

FRENCH

<p>Paper 0520/03 Speaking</p>

Key messages

- The standard of performance was very similar to the standard heard in 2016.
- Some Examiners did not observe the correct timings for the exam. Some of the tests in this session were too short in the Topic conversation sections and in some cases there was far more time than 2 minutes given to the presentation part of this section. Some of the General conversation sections were also too long.
- The Role Play sections were usually attempted well. Good Examiners did not create or change cues and tasks. Candidates needed to be concise and stick closely to the tasks to score well.
- Centres usually remembered to include questions in the General conversation section which would elicit past and future tenses from candidates. This was not always the case in the Topic presentation/Conversation. Such tense usage is essential in **both** the Topic presentation/Conversation **and** the General conversation in order to score 6 or more for Language.
- The best performances at all levels of ability were in Centres where there had not been over preparation of work and in which spontaneous and natural conversations could develop.
- Centres should aim to cover only two or three topics only in the General conversation section with each candidate. In many Centres too many topics were covered too briefly.
- The quality of recordings was usually good. Some samples are still not identified according to the correct convention which can make it difficult to identify the correct candidates for moderation.

General comments

The format of the test was as last year.

Centres were usually well aware of the format of the test. The Role Play section was usually conducted well in Centres. Examiners usually followed the cues correctly, prompting where necessary and encouraging candidates to work for the marks. Examiners who did veer away from the script and changed the tasks or who did not prepare fully sometimes made this section of the test harder for the candidates. There were, in this examination series, some cases of short tests or very long tests in the conversation sections. New Centres should understand that **if conversation sections are short or too long that this will adversely affect candidates' marks**. In cases of short tests, candidates are not given the opportunity to develop their ideas and use a range of structures and tenses. In long sections candidates can become tired and can start to make mistakes. It cannot be over-emphasised that it is in the interest of fairness to all candidates to make sure that each candidate is given the full examination time of 5 minutes for each conversation section.

Candidates had usually made good use of the 15 minutes preparation time. Centres are reminded that Examiners may have access to the confidential test materials (Teachers' Notes booklet and Role Play Cards) in the four working days before the first Speaking test is conducted in order for the Examiner to prepare for his/her role. **Centres are reminded that the contents of these materials are confidential and must not be shared with candidates**. The confidential test materials must be returned to the secure storage facility after preparation has taken place and after each session of examining. Once the last Speaking test has been conducted, the materials must remain in secure storage until the end of the Speaking test period. Centres are reminded that candidates must not be allowed to do any writing during their preparation time and must not be allowed to bring any written materials with them into the preparation area.

Examiners need to understand the requirements of the mark scheme in order that they ask the right sort of questions which will stretch candidates and give them the opportunity to fulfil the descriptors in the higher mark bands. For example, Examiners who included unexpected questions and went beyond the straightforward "closed" questions gave candidates the possibility of scoring in the Good band or above on

Table B, Communication. **It is also essential to include questions which will elicit past and future tenses in both conversation sections as candidates need to show they can use both of these tenses for a mark of more than 6 to be awarded on Table C, Language.** In many Centres where reductions were made to the marks it was frequently the case that candidates had not been asked questions in past and future tenses in the Topic conversation and/or General conversation.

Centres are reminded to make a clear transition between the Topic conversation and the General conversation. This is helpful to both candidates and Moderators. This transition should be in French. **The links between the different parts of the test should not be in English.**

The full requirements of the test are clearly laid out in the Teachers' Notes booklet and all Centres are strongly advised to read through these in advance of the test so that they have plenty of time to clarify any uncertainties. Centres are also reminded to request permission well in advance of the test session should they need to use more than one Examiner in the Centre. A copy of the permission should be enclosed with the sample together with details of the Internal moderation procedures used in the Centre.

- **Clerical checks and sample size**

In the vast majority of Centres, the clerical work had usually been completed efficiently and Centres are thanked for this. It is essential that all clerical work is checked very carefully so as to ensure that candidates receive the correct mark in Centres. On the Working Mark Sheet, the addition of the individual marks for each candidate should be checked to ensure that the total mark is correct. Then, for each candidate, the transfer of the marks from the Working Mark Sheet to the MS1 Mark Sheet (or the electronic marks file) must also be checked. It is important to check that the marks on the Working Mark Sheet and the MS1 Mark Sheet match. Centres generally understood the requirements of the sample size well and samples were nearly always correct. New Centres are reminded to check the instructions on sample size carefully and to ask for advice from Cambridge if they are unsure how to proceed.

- **Recording quality**

Moderators commented that a high proportion of the recordings received were of a very good quality. Centres are thanked for this. Most Centres submitted digital recordings which were very clear and eased access to the sample. Please check all recording equipment prior to the live exams. Also, please remember to avoid sticking labels on CDs and do not write on the surface of the CD without using a CD friendly pen.

Please ensure that each candidate's recording is labelled with the candidate name and number on the box for the CD. On the CD, the recording for each candidate must be saved individually as an .mp3 file and named as follows, Centre number_candidate number_syllabus number_component number. **The recording for each candidate must be on a separate file.**

A list of the featured recordings should also be submitted with each CD. Each CD must include a recorded introduction by the Examiner, listing the CD number, Centre number, examination number, examination name, name of Examiner and date. This introduction needs to be made only once, and should be saved as a separate file (named Recording introduction). The Examiner and **not the candidate** must introduce the candidate by name and number and the Role Play Card number.

CDs must be carefully wrapped in some form of protective packaging before they are placed in the envelope with the moderation paperwork. The envelope containing the recordings and paperwork should then be packaged in another parcel/envelope and one of the return labels with the Cambridge address should be attached before it is returned to Cambridge. In the very few cases of extra or replacement recordings being required, Centres were quick to respond and provide new copies of recordings.

- **Timings of tests I missing elements**

Most Centres adhered well to the stipulated timings, but some Centres persist in going under or over the 5 minutes prescribed for the Topic conversation and/or the General conversation test. Each of these two sections **must** last for approximately 5 minutes. Centres are reminded that the presentation of the topic should last no longer than 2 minutes and that the remaining time of this 5 minute section should be spent in conversation on this topic. Where conversations are short or missing, candidates can be disadvantaged as marks cannot be awarded for tasks which are not attempted. In a few Centres, marks had been awarded for missing sections which resulted in marks being reduced by Moderators.

- **Application of the mark scheme**

As in 2016, many tests were conducted well and Examiners applied the mark scheme fairly and consistently. Some Centres required no or only small adjustments to their marks to bring them in line with the agreed standard. There were, however, some larger adjustments to marks in some Centres. This was often a result of lenient marking in the conversation sections. This, in turn, could often be attributed to short sections and few opportunities for candidate to answer unexpected questions or answer questions in a variety of tenses. Some Centres had adjustments made just to part of the mark range in cases of lenient or harsh marking over part of the mark range in the Centre. Many Centres had no adjustments made to their marks.

Role plays

In the role plays, some Examiners did not realise that a short response, if appropriate, can earn a mark of 3. If there are two parts to a task then Examiners are free to split the task, but if only one part of a task is completed by the candidate, the maximum mark which can be awarded is 1. **If a candidate uses a verb to complete a task and makes an error of tense or conjugation, a mark of 2 and not 3 is appropriate.** Examiners are reminded that poor pronunciation should be queried especially if it prevents clear communication of a task. If pronunciation of a key element is not clear, a mark of 3 is not appropriate. Apart from the task in Role Play A which requires the candidate to listen to two options and then choose one, candidates cannot be awarded marks for material given by the Examiner which is then repeated by the candidate.

Conversation sections

In the conversation sections, marking tended to be generous in some Centres, as marks were awarded in the higher bands when there was no evidence that candidates could respond in a spontaneous way to unexpected questions or that they could communicate consistently and accurately in past and future tenses. It is important to differentiate the level of questions according to the ability of the candidate and to give candidates the opportunity, where appropriate, to go beyond basic straightforward questions of a closed nature which can limit the way a candidate develops his/her response.

Impression marks were usually awarded fairly in Centres.

- **Internal moderation in Centres**

The standard of Internal moderation in large Centres which had been given permission to use more than one Examiner was usually good. Moderators commented that much effort had clearly been taken in such Centres to apply the mark scheme consistently and ensure a common approach across all Examiners. New Centres are reminded that where more than one Examiner is used, Moderators need to be able to check that all Examiners have adopted a uniform approach to the test and applied the mark scheme consistently. **All Centres wishing to use more than one Examiner to conduct the Speaking tests for their candidates are reminded of the need to apply to Cambridge for permission well before the start of each Speaking test period.** Permission is normally granted, on the understanding that Internal standardisation/moderation takes place at the Centre **before a sample is chosen for External moderation by Cambridge.** In order to assist Centres that have been given permission to use more than one Examiner, Cambridge has produced guidelines for Internal standardisation/moderation. These guidelines explain the need for the marking of all Examiners in the Centre to be checked for consistency **before** a representative sample of recordings is chosen.

It was clear that in many large Centres a very thorough approach to the Internal moderation process had taken place. In most cases, the supporting documentation made it very clear to Moderators as to what Internal moderation had taken place in the Centre. It was, however, apparent in more Centres than last year that in cases where changes to marks were made to the marks of sample candidates, these marks had been changed in isolation from the marks of the rest of the candidates. This made the Internal moderation incomplete. If during the checking of marks, the marks for one Examiner are out of line, it is good practice to check a further sub sample for that Examiner before changing marks. **After checking the sample for a particular Examiner, if the decision is taken to adjust that Examiner's marks on a particular candidate, that adjustment must then be applied to the marks of all the candidates who were examined by that Examiner, and not just to the marks of the candidates in the sample checked.** In cases where marks were changed in isolation from those of other candidates, Moderators reported this back to Centres. Centres are encouraged to read their Centre report on the test with care as thorough Internal moderation relies upon the same standards being applied to all candidates within a Centre. Incomplete Internal moderation can disadvantage candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Centres generally encouraged candidates to attempt all parts of each task and prompted appropriately when candidates needed encouragement. If only one part of a two-part task is completed, only 1 mark can be awarded. As last year, two-part tasks were split into (i) and (ii) on the Role Play Cards. Examiners generally kept well to their script. Overlong answers are not to be encouraged as marks are only awarded for the set tasks. Indeed, should candidates go on and add material extra to the set task it may distort meaning and detract from an otherwise correct answer.

