climatition*). Question 27.2, which was another high-demand, performed as anticipated with only very few students successfully scoring a mark here. Alternative acceptable answers (eg *nager*) allowed those students who did not know the correct spelling of *baigner* but who had clearly understood its meaning to be rewarded.

Questions 28 & 29

This final overlap question was answered successfully by most students at this tier.

Unlike at Foundation tier, 22.1 was less successful than 22.2 with many choosing option B incorrectly, suggesting some issues with recognition of tenses. Part 2 had a high success rate with students at this tier being more familiar with vocabulary items such as *sans-abri* and *SDF*.

Question 29.1 did not appear to pose problems for students at this tier. However, question 29.2 produced a much lower outcome than expected with just over one-third of students scoring a mark. A significantly high proportion chose option B incorrectly. Those students may have been attracted by the word *rôle* which appeared in both the question paper and the recording. As this question was testing the relationship between tenses, this also suggests that more work might still be needed in this area.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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