Candidates should be reminded that it is always important to listen to the Examiner as on all the Role Play A situations, there is **always** a task which requires them to listen and choose from the two scripted options offered by the Examiner. If one of these options is not chosen by the candidate the appropriate mark to award is 0. Likewise, there is **always** one task which requires responding to an **unexpected question** on the Role Play B. Examiners are reminded not to change the cues in the scripts so as to ensure that the level of difficulty in the task remains the same for all candidates.

A Role Plays

Moderators found these tasks to be appropriate and straightforward for all candidates. All of the Role Play A situations featured a task which required a question to be asked and one task which required candidates to choose an option from two provided by the Examiner. Candidates generally found the three situations to be equally accessible and usually scored well on this opening exercise. Centres had trained candidates well to include a greeting and thanks where required. Centres are reminded that often a short response (perhaps one word) will often be appropriate and in such cases a mark of 3 can be awarded. Examiners should introduce Role Play A and start the conversation off. English should not be used to introduce the test. It is always helpful to read out the introduction to candidates. **Examiners should query pronunciation if the meaning is not clear due to mispronunciation.** Generally, candidates had been very well prepared for the A role plays.

Phoning a hotel

This Role Play was done well by candidates. Nearly all candidates were able to say that they wanted to reserve a room and pronounced this well. In the second task, some gave a time rather than a date. On the third task, most managed a number with ease but pronunciation of *deux* was sometimes ambiguous. The options offered in the next task were well understood and nearly all candidates were successful here. A few forgot to thank the receptionist on the last task but most were able to formulate an appropriate question.

Renting tennis rackets

On the first task, the pronunciation of *raquettes* was not always clear. On the next task, most were well able to say when they wanted to play tennis. Any day or time was accepted. On the third task, the options were usually understood but those who chose the option *pour adultes* were often unable to pronounce *adultes* correctly. Again, on the next task, the number was usually well done but some cases of poor pronunciation led to ambiguity of the message. The last task, asking the price, was usually well done but some used a brief *Combien ?* to ask the price.

Buying cinema tickets

The first task was well done but, again, many mispronounced *tickets/billets*. Candidates need to be reminded to listen carefully to the pronunciation of the two options given by the Examiner. Many were able to listen fairly well and chose an appropriate option. On the fourth task, most were able to say they would like a certain drink and found this fairly easy. The last task was fairly well approached. Most chose to ask where the toilets were but went on to make the common error of saying *Où est les toilettes ?* Here, the message was understood but the inaccurate verb meant that a maximum mark of 2 was scored.

B Role Plays

The B Role Plays were deliberately more demanding in that they required the ability to use different tenses, to explain, give an opinion, apologise or express pleasure. The level of challenge was balanced with some easier and more challenging tasks across the role plays. As last year, they differentiated well, but even the weakest candidates could usually score some marks on some tasks. Candidates should be reminded that there will always be one task in which they have to listen to the Examiner and reply to an unprepared question. They should be advised to consider likely questions in the 15 minutes preparation time, immediately prior to the Speaking test, and to listen carefully in the examination room. It is also well worth during revision time prior to the tests to ensure that commonly used cue types are familiar to all candidates and that they are given practice in manipulating opening rubrics.

Asking permission to go out to a birthday party

The first task was usually approached quite well but some merely stated that they wanted to go to a birthday party rather than using *demander la permission* from the rubric. On the second task, there were two elements needed, an indication of the person whose birthday it was and where the party was being held. Brief appropriate answers often gained 3 marks here. Both elements were needed to earn the 3 marks. The next task proved more difficult with some giving a list of excuses as to why they had been late. This made the task incomplete. **It is essential that all candidates are familiar with the commonly used cue *Faites vos excuses* and are aware that for such a task they need to make an apology.** Quite a number of candidates did not apologise. A past time frame was also needed here on the other part of the task to explain why they were late the previous evening. Weaker candidates sometimes found it hard to render a perfect or imperfect tense correctly. The unexpected question in the next task was usually well understood by most candidates and many scored good marks here. Any time was accepted and, if used, present or future tenses were deemed appropriate. On the last task, there were occasional mismatches of times due to the cue stating *11 heures*. If Examiners decided here to vary the cue slightly in line with what the candidate said in response to the previous task, this was perfectly acceptable. The last task required the candidate to ask for permission and formulate an appropriate question about coming back after 11pm. This was quite well done but weaker candidates found it difficult to use an appropriate part of the verb *pouvoir*, despite the phrase *Est-ce que je peux* being common classroom parlance.

Phoning a friend about a book left in France

Again, the first task was approached quite well but Moderators reported that many candidates mispronounced *j'ai laissé* as *j'ai lassé*. Some also found it hard to manipulate the *chez lui/elle* in the rubric to *chez toi*. The next task, the unexpected question, required candidates to say what kind of book this was. The question was well understood and Moderators looked for not just a *genre* but any kind of identifying feature about the book. Consequently, a wide range of answers were acceptable such as *policier, un livre d'école, un livre bleu, un grand livre*. On the next task, candidates were required to give two details about where they had left the book or where the book could be found. Past or present tenses, if used by candidates, were appropriate as were short phrases such as *Sur la table dans la chambre*. Some only gave one detail. The repeated mispronunciation of *lassé* was tolerated on this task. On the next task, only the more able candidates managed to formulate a correct question asking the friend to send/post the book. Some here also used a register which was inconsistent with the register used in the rest of the role play. Most were able to express their pleasure and a wide range of appropriate brief utterances earned the mark but many seemed unfamiliar with the verb *rembourser* or a suitable synonym. Some veered away from the cue and chose instead to say they would buy the friend a present.

Phoning a French host about a bike accident

On the first task, candidates were expected to reformulate the rubric and say they had had an accident. Many found *j'ai eu* difficult and, instead stated *j'ai un accident*. Most were however to communicate at least some meaning here. On the next task, there were many cases of incorrect auxiliary verbs used with the verb *tomber* in the perfect tense. Some candidates did not go on to state where they were hurting, but those who did generally did this well. Good Examiners recued successfully here. On Task 3 however, there were again cases of candidates being unfamiliar with the rubric *Faites vos excuses* (see above). Quite a number of candidates did not make an apology. Some found it difficult to say why they could not return on the bike. Most said the bike was broken or gave another medical reason. The unexpected question required them to state where they were. This was well understood. Some were to be found in a different country but this was tolerated and Moderators looked for any one detail/place in which the candidate was. The final task required the candidate to ask when Monsieur/Madame Martin would arrive. Weaker candidates merely read the cue or had difficulty in formulating a correct question in an appropriate tense but the more able candidates coped well here and were able to score at least 2 of the available 3 marks.

Topic presentation/conversation

The standard of work heard in this section covered a very wide range of performance across the candidature. Standards heard across the mark range were very much in line with those heard in 2016. The whole section (Topic presentation and Topic conversation) should last for a full five minutes. Centres usually understood that the maximum time to be spent on the presentation part of this section of the test was 2 minutes but Moderators reported that this was sometimes not the case and there were instances of some very long presentations followed by very short conversations on the presentation topic. In a few cases there were no topic conversations at all. In a few Centres, some Examiners passed straight on to the General conversation. This therefore denied candidates the opportunity to converse on their chosen topic which is a required part of the test and this disadvantaged candidates. The presentation should be followed up by a conversation on this same topic for the **remainder** of this five minute section of the test.

Moderators heard a wide variety of topics this year. Many candidates chose familiar topics such as leisure activities, holidays, school life and their country or town of origin. As in previous years, numbers choosing to talk about themselves were small but a few Centres continue to allow this. Centres are reminded not to let candidates talk about themselves in this section of the test as it replicates a general conversation and does not enable them to go into depth on one particular topic. Some Moderators reported also hearing interesting topics on the environment, animal protection, school trips, festivals, an unusual museum visit, a famous person, sailing, and future plans. Some candidates also chose to talk about their favourite book, their school orchestra, the importance of their phone/computer, a film or a play. Usually Centres had encouraged candidates to choose a good range of different topics within a Centre and this led to the follow up conversation being of a more spontaneous nature. The best topics were ones in which the candidates displayed a genuine interest.

It was clear that candidates had taken the preparation of their topic seriously and had prepared well. They tried to present their topic at a good pace and realised that they needed not to give just factual information but needed also to express their opinions and, where possible, justify and develop these. It was also clear that in linguistic terms many used a good variety of structures, appropriate vocabulary and, often a good range of tenses where possible. The practice of including past and future tenses in the presentation itself is also increasing. In such cases, Examiners are reminded that they must go on also to ask questions to elicit past and future tenses in the conversation section. This is to ensure that all candidates get the opportunity to use these tenses and therefore go beyond a score of 6 for Language. In some cases, the questioning did not give candidates this opportunity. Most Examiners kept the questions in the Topic conversation clearly focussed on the choice of the topic and gave the candidate the opportunity to go beyond straightforward short factual statements. In such cases, questions were put to encourage candidates to talk in a spontaneous way and to give and justify their opinions routinely. Exchanges which sounded over prepared and lacking in spontaneity did not fulfil the criteria of the top marking bands. The very best performances were ones in which the standard heard in the presentation was maintained in the follow up conversation.

Most Examiners remembered to make a clear transition between this section of the test and the General conversation section. This is very helpful for both the candidates and the Moderators.

General conversation

Most Centres had understood the need to cover only **two or three topics** from the syllabus with each candidate in the General conversation section but there were still some Centres in which **too many topics were covered too briefly with all candidates**. It can be highly confusing for candidates to skip from topic to topic. It also usually results in few opportunities to show the ability of the candidate to respond in a genuine way to some unexpected questions as such topic coverage usually leads to closed questioning.

As last year, there were many examples of very professional and sympathetic examining in which the topic was clearly announced to the candidate and questions were well differentiated according to the ability of different candidates. Such examining aimed clearly to put candidates at ease and encouraged them to work to the best of their abilities. Moderators often reported that the best Examiners spoke as little as possible and listened hard to the responses made by candidates, picking up interesting leads where necessary. When examining the same topic with different candidates, efforts were also made to try to vary the questions asked upon that topic. Centres are reminded that candidates must not be aware of which General conversation topics will be examined before the test.

There was usually a good range of topics within a Centre and Examiners usually tried to vary the questions on the topics between candidates in order to keep some spontaneity in the conversation. It is important in the examination room to give the candidate the opportunity to respond to unexpected questions which arise

naturally and to follow up interesting leads presented by the candidate. Moderators generally reported that the questioning to elicit past and future tenses was this year more consistent in this section than in the Topic conversation section. Many Examiners heard were patient, sympathetic to their candidates and encouraged them to work for the marks.

This year, a very wide range of performance was heard by Moderators in this section of the test and the standards heard were very much in keeping with those heard in 2016. Many candidates communicated well on topics such as family life, home life, ambitions, life at school, learning a language, sport and leisure, technology, recycling and the environment, their town/country, food and drink/healthy living. As last year, there were some excellent examples of candidates achieving at all levels of ability with good numbers showing that they could communicate well with many going beyond brief straightforward messages to longer utterances in which opinions and justifications were routinely given.

Work heard illustrating standards at the lower end of the marking bands for Language showed some manipulation of structures and some awareness of verbs and a limited vocabulary. Work illustrating the performance in the middle bands showed the ability of the candidate to produce some accurate examples in past and future tenses and to be aware of key Defined Content vocabulary together with some key adverbs of time. The more able candidates were also able to go beyond working in the first person and conjugate verbs with different subjects with greater control. Such work also showed the ability to communicate clear ideas accurately in a wide range of tenses appropriate to the questions asked and make accurate use of a wide range of appropriate vocabulary. At the top end of the performance, candidates also made good use of adverbs, adjectives and pronouns. Such utterances were longer and well connected by conjunctions. In terms of linguistic structures, there were examples of structures such as *si* + imperfect plus a conditional tense, *depuis*, perfect infinitives, correct future tenses (rather than an over reliance on *je voudrais*), *avant de* + infinitive and, on a few occasions, compound tenses such as the pluperfect and conditional perfect tenses. This **range of structures** is one of the important descriptors of the very best IGCSE performances in terms of linguistic performance.

It remains clear that the skill of speaking remains central to the IGCSE classroom and it was, for this international candidature, a skill which many said they had found to be one of the most rewarding aspects of their study of the foreign language.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 0520/11 Listening</p>
--

Key messages

- The format and question types of the Listening test remained as in June 2016. Candidates were usually well aware of the requirements of the examination.
- The candidate performance on this paper was similar in standard to that of June 2016. As intended, there was a gradient of difficulty on the paper and the final section was found to be the most challenging but even weaker candidates usually scored some marks on this section.
- Centres need to remind candidates to write very clearly in blue or black pen. Some candidates wrote first in pencil and then appeared to overwrite answers in pen but, in so doing, they left first attempts at ticks or words visible. This was often very difficult to read. Candidates should cross out very clearly any material which they do not wish the Examiner to consider.
- Most candidates appreciated the need to write as briefly as possible. Full sentences are not required in responses and candidates should be aware that if answers are long, there is the danger that extra distorting details may be included which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer.
- Answers were marked on the basis of communication and comprehension. Some candidates still need to be more aware concerning ticking the correct number of boxes in objective exercises.
- Examiners yet again reported that very poor handwriting often made scripts difficult to read.

General comments

This session's paper was found to be generally in keeping with the demands made in previous sessions. The candidature overall performed well on the first two sections of the paper. Nearly all candidates went on to attempt the final section with weaker candidates being able to be successful on a few questions in each of the two exercises. A full range of performance was seen across the paper and Examiners found the paper to be at an appropriate level of difficulty for the candidature. Good numbers of candidates scored well on the paper. The exercises discriminated appropriately across the gradient of difficulty in the paper. It was also evident that the examined topics and contexts were accessible to all candidates.

The majority of candidates were usually familiar with the rubrics and were aware of the requirements of the test types. Some candidates however were unsure as to the correct number of boxes to be ticked on multiple choice exercises and, in particular, on **Question 16**. There were cases of candidates ticking too few or too many boxes. A few candidates tried to use a system of both ticks and crosses. Either is acceptable but not both used together. On questions requiring a written answer, any notes taken during the listening time should not be written. Should candidates need to take notes during their listening time, they should be advised not to write these notes in the space intended for the answer.

As last year, the French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and density and featured both monologues and conversations. The emphasis of the questions moved from targeting the candidates' ability to pick out information contained in short factual pieces, to testing their ability to understand specific factual information, as well as opinions and explanations, in longer narrated accounts and conversations. Longer extracts featured a variety of register and references to both past and future events.

Candidates in many Centres had appreciated the need to write as **briefly and clearly as possible and understood that full sentences were not required in response**. Brief answers are preferable on this paper as candidates do not run the risk of extra distorting material being added which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. Candidates also seemed aware of the need not to answer or infer from general knowledge. There were fewer cases this year of candidates including extra material which was not on the recording.

This year, all Examiners reported more cases of poor handwriting which sometimes made it very difficult to read answers. Centres must stress to candidates the need to write clearly and not to use pencil to make a first attempt and then overwrite this in pen. **Please remind all candidates that, if they wish to make a second attempt at an answer, they should cross out their first attempt very clearly. This is particularly important on multiple choice questions.** Any answer which a candidate does not wish the Examiner to consider should be clearly crossed out. If Examiners see alternative answers the mark is not awarded. Likewise, letters should be clearly written as poorly shaped letters may be seen as unacceptable spellings of answers. Many Examiners also commented this year that, on some questions, candidates left a blank. Candidates should always be encouraged to attempt every question.

The Listening paper tests comprehension. Accuracy in written responses in French is not an issue provided that the message is clear. If the answer sounds and reads like French it will be accepted provided that the message is unambiguous.

Centres are reminded that reading time for each exercise is included in the pauses throughout the paper and there is not extra reading time before the examination starts. It remains important to give candidates practice on past papers to ensure that they are familiar with the rubrics and when the pauses occur. It also helps to remind candidates that they can expect to hear all recordings twice.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–8

This first exercise tested the understanding of eight short conversations/monologues through multiple choice questions with visual options. Candidates usually performed very well in this opening exercise which is intended to give them a confident start to the paper. The extracts were straightforward and short. The vocabulary areas tested getting around, food and drink, household items and activities, types of TV programmes, shopping and leisure activities. Rubrics and visuals were generally well understood by candidates.

This opening exercise caused few problems and candidates answered confidently. Scores were generally very good on this opening exercise. On **Question 3** some were unsure as to the meaning of *serviette* and on **Question 5** some were unfamiliar with *débarrasser la table*. Other questions were answered very well.

Exercise 2 Questions 9–15

Candidates heard a longer extract which featured an advert for an activity holiday in Martinique. Questions tested tourist activities, places, numbers, leisure activities, room facilities, and boarding details. Candidates again did well on this exercise and many scored full marks on the first three questions identifying *planche à voile*, *port*, and 14. Candidates need to be reminded that when writing a number it is perfectly acceptable to write in figures. On **Question 11** some wrote a number and then invalidated their answer by also offering an unacceptable spelling of *quatorze*. Weaker candidates confused 14 for 40 and in some cases 4. It was evident that some needed further practice with frequently occurring numbers. Good attempts were also made at the final four questions on this exercise. **Question 12** presented few problems with most recognising *marché*, but on **Question 13** some answered a little too quickly and chose **B** as they heard *village de vacances* before they heard *appartement* and may have confused the first letters of the word *village* and thought of the word *villa*. On **Question 14** some did not know *climatisation*. Attempts at the final question, *pension complète* were quite good. Overall, numbers scoring well on this exercise were good.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 16

Performance on this exercise was, as last year, good. Candidates are, mostly, well accustomed to the exercise type and its requirements. There were still, however, cases of candidates ticking more than six boxes or four boxes only. Candidates should also be reminded to use a consistent method to indicate their answers: ticks **or** crosses are both acceptable, but are likely to cause confusion when used together. They should not attempt to put a tick and/or a cross in all boxes. Six of the twelve boxes need to be left blank.

Candidates heard four young people talking about their school lives. The topic was one familiar to all candidates and very accessible. Candidates generally found the first two short extracts easier to understand than the last two and were not always able to understand *il n'a pas beaucoup de patience* (i) and *le collège a donné un ordinateur à tous les élèves* (k). Generally, good attempts were made on this exercise with many scoring at least 4 marks. A good number scored 5 or 6 marks.

Exercise 2 Questions 17–21

In this exercise, candidates heard two interviews with a young French girl, Angélique, who lived in Morocco. In the first interview, candidates were required to correct an incorrect detail in each of five statements, a question type with which they were clearly familiar. The missing words were all items which appear in the vocabulary lists of the Defined Content. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test and the extract heard was longer than that heard in the previous exercise.

Candidates often approached this first part of the exercise confidently but incorrect spelling of key items of vocabulary often let down weaker candidates. On **Question 17** most attempted this question well but some gave *capitol* as the answer and did not score the mark. **Question 18** was found to be more demanding and *enfance* was often incorrectly rendered as *en France, en fance* (inappropriate split) by weaker candidates. **Question 19**, *transports*, was well done. **Question 20** was the most challenging question on this part of the exercise. Many could not render *étranges* and often wrote *étranger, en tronge, en tranche*. The last question, **Question 21**, was very well done.

Exercise 2 Questions 22–25

Candidates heard another interview with Angélique and were required to give short answers in French. Here candidates scored very much in line with the work seen on the comparable exercise last year with many scoring marks. On **Question 22**, most were successful but there were many unsuccessful attempts at *patinage* spelt as *partinage* or *batinage*. **Question 23** required close listening to the extract and a careful reading of the text as candidates were required to state what Angélique did after visiting the market. The recording gave a clear cue and candidates heard *...et après on va boire du thé*. Candidates needed to listen to the whole utterance and weaker attempts showed that many had written instead what Angélique did at the market (*acheter des pâtisseries*) rather than what she did after. Answers including *pâtisseries* were treated as invalidations. Many were more successful in giving an acceptable spelling of *montagne* on **Question 24**. On the last question on this exercise, **Question 25**, candidates heard *ma voisine nous invite... à prendre un repas typique*. Correct answers needed to feature *prendre + repas*. Many incorrect answers were written as *apprendre un repas* or *préparer un repas*. This was, for many, a very challenging last question on this exercise. Candidates needed to think clearly about the difference between *prendre* and *apprendre* in the context of a meal.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26–31

Candidates heard an interview with Lucien who talked about a trip to Madagascar and making a film there. The topic area was generally accessible and candidates made a good attempt at this exercise. Even the weaker candidates were usually able to score a few marks on the exercise. Generally candidates fared better on the last three questions rather than the first three questions. This was a suitable demanding exercise for this stage of the examination. A full range of marks was evident with a fair number scoring 4 or more marks. The question type used was multiple choice with written options. Questions tested not just specific factual information but also gist understanding over the longer extract. Candidates needed to identify attitudes and emotions in some questions and be able to understand a narrative which, in places, depended upon them understanding a sequence of events. The first question was approached well but many found **Question 28** harder, often choosing options **B** or **C** instead of option **D**. The very best candidates were successful here and understood the sequence of events well and understood that Monsieur Dubois had advised Lucien to use his drawings to make a film. The final three questions were done quite well with no discernible pattern of incorrect answers except on **Question 31** where weaker candidates chose option **D**.

Exercise 2 Questions 32–40

As in 2016, this was found to be an appropriately demanding and challenging exercise at this stage of the paper. A full range of performance was seen on this last exercise. Many weaker candidates made commendable efforts to answer at least some questions and were usually able to score a few marks. There was a good mix of harder and more accessible questions on this last exercise. The questions were designed

to make short responses possible and only a few candidates seemed unaware of this. The best work featured brief responses without additional distorting detail.

On **Question 32**, candidates made a good attempt at expressing the concept of double nationality and many gained the mark here. Those who stated that her mother was American and that her father was French did not convey the full concept and did not gain the mark. On **Question 33**, there were many acceptable attempts to spell *championnat du monde* but incorrect attempts from weaker candidates such as *champignon* and *champagne* were seen by Examiners. On **Question 34**, candidates needed to use part of the verb *commencer* + part of the verb *marcher* to gain the mark. Alternative answers such as *quand elle a marché pour la première fois* or *quand elle a appris à marcher* were also successful. Some candidates did not read the question well on **Question 35** and answered with a place instead of a person. There was some confusion here and instead of identifying the mother as her trainer some stated it was the club or *un entraîneur*. Those who answered *mère et entraîneur* or *mère et club* invalidated their answers as the correct message was distorted. On **Question 36** candidates heard on the recording *le sentiment le plus fort pour moi, c'est que je me sens libre*. The weaker candidates chose to answer using the word they first heard, *fort* rather than *libre*. Some tried to render *je me sens* (which was not necessary due to the wording of the question) and wrote *sans libre* which distorted the meaning. Those who wrote *fort et libre* invalidated their answer. Candidates were quite successful at identifying *attention* on **Question 37** but some misheard and did not read the question carefully and wrote *natation*. Others wrote *concentration*. It is well worth reminding candidates that on this paper they should write exactly what they hear rather than trying to find an alternative word. On **Question 38**, candidates needed to identify *furieuse*. There were many inaccurate spellings here but provided that the answer started with *furi* and ended with one of the acceptable endings on the mark scheme, the mark was scored. Consequently, fairly good numbers managed to score here. On **Question 39**, two elements were needed to score the mark, *plus* and *détermination*. This was attempted reasonably well. Many could identify *détermination* but some did not use the comparative. The answer *beaucoup de détermination* was also accepted. Some incorrect responses featured an inappropriate word split such as *dé termination*. The final question was one of the most challenging on the paper but was well done by the best candidates who successfully identified *plaisir*. Many could not spell *plaisir* and weaker candidates sometimes thought that Muriel continued to climb as she wanted to be the best climber and had not identified the negative coming before the very last statement heard.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 0520/12 Listening</p>
--

Key messages

- The format and question types in the Listening test were the same as in June 2016. Candidates were usually well aware of the requirements of the examination.
- The candidate performance on this paper was similar in standard to that of June 2016. As intended, there was a gradient of difficulty on the paper and the final section was found to be the most challenging but even weaker candidates usually scored some marks on this section.
- Candidates should be advised to write very clearly in blue or black pen. Some candidates wrote first in pencil and then appeared to overwrite answers in pen but, in so doing, they left first attempts at ticks or words visible, which was often very difficult to read. Candidates should cross out very clearly any material which they do not wish the Examiner to consider.
- Most candidates appreciated the need to write as briefly as possible, as full sentences are not required in responses. Candidates should be aware that if answers are long, there is the danger that extra distorting details may be included which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer.
- Answers were marked on the basis of communication and comprehension. Some candidates still need to be more aware concerning ticking the correct number of boxes in objective exercises.
- Examiners reported again this year that very poor handwriting often made scripts difficult to read.

General comments

This session's paper was found to be generally in keeping with the demands made in previous sessions. The candidature overall performed quite well on the first two sections of the paper with very few candidates omitting questions. Nearly all candidates went on to attempt the final section with weaker candidates being able to be successful on a few questions in each of the two exercises. A full range of performance was seen across the paper and Examiners found the paper to be at an appropriate level of difficulty for the candidature and a large proportion of candidates scored well on the paper. The exercises discriminated appropriately across the gradient of difficulty in the paper. It was also evident that the examined topics and contexts were accessible to all candidates.

The majority of candidates were usually familiar with the rubrics and were aware of the requirements of the test types. Some candidates however were unsure as to the correct number of boxes to be ticked on multiple choice exercises and, in particular, on **Question 16**. There were cases of candidates ticking too few or too many boxes. A few candidates tried to use a system of both ticks and crosses; either is acceptable but not both used together. Should candidates need to take notes during their listening time, they should be advised not to write these notes in the space intended for the answer.

The format of the exam had not changed since last year and the French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and density and featured both monologues and conversations. The emphasis of the questions moved from targeting the candidates' ability to pick out information contained in short factual pieces, to testing their ability to understand specific factual information, as well as opinions and explanations, in longer narrated accounts and conversations. Longer extracts featured a variety of register and references to both past and future events.

Candidates in many Centres had appreciated the need to write as **briefly and clearly as possible and understood that full sentences were not required in response**. Brief answers are preferable on this paper as candidates do not run the risk of extra distorting material being added which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. Candidates also seemed aware of the need not to answer or infer from general knowledge. There were fewer cases this year of candidates including extra material which was not on the recording.

This year, all Examiners reported more cases of poor handwriting which sometimes made it very difficult to read answers. Centres must stress to candidates the need to write clearly and not to use pencil to make a first attempt and then overwrite this in pen. **Please remind all candidates that, if they wish to make a second attempt at an answer, they should cross out their first attempt very clearly. This is particularly important on multiple choice questions.** Any answer which a candidate does not wish the Examiner to consider should be clearly crossed out. If Examiners see alternative answers the mark is not awarded. Likewise, letters should be clearly written as poorly shaped letters may be seen as unacceptable spellings of answers. Many Examiners also commented this year that, on some questions, candidates left the answer blank. Candidates should always be encouraged to attempt every question.

The Listening paper tests comprehension. Accuracy in written responses in French is not an issue provided that the message is clear. If the answer sounds and reads like French it will be accepted provided that the message is unambiguous.

Centres are reminded that reading time for each exercise is included in the pauses throughout the paper and there is not extra reading time before the examination starts. It remains important to give candidates practice on past papers to ensure that they are familiar with the rubrics and when the pauses occur. It also helps to remind candidates that they can expect to hear all recordings twice.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–8

This exercise was completed very well by the vast majority of candidates and many scored full or nearly full marks here. In **Question 3**, less able candidates were not able to distinguish *tout droit* from *à droite* and gave the wrong answer. There was also some confusion over *rond-point* which was not understood by a minority of candidates. The only other question which caused some difficulty was **Question 8**, where some candidates were not able to correctly identify *le vieux quartier*. It was exceptionally pleasing to see that very few candidates omitted questions in this section of the exam.

Exercise 2 Questions 9–15

The first question in this section was successfully completed by a significant number of candidates but where the number was incorrect, it was often rendered as *45* rather than *400/quatre cents*. Candidates clearly found this question less accessible, as it was the only question where significant numbers of candidates omitted to answer the question. In the remaining questions in this exercise, many candidates scored 5 or 6 marks. The less able candidates found *oreillers* difficult in **Question 10** and sometimes confused *plats* and *pain* in **Question 14** and incorrectly chose option **C** instead of the correct answer **B**. In general terms, this proved to be a very successful exercise for the majority of candidates.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 16

In this section of the exam, candidates heard four young people speaking about different forms of celebrations. A significant number of candidates scored 4 or 5 marks on this exercise but only the most able scored all 6 marks. The final section, where the correct answers were **(j)** and **(k)**, proved to be the least accessible.

Exercise 2 Questions 17–25

In the first part of this exercise, many candidates scored 4 or 5 marks. Even weaker candidates were able to score marks here, notably in **Question 17**, **Question 19** and **Question 20**. The first question, **Question 17**, was extremely successful with many candidates answering correctly. Where an incorrect answer was observed, it was usually *porte*. In **Question 18**, again many candidates answered correctly but some answered *habiter* as a guess, rather than leaving a blank. Then in **Question 19**, which required the answer *journaliste*, a significant number of candidates answered this question correctly and **Question 20** was extremely successful, allowing the least able to score at least 1 mark on this exercise. The mark scheme allowed for different renderings of *climat* in **Question 21** but many candidates found this question difficult.

In the second half of this exercise, many candidates scored 2 or 3 marks, with the most able scoring all 4 marks. In **Question 22**, there were many different renderings of *théâtre* and also some synonyms which were allowed in the mark scheme. Candidates were not as successful in the following question, most often invalidating a correct answer with the addition of *français et anglais*. In a similar way, correct answers were invalidated in **Question 24** by the addition of *bibliothèque* to the correct answer *gymnase*. The final question in this section was quite successful, with many candidates answering correctly. The most common incorrect answer here was *cantine*.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26–31

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview with Simon, who was talking about his holidays. It was encouraging that even weaker candidates, who do not always complete some of the last written questions, all kept on going through this exercise and at least scored 1 mark. It was notable that the first three questions proved to be less successful than the second set of three questions and many candidates scored 4 marks or more.

In the first section, the least accessible question was **Question 26**, with many candidates answering incorrectly, but with no discernible pattern to the incorrect answers. Many candidates were unfamiliar with *station balnéaire* heard on the transcript and went straight for the option beginning *station*. In this section, candidates scored at least 1 mark on either **Question 27** or **Question 28** but it was very common to see scores of 2 or even 3 marks in the second half of this exercise. The most successful answers in the second half of the exercise were **Question 30** and **Question 31**.

Exercise 2 Questions 32–40

Although the exercise was based around an accessible topic, it did show the difference between those who could or who could not follow a narrative. In the first question, **Question 32**, the mark scheme allowed for many variations in the spelling of *vétérinaire* and many candidates were able to answer that question successfully. The answer to **Question 33** required two elements, *contact + humain*, and this proved to be one of the least accessible questions in this exercise and also across the whole examination. By contrast, **Question 34** was answered extremely well and proved accessible across the ability range.

In the second group of three questions candidates invalidated their answer in **Question 35**, either by omitting *manquer* or by including *courses* instead of *cours* in their answer. The mark scheme allowed for many different interpretations of the concept of going home to her parents in **Question 36**. **Question 37**, requiring just the word *sport*, was accessible to a large number of candidates and proved to be very successful.

The final group of three questions proved to be the most difficult, confirming the incline of difficulty both in the paper and in this exercise. More able candidates were able to answer **Question 38** correctly but fewer were able to give the two part answer *sauver + vies* in **Question 39**, often unable to render correctly the concept of *vies*. The least accessible question was **Question 40**, requiring three parts to the answer *mieux + connaître + patients*. It was a suitable challenging final question which was answered well by the most able candidates but less able candidates replaced *patients* with *passion*, which would not have fitted the context of the passage.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 0520/13 Listening</p>
--

Key messages

- The format and question types of the Listening test remained as in June 2016. Candidates were usually well aware of the requirements of the examination.
- The candidate performance on this paper was similar in standard to that of June 2016. As intended, there was a gradient of difficulty on the paper and the final section was found to be the most challenging but even weaker candidates usually scored some marks on this section.
- Centres need to remind candidates to write very clearly in blue or black pen. Some candidates wrote first in pencil and then appeared to overwrite answers in pen but, in so doing, they left first attempts at ticks or words visible. This was often very difficult to read. Candidates should cross out very clearly any material which they do not wish the Examiner to consider.
- Most candidates appreciated the need to write as briefly as possible. Full sentences are not required in responses and candidates should be aware that if answers are long, there is the danger that extra distorting details may be included which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer.
- Answers were marked on the basis of communication and comprehension. Some candidates still need to be more aware concerning ticking the correct number of boxes in objective exercises.
- Very poor handwriting often made scripts difficult to read.

General comments

This session's paper was found to be generally in keeping with the demands made in previous sessions. The candidature overall performed quite well on the first two sections of the paper. Nearly all candidates went on to attempt the final section with weaker candidates being able to be successful on a few questions in each of the two exercises. A full range of performance was seen across the paper and Examiners found the paper to be at an appropriate level of difficulty for the candidature. The exercises discriminated appropriately across the gradient of difficulty in the paper. It was also evident that the examined topics and contexts were accessible to all candidates.

The majority of candidates were usually familiar with the rubrics and were aware of the requirements of the test types. Some candidates however were unsure as to the correct number of boxes to be ticked on multiple choice exercises and, in particular, on **Question 16**. There were cases of candidates ticking too few or too many boxes. A few candidates tried to use a system of both ticks and crosses. Either is acceptable but not both used together. Should candidates need to take notes during their listening time, they should be advised not to write these notes in the space intended for the answer.

As last year, the French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and density and featured both monologues and conversations. The emphasis of the questions moved from targeting the candidates' ability to pick out information contained in short factual pieces, to testing their ability to understand specific factual information, as well as opinions and explanations, in longer narrated accounts and conversations. Longer extracts featured a variety of register and references to both past and future events.

Candidates in many Centres had appreciated the need to write as **briefly and clearly as possible and understood that full sentences were not required in response**. Brief answers are preferable on this paper as candidates do not run the risk of extra distorting material being added which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. Candidates also seemed aware of the need not to answer or infer from general knowledge. There were fewer cases this year of candidates including extra material which was not on the recording.

This year, there were more cases of poor handwriting which sometimes made it very difficult to read answers. Centres must stress to candidates the need to write clearly and not to use pencil to make a first attempt and then overwrite this in pen. **Please remind all candidates that, if they wish to make a second attempt at an answer, they should cross out their first attempt very clearly. This is particularly important on multiple choice questions.** Any answer which a candidate does not wish the Examiner to consider should be clearly crossed out. If Examiners see alternative answers the mark is not awarded. Likewise, letters should be clearly written as poorly shaped letters may be seen as unacceptable spellings of answers. Examiners also commented this year that, on some questions, candidates left a blank. Candidates should always be encouraged to attempt every question.

The Listening paper tests comprehension. Accuracy in written responses in French is not an issue provided that the message is clear. If the answer sounds and reads like French it will be accepted provided that the message is unambiguous.

Centres are reminded that reading time for each exercise is included in the pauses throughout the paper and there is not extra reading time before the examination starts. It remains important to give candidates practice on past papers to ensure that they are familiar with the rubrics and when the pauses occur. It also helps to remind candidates that they can expect to hear all recordings twice.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–8

This first exercise tested the understanding of eight short conversations/monologues through multiple choice questions with visual options. Candidates usually performed well on this opening exercise which is intended to give them a confident start. The extracts were straightforward and short. The vocabulary areas tested food, domestic animals, family members, school subjects, times, musical instruments, leisure activities and clothing. Candidates did well on this opening exercise and performed well on all questions except **Question 8** where some were not familiar with *pull*. Performance on this opening exercise was very comparable with that seen in 2016.

Exercise 2 Questions 9–15

Candidates heard a longer extract which featured information about a *club des jeunes*. Questions tested numbers, activities, food and places in town. The first four questions were very well done. On **Question 9**, the number 5 was identified well as was *sport* on **Question 10**. Candidates also went on to be able to identify *cours de cuisine* and *ferme* on **Questions 12** and **13** with relative ease. **Questions 14** and **15** were well done by nearly all candidates. This exercise was attempted better this year than last year.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 16

Performance on this exercise was good and continues to improve as many candidates become accustomed to the exercise type and its requirements. There were still however cases of candidates ticking more than six boxes or four boxes only. Candidates must be reminded to use a consistent method to indicate their answers: ticks or crosses are both acceptable but are likely to cause confusion when used together. They should not attempt to put a tick and a cross in all boxes. Six of the twelve boxes need to be left blank.

Candidates heard four young people talking about world problems. Candidates generally coped well with the first two extracts heard but found option **(f)** quite difficult to identify as being false. Weaker candidates frequently ticked this as a true option. Candidates generally went on to identify on the third extract that Éloïse was afraid for African animals. The most common incorrect option chosen was option **(j)** instead of option **(k)**. Good numbers, as last year scored at least 4 marks here.

Exercise 2 Questions 17–21

In this exercise, candidates heard two interviews in which Simon talked about his life as champion boxer. In the first interview, candidates were required to correct an incorrect detail in each of five statements, a question type with which they were clearly familiar. The missing words were all items which appear in the vocabulary lists of the Defined Content. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test and the extract heard was longer than that heard in the previous exercise. Good numbers identified that

his father had been a boxer on **Question 17** and that when little Simon had wanted to try to ski on **Question 18**. Most were able to give an acceptable spelling of *technique* on **Question 19** and good attempts were made at rendering *forme* on **Question 20**. The most challenging question by far was **Question 21**. On this question attempts at either the words *sucre* or *sucreries* were very poor and only about one third of the candidature was successful here.

Exercise 2 Questions 22–25

Candidates made a fair attempt at the second part of this exercise but clearly found some questions more challenging. On **Question 22** many candidates gained the mark but found **Question 23** a little more difficult. To be successful here candidates needed to identify not just the *compétitions* but also *beaucoup*. Incorrect attempts often featured the answer *formation* which had also been heard on the recording before the correct answer. **Question 24** was the hardest in this section with only the best able to identify the verb *arrêter*. Better attempts were made at **Question 25** with many able to give an acceptable rendering of the word *gymnase*.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26–31

Candidates heard an interview with Benoît who talked about his interest in Japanese music and culture. The topic area was generally accessible and candidates made a good attempt at this exercise. Even the weaker candidates were usually able to score a few marks on this exercise. This was a suitably demanding exercise for this stage of the examination and candidates performed in much the same way on this exercise with a full range of marks evident and a fair number scoring 3 or more marks. The question type used was multiple choice with written options. Questions tested not just specific factual information but also gist understanding over the longer extract. Candidates needed to identify attitudes and emotions in some questions and be able to understand a narrative which, in places, depended upon them understanding a sequence of events. Candidates generally did better on the last three questions in this exercise than on the first three. The questions best attempted were **Questions 30** and **31**. The question found to be the most difficult was **Question 28** but a fair number were successful on this question. There was no particular discernible pattern of incorrect answers on this exercise.

Exercise 2 Questions 32–40

As in 2016, this was found to be an appropriately challenging exercise at this stage of the paper. Many weaker candidates made commendable efforts to answer at least a few questions and were usually able to score a few marks. Very weak candidates however often failed to attempt questions in this last exercise. Candidates heard an interview with Chantal, a school student who had set up her own IT company. There was a good mix of harder and more accessible questions on this last exercise. Most candidates scored some marks with some questions only being successfully answered by, as intended, the most able. The questions were designed to make short responses possible and only a few candidates seemed unaware of this. Candidates should be reminded not to write long answers as sometimes they add extra detail which is not on the recording. This can distort and invalidate an otherwise correct answer. The handwriting seen on this exercise made some scripts very difficult to read.

Candidates made a very good start to this exercise and on **Question 32** nearly all were able to give an acceptable rendering of the word *technologie*. On **Question 33**, weaker candidates often answered *père* as they had also heard the word *parents* on the recording and clearly answered too quickly before they heard the correct information *grand-père*. The next question was also found hard by weaker candidates. Candidates heard *Je me levais même la nuit pour créer mes jeux*. Weaker candidates mistook *jeux* for *jour* and, consequently, did not identify the correct answer. On **Question 35**, candidates needed to express the concept of the parents encouraging Chantal to continue. Any parts of the verbs *encourager* and *continuer* were acceptable. The best answers here were concise. Many however did not include one of the two necessary verbs. Candidates fared better on **Question 36** with over half being able to give an acceptable spelling of *éducatifs*. A fair number were also able to score the mark on **Question 37** and managed to convey the concept that she was young or was only 13 years old. Here, some weaker candidates spelt *jeune* as *jaune* and did not score the mark. **Question 38** was the most challenging question of the test with only the very best candidates able to identify *quelques* and *milliers*. The relevant part of the recording for **Question 39** went on to state *j'ai ouvert un centre pour les enfants malades*. Many here chose to avoid the required answer which required part of the verb *ouvrir* and the word *centre*. Candidates need to be reminded to target the words heard rather than try to paraphrase them and offering synonyms as this creates an extra task for them to have to do in what is already a demanding test requiring several other skills whilst listening. Half the candidates went on to finish the paper well and made an acceptable attempt at rendering *maison plus moderne* on **Question 40**.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 0520/21 Reading</p>

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:

- select carefully only that information from the text that answers the question, in particular in the last two exercises,
- ensure that their answers grammatically answer the question in **Section 3**,
- remember that questions follow the order of the text.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper, and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination. There were few instances of candidates leaving more than a couple of questions blank.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–5

Questions 1–5 proved accessible to almost all candidates, with no discernible pattern of incorrect answers.

Exercise 2 Questions 6–10

Almost all candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

Exercise 3 Questions 11–15

This exercise was accessible for candidates, with **Questions 12** and **14** proving the most challenging. **C** was a common distractor for **Question 12** and **B** for **Question 14**.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 16–20

For this exercise, candidates completed statements in French, choosing words from a list. Some candidates appeared to make use only of perceived meaning of the option words and the text, and did not use the grammatical markers in the sentences to assist with narrowing down their options. *Permet* was a very common distractor for **Question 16**, being chosen almost as frequently as the correct answer. Almost all candidates gave the right answers to **Questions 19** and **20**, but **Questions 17** and **18** also presented difficulties, with *conseille* and *difficile* common distractors for **Question 18**.

Exercise 2 Questions 21–29

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text in which Victor wrote about how he had earned money. The text was mostly straightforward and the vocabulary covered familiar topics. Most candidates were able to cope with the demands of the task. Although long answers are not required, and often only a few words would answer the question, some candidates chose to copy a couple of sentences from the text for each question, although this was less common than in previous series. For this exercise, extraneous material and incorrect tenses are often ignored as long as they do not in some way invalidate the candidate's correct response.

In **Question 24**, some candidates missed out the idea of neighbours. For **Question 26**, a common wrong answer was to state who M Tonti was, rather than answer the question asked. In **Question 27(i)**, some wrote that he could not do his shopping, thus changing the meaning, whereas in **Question 27(ii)** some picked up on the computer problems, which related to a different person. For **Question 29**, some candidates wrote that he still had to work which, on its own, was not enough.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 30–34

In **Section 3**, examiners are expecting a higher level of attention to detail, and for candidates to be more selective of the information they take from the reading texts when correcting the false statements. Candidates are reminded that they should not merely write the opposite of the statement and need to look for the alternative information.

Most candidates scored well on the true-false responses. Candidates cannot be credited with a justification if they have ticked VRAI for the statement, so there is no benefit in writing a justification for every response.

In terms of the justifications, these proved considerably more difficult as is usual. It was often additional information that cost candidates the mark for **Question 30**, incorrect information for **Question 32** and insufficient information for **Question 34**, where two elements were required.

Exercise 2 Questions 35–41

This final exercise was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. Where stronger candidates lost marks it was often through writing too much and including information that did not answer the question. Weaker candidates often simply targeted the wrong information.

Although there were few candidates who left blanks, only a minority scored full marks. There was again some evidence of question words such as *où* not being known.

Most candidates were able to locate the answer to **Question 35**, but a minority presented it in a way that did not answer the question asked, almost always through an indiscriminate lift. **Question 37** proved the most difficult, with candidates supplying much irrelevant information that did not grammatically answer the question.

It is sometimes possible to lift from the text in order to answer questions in this final exercise, but where this is the case, the lift must be precise, in contrast to **Section 2** where candidates merely need to locate the answer. Poor lifting tended to be the problem for **Questions 39** and **40**. For **Question 41**, some candidates focused on the destination rather than the reason for the new contract.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 0520/22 Reading</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should keep their answers brief and focused, particularly in **Section 3**.
- Candidates need to make sure that they read the questions carefully.
- Candidates need to check the accuracy of their spelling, especially with words used in the text/question.

General comments

The paper proved accessible to all the candidates. The vast majority attempted all sections and exercises on the paper.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–5

Most candidates scored the 5 marks available for this exercise.

Exercise 2 Questions 6–10

This exercise was also very successful and the vast majority of candidates scored the 5 marks. Those who did not often chose **C** for **Question 7** instead of **A**, probably because of the use of *sport* in the statement.

Exercise 3 Questions 11–15

This multiple choice exercise based on a short text proved very successful and the vast majority of candidates scored full marks. Some only scored 3 marks as they chose **B** instead of **C** for **Question 14** and **C** instead of **B** for **Question 15**.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 16–20

For this exercise, candidates had to read a short text and then choose from a list the most appropriate word to fill in gaps. Some candidates found this task rather challenging. However, most correctly chose *parler* for **Question 18** and *préfèrent* for **Question 19**. *Parfois* instead of *régulièrement* for **Question 16** and *collection* instead of *passion* for **Question 17** were common errors.

Exercise 2 Questions 21–29

For this exercise, candidates were asked to read a longer piece of text and answer questions in French. What was required was for the candidates to locate the correct information within the text. The responses were marked for communication only and text lifted directly from the passage was rewarded.

This exercise was very successful and the vast majority of candidates scored at least 8 out of 10 marks.

Candidates did not have to write in full sentences as the key words on their own were rewarded. *Juillet* for **Question 21**, *occupée* for **Question 22**, *examen* for **Question 23**. For **Question 24**, a longer answer was

expected: *(elle) ressemblait à une chambre de petite fille*. For **Question 25**, either *vieux jouets, jouets d'enfant* or *vieux jouets d'enfant* were rewarded. For **Question 26**, candidates could give the full sentence *j'ai aussi une table avec assez de place* or *une table* as long as the preposition *sur* had been included. **Question 27** was very well answered. Some candidates did not score the mark for **Question 28** as they answered *elle avait une liste* rather than *il y avait un très grand choix (d'articles)*. Both **Questions 29** and **30** were very successful.

Section 3

In **Section 3**, candidates need to answer questions in such a way as to demonstrate that they have understood the text/questions. Candidates who lift indiscriminately do not demonstrate genuine comprehension and, therefore, cannot score the marks. The inclusion of unnecessary connectives often resulted in the invalidation of an otherwise correct answer. Candidates would do well to be guided by the length of the space allocated for an answer and should ensure that their answer fits within that space.

Exercise 1 Questions 31–35

Candidates are expected to read a longer text and then decide which of the given statements are *Vrai* and which are *Faux*. They are also told that two of the statements are *Vrai* and that three are *Faux*. Having made their choice, they must then correct the false ones in the style of the example given. No credit is given for a sentence which just adds *ne...pas* to the original statement.

Questions 32 and **35** were the two most often incorrectly identified as true or false.

For **Question 31**, which was a *Faux* statement, the expected answer was *son stage lui a plu*. Candidates who retained *donc* in their answer could not score the mark. For **Question 32**, the correct answer was *les chiens écoutent seulement une personne*. The full lift *les chiens écoutent seulement une personne, celle qu'ils connaissent bien et en qui ils ont confiance* could not be rewarded as it did not show genuine comprehension. **Question 33** was quite successful and many candidates correctly answered *le plus difficile pour lui a été de s'habituer au froid*.

Questions 34 and **35** were *Vrai* statements and required no correction.

Exercise 2 Questions 36–42

The final exercise was, as intended, the most demanding part of the paper. Even though many candidates found this exercise rather challenging, many persevered and managed to score a few marks. Many were able to locate the correct part of the text but were not selective enough when choosing what was a relevant response to the question or they were unable to manipulate the language to give an acceptable answer. Lengthy responses did not score the marks as they did not show genuine comprehension. Candidates need to read the questions carefully and ensure that their answers grammatically answer the questions. It is also essential that they copy accurately words which have been given in the text or the question.

The answer to **Question 36** was either *parce que leurs musiciens favoris étaient les mêmes* or *ils aimaient les mêmes musiciens*. *En parlant de leurs musiciens favoris (qui étaient les mêmes)* was not rewarded as the key word in the question was *pourquoi*, not *comment*. For **Question 37**, candidates who answered *ils ont été ravis* or *ils ont tout de suite acheté des billets* gained the mark. For **Question 38**, candidates could answer either *le festival dure deux jours* or *le festival est en plein air*. Candidates who located the correct information but quoted indiscriminately *une tente et des vêtements chauds car le festival dure deux jours* could not score the mark as they did not show that they had fully understood the question. The vast majority of candidates were able to give the correct answer *de sympathiques voisins* for **Question 39**. **Question 40** proved quite a challenge for many candidates.

Whilst many provided *d'immenses tentes rouges* for **Question 41**, their use of *devant* rather than *dans* indicated that they had not fully understood the text. For **Question 42**, some manipulation of the text was required. Candidates were expected to turn *on partageait tous l'amour de la même musique* to *les spectateurs partageaient tous l'amour de la même musique*.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 0520/23 Reading</p>

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper candidates should:

- ensure that all questions are answered,
- make any changes made to an answer unambiguous,
- devote time and attention to checking final answers.

General comments

This paper presented candidates with an appropriate challenge and gradient of difficulty. There was confident handling generally of the range of task types but sometimes signs that answers had been rushed. There is adequate time to answer all questions with care. It was pleasing to note that the tendency to write excessively long answers (in particular in **Section 3**) was much less in evidence this year.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–5

This opening exercise was generally well answered but was not without its stumbling blocks. In **Question 1**, option **A** *carottes* was a fairly frequent wrong choice for *haricots*. It was surprising that *portable* in **Question 3** was not better known. Option **A** was the usual distractor.

Exercise 2 Questions 6–10

Candidates had little difficulty generally with this exercise.

Exercise 3 Questions 11–15

Here again candidates were confident and successful with this exercise, showing good understanding of the text and the multiple choice questions. Any wrong answers were usually confined to **Question 12** and **Question 15**.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 16–20

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a short information piece about a village art club and complete statements in French, choosing words from a given list, in order to show comprehension of the text.

Generally this exercise was completed very well. Even where there were errors, candidates had nevertheless often attempted to complete the sentences with a grammatically appropriate item of vocabulary from the list.

Exercise 2 Questions 21–29

Candidates read a blog by Jean-Paul on the subject of his holidays in the south of France and a day trip to Monaco. This was a straightforward exercise requiring candidates to understand questions in French, select the appropriate information from the text and to write down an appropriate response. The text was clearly well understood by the majority of candidates and high scores were common. The range of question types and question words were also well understood. It was pleasing to note that there were few examples of overlong answers and that copying from the passage was usually accurate.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 30–34

For this exercise, candidates had to read a longer text about Sylvie's decision to live a more ecological life. The rubric instructs candidates to read the text, tick VRAI or FAUX against five statements about the text and to write corrected version of the three statements they have picked out as false. Candidates are informed in the rubric that three of the statements are false and two are true. In spite of this there were some candidates who did not heed this information.

There was a high measure of success in identifying the VRAI/FAUX and indicating in the box with a tick. Candidates should be advised to check that at least one of the two boxes is ticked for each question and a change of mind needs to be indicated unambiguously.

The task of correcting the incorrect statements was justifiably found to be quite challenging. In **Section 3** of the paper, it is not sufficient to locate and copy the information from the text to show understanding. Candidates need to be accurate and selective in the language they use. For **Question 30**, the answer *elle les a donnés à une organisation qui aide les pauvres* was a valid correction of the statement. The retention of *donc* from the text was considered to be an invalidating addition. **Question 31** was found to be quite difficult to answer. *Sylvie a moins de provisions dans ses placards* was the concept required. Many answers did not convey this or added unwanted information about shopping or creating imaginative recipes. The third false statement (**Question 33**) was more accessible and returned a higher rate of success.

Exercise 2 Questions 35–40

This final exercise required the reading and understanding of a longer passage about Émilie who comes across a solution to her problems of finding accommodation as a student in Paris. Comprehension was tested by means of questions and answers in French. Most candidates attempted answers to all the questions. The most successful responses to this task demonstrated careful reading of the text and the questions and the presentation of brief but focused answers. For some answers, manipulation of the language may be required but in many cases a careful lifting of information from the text shows comprehension. Answers must grammatically answer the questions and the language needs to be accurate. **Questions 35, 37, 38** and **40(i)** proved to be the most accessible. **Question 36** was found the most difficult.

FRENCH

Paper 0520/41
Writing

Key messages

- It is vital that candidates be familiar with all the common interrogative adverbs.
- In **Question 2**, candidates must address all the tasks.
- The recommended word count for both **Question 2** and **Question 3** is not mandatory. Candidates should not feel obliged to remove significant detail to meet the word count.
- Candidates should read carefully each of the options in **Question 3** and should choose the one which best allows them to demonstrate the linguistic knowledge they have.
- Candidates aiming for the highest grades should make sure that they use common vocabulary and structures accurately.
- In **Question 3**, in order to access the top bands for Other linguistic features, candidates must demonstrate that they can use the complex structures which are detailed in the specification.
- Candidates should always aim for a high standard of legibility and presentation. When candidates write in pen over an initial draft in pencil their work is often difficult to read.

General comments

The full ability range was represented. The gradient of difficulty in the questions allowed the majority of candidates to show what they knew and could do.

Question 1

One mark was awarded for each noun which identified a sport represented by the illustrations. Candidates should be reminded that if they cannot recall a particular word, they are free to add different nouns which fit the context of the question. When nouns are used a definite/indefinite articles is not required.

Question 2

Communication

One mark was awarded for each relevant detail. It is a requirement that candidates use a verb for each piece of information in order to gain a mark. Candidates are not required to provide the same amount of information for each task, however candidates should be advised that marks for Communication are awarded only to information directly required by the tasks. Candidates should remember that the most effective way of gaining full marks is to address each task in a new sentence and where possible to add extra relevant detail.

Candidates should remember that the word count is a recommendation and not an absolute requirement. If they write over 80 words, they should not indiscriminately remove parts of their response. The act of editing a piece on completion is quite difficult, especially if there is little time available. Unfortunately, some candidates crossed out details which were vital for the successful completion of the task.

Candidates are also reminded that the maximum of 10 marks for Communication cannot be accessed if they omit a task.

Language

The published criteria offer a clear guide to what is expected. Candidates should use basic sentence structure, using appropriate verb forms, definite/indefinite articles, adjectives, time phrases and prepositional phrases.

Question 3 offered a choice of three options: an email, an article, a story line to be continued.

A crucial decision for candidates is: which question will allow me to show best the French that I know? This is particularly important given the method by which marks are awarded across the three categories. Candidates are advised therefore to read all three options before making their choice. A close reading of the tasks within the questions is recommended: this will allow candidates to think about the vocabulary, verb tenses and structures which will be needed in order to respond effectively and fully to the question.

Frequently the rubric provides key vocabulary. Candidates should always copy correctly key vocabulary items from the rubric and also look for clues of the gender of any significant nouns: this session there was clear evidence of candidates not taking advantage of the vocabulary and structures provided in the rubric.

In the very best work, the language flowed naturally.

Communication: to gain the 2 marks available for each task, candidates must respond to each of the five tasks using a tense which is appropriate. Candidates are strongly advised to answer each task in the tense used in the rubric. The use of a different tense will distort the meaning and invariably lead to the loss of marks. Whilst it is always a good idea to add an extra detail or opinion where possible, it must be remembered that excessive length often leads to error, repetition and irrelevance. Candidates should be advised to be selective when they are planning their responses.

Verbs: ticks are awarded to correct verbs. The maximum mark of 8 is awarded for 18 verbs. There were instances again this session of candidates who were able to maintain control of verbs and who exceeded this total.

Candidates should be reminded of the correct use of verbal structures such as *avant de* and *après avoir / après être*. There were many who seemed not to be aware that these constructions can only be used when the action refers to the subject of the main verb: e.g. *en arrivant en ville, il a commencé à pleuvoir*, there is no reward for the first element.

When some conjunctions are used, grammar rules require strict observance of a sequence of tense e.g. *si j'ai le choix, j'habiterais à la campagne* is incorrect by these rules. The candidate should have written either *si j'avais le choix, j'habiterais à la campagne* or *si j'ai le choix, j'habiterai à la campagne*.

There is increasing evidence of candidates using the subjunctive. This is not always an indicator of linguistic competence, especially when the verbs carrying the details demanded by the tasks are incorrect. Some candidates used the subjunctive mood numerous times, often clumsily to convey ideas which would normally be expressed by a more simple verbal structure. Some uses were particularly tortuous: *il a fallu que nous ne l'ayons pas avant car nos anciens voisins étaient allergiques aux chats*. Examiners reported frequent use of *autant que je sache*; again, this was not always appropriately used e.g. *autant que je sache j'aime vivre en ville*.

Other linguistic features: the published table of grade descriptors highlights the range of language structures expected. The ablest candidates were able to demonstrate, among other things, varied sentence patterns using subordinate clauses (e.g. *quand, si, parce que, car, qui*) object pronouns, linking words/conjunctions, (e.g. *donc, cependant*), strong negatives (*ne... jamais, ne... plus*), comparative/superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs, prepositions (e.g. *depuis, pendant, pour*) and be familiar with some less common vocabulary, pertinent to the subject matter. This session, there was less evidence of many of these structures, particularly object pronouns.

It is important for all candidates to show control of basic structures, including correct spelling, gender, adjectival agreement, possessive adjectives, expressions of quantity, common prepositions, without this they will not access the top most bands.

There were many inconsistencies in work seen this session e.g. the common noun *la maison* as indicated below, confusion between *dernier* and *derrière*, the misspelling of *maintenant, beaucoup, par exemple*, the lack of adjectival agreements e.g. *une grand (sic) ville*, the lack of elision in, for example, *parce qu'il y a* were all frequently seen.

Candidates showed that they were familiar with *à mon avis* and *selon moi* when communicating their opinions. However, too many candidates used these inappropriately: *selon moi, je pense que...* or *à mon avis, j'aime...*

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1: Au centre de loisirs

This straightforward question provided candidates with an opportunity to establish a base for further success.

The rubric and the pictures established that sporting activities were required. Candidates had little difficulty naming five. Nouns and verb forms were equally acceptable. For the most part candidates used the words for those activities illustrated. The published mark scheme gives full coverage of the range of words which candidates also chose to offer. There were no notable difficulties but interestingly candidates were not always sure about *tennis de table*.

Question 2: Manger et boire

Communication

There was mixed success for candidates on this question. There were many candidates who achieved full marks. There was however a significant proportion of candidates whose French was evidently competent but who did not provide the information required.

As has been mentioned in previous sessions the word count is a guide. Candidates, thinking that they had written too much, again crossed out details which would have gained them marks.

Task 1 required candidates to say what meals they normally eat at home and at school. The mark scheme allowed candidates to write freely about their normal routine wherever they lived. Marks were awarded for meals as well as for specific foods. However, there was no reward for vague statements such as *je mange beaucoup*.

Candidates gained marks for a variety of information: *je prends le petit déjeuner et le dîner à la maison et je prends le déjeuner à l'école / je mange un croissant et je bois du jus d'orange à la maison / je ne mange pas à l'école*. Candidates who gave the information using a single verb gained a mark for each specific reference: *je prends le déjeuner à l'école et le dîner à la maison*.

In **Task 2**, candidates were invited to comment on school food. This was an opportunity to provide a number of opinions: some candidates expressed both approval and dissatisfaction and were rewarded for both. Comments about particular school food mentioned in the first task were also rewarded. Negative comments were rather more common. Whenever there is the chance to write about food, candidates tend to use the adjective *délicieux*. The spelling of this word is not as well-known as it should be and there were many spellings which did not communicate the intended idea: marks were not always gained as the Mark Scheme indicates.

Task 3 gave candidates the chance to gain a number of marks and many took advantage. As with the previous task, they provided both positive and negative opinions and relevant reasons. A mark was available for the initial comment (e.g. *j'aime / j'adore / je préfère / je n'aime pas / je déteste*) and a mark for each of the reasons given (e.g. *c'est bon pour la santé / les baguettes sont magnifiques / c'est trop épicé*). Candidates often needed the adjectives of nationality (e.g. *français, italien, chinois, indien*) but their spelling sometimes let them down. Similarly, *la cuisine* was also a word which was a challenge for some. Candidates who used local words for ethnic foods which do not have a French equivalent were rewarded.

Task 4 required candidates to say what they would like to eat at next New Year. It is expected that candidates use the appropriate time frame in answering but, as always, that is considered under Language. Most candidates gained a mark here and some gained an additional mark if they mentioned what they would drink.

Language

Most candidates could formulate sentences, which is a requirement for the award of marks for Communication. However, although the verb forms were not always secure, the intended meanings were conveyed effectively enough which meant that most candidates scored 4 or 5 marks. Both in **Question 2** and in **Question 3** there was evidence to suggest that a small proportion of candidates confuse *penser* and *prendre*.

Many were not able to formulate a correct conditional tense: it is important that candidates be able to use a straightforward structure such as *je voudrais* followed by an infinitive.

It does help the overall mark for Language if the words provided in the question are correctly copied (e.g. *normalement, nourriture, étrangers*).

Section 2

Candidates must look carefully at each of the three options and choose the question which they are best equipped to answer.

Question 3 (a): Ma nouvelle maison

This question attracted 48% of candidates.

Communication

In the first task, candidates were required to state when they moved house. This proved to be quite straightforward for most candidates, as it required simple manipulation of the verb in the question and the addition of a time phrase (e.g. *la semaine dernière / il y a un mois / le 20 mars*). There was some evidence of candidates being unaware of the significant difference in meaning between *la semaine dernière* and *la dernière semaine*. Some candidates did not copy correctly the spelling of the past participle *déménagé* and thus forfeited the marks available.

In **Task 2**, candidates were asked to explain how they felt about moving. The emotional element of the response needed to be in a past tense for the award of both marks: this proved to be an issue for a significant proportion of candidates. A wide range of reasons were offered, some successfully completed the task by adding *de quitter mes amis*. Most however used a clause introduced by *parce que* or *car*. Candidates who took a positive view gained both marks for comments such as *j'étais content parce que la maison était trop petite*.

For **Task 3**, a simple description of the new house gained the marks. This was a successful task and the vast majority of candidates gained marks here. Many candidates did write at some length: for the most part, the details were informative and relevant but not particularly advantageous in terms of marks as the vocabulary was quite basic and simple sentence patterns were used repeatedly.

Candidates gained 2 marks for giving an advantage of living in this new house in **Task 4**. The issue of correctly copying words provided was again a matter of some concern: *avantage* too frequently became *advantage*. Candidates provided a very wide variety of positive aspects of the new house, some giving more than one. In this instance, there was some benefit as they tended to use more complex language (e.g. *j'ai ma propre chambre / la maison est plus moderne que l'autre / il y a une gare donc je peux prendre le train / on a le chauffage central*).

The future or conditional tense was expected in **Task 5**. Most candidates could do this effectively and quite familiar vocabulary gained the marks (e.g. *je vais aller au cinéma / je vais faire une promenade à la plage / je voudrais découvrir mon nouveau quartier*). A number of candidates chose to write extensively here, sometimes extending their answers by 50%. It was unnecessary as they had for the most part already met the recommended word count. What was written was often not strictly relevant: the information given was not confined to what they planned to do the following weekend, there were, for example, references to future holidays. Candidates should be discouraged from doing this.

Verbs

There was a dip in performance compared to the last session. Candidates tended to use repeatedly the same verb patterns. *La maison est / il y a / la maison se trouve* was one way of giving a simple detail using a different verb. Some found opportunities to use a range of verbs by giving additional details about the removal and reasons for being sad or happy about moving.

Candidates must check their work as marks were lost through carelessness. The misspelling of *déménagé*, already mentioned, meant the loss of verb marks as well as marks for Communication. *Les avantages est / les avantages sont / les avantage sont* were other common errors which entailed the loss of marks for verbs.

Other linguistic features

Candidates must show control both of basic structure and knowledge of complex structure. Successful candidates demonstrated those qualities (e.g. *j'étais extrêmement triste et je le suis toujours car j'adorais mon ancienne maison / la maison est au moins trois fois plus grande que l'ancienne / la maison est près de la plage, ce qui me plaît beaucoup / j'ai hâte de découvrir le nouveau quartier*).

There was evidence of far too many errors, for example in the use of the noun *maison*: the gender was incorrect, adjectives did not have the appropriate agreement and even the noun itself was misspelt.

Question 3 (b): Une ville que j'aime

The 45% of candidates who chose this option were as successful as those who chose **Question 3 (a)**. As candidates realised, it was possible to respond to each of the tasks in a straightforward way, using largely very familiar vocabulary and structures.

Communication

In **Task 1**, candidates were required to say what they saw on their last visit to their chosen town/city. It was expected that candidates would use either *voir* or *regarder* when formulating their answer. Typical details included *j'ai vu des monuments historiques / nous avons vu la Tour Eiffel / on a regardé un match de foot*.

In **Task 2**, as in the first task, a past tense was needed for the information about what they did. Many confined themselves to relaying simple information, such as *j'ai mangé au restaurant / j'ai pris beaucoup de photos / nous avons visité les marchés traditionnels*.

In **Task 3**, candidates were required to give a reason for liking the place, in an appropriate tense. Again, many gained the marks for quite simple but valid information: *la ville est très animée / les gens sont sympa / c'est ma ville natale / j'aime apprendre l'histoire de la ville*.

Task 4 invited candidates to mention a disadvantage of living in large towns generally. Candidates knew the type of vocabulary needed here, with references to noise, traffic, pollution, transport, cost and security issues. There were opportunities to use more sophisticated structures, e.g. *il y a beaucoup plus de bruit que dans la campagne*.

Not all candidates read the question carefully. Those who referred to a problem of living in the town they liked did not give the information required and were rewarded with only 1 mark.

The marks in **Task 5** were awarded for the explanation of why they would wish to live in either a town or in the countryside. Candidates were expected to make the context clear by introducing the reason using a future/conditional verb, e.g. *je voudrais habiter*. Reasons often reflected comments previously made (e.g. *ce serait plus calme / il n'y a pas de bruit ou de pollution / je pourrais faire du shopping tous les jours / le transport est meilleur / on peut trouver du travail plus facilement*).

As with **Question 3 (a)**, there were many extended responses here: some candidates went way beyond the task set to explain their plans for the rest of their lives.

Verbs

The performance here was a little better than in **Question 3 (a)**, partly because candidates found it easier to use a range of verbs to refer to their activities during the visit. There was evidence that candidates do not know very well the spelling of *rencontrer*, similarly some candidates persist in writing *j'ai visté*.

Other linguistic features

Candidates who hope to achieve well in this area must be able to manipulate basic grammar. The following illustrate the work of candidates who could do that: *je la visite presque toutes les vacances car c'est la plus grande ville du pays / chaque fois que j'y vais / cependant j'aurais aimé y rester plus longtemps / ma mère m'a dit que ça coûte cher de vivre dans le centre / j'adore les villes car chaque fois qu'on sort on découvre quelque chose de nouveau*.

As with **Question 3 (a)**, candidates made basic errors with crucial vocabulary: here with *la ville*. Again, there was some insecurity with the gender and adjectives were often misplaced and lacking in agreement.

Question 3 (c): Mon stage dans une école primaire

Just 6.5% of candidates attempted this option.

Communication

The question required candidates to write throughout in the past tense. There were some who were not able to maintain the narrative as required. However, as can be seen from the examples below, it was possible to be very successful using quite familiar vocabulary and simple sentence structure.

Candidates gained 2 marks for each of three details describing what they did with the children. The following demonstrate the types of responses given: *j'ai fait du sport avec les élèves / j'ai raconté des histoires / j'ai aidé les élèves dans le cours d'histoire / j'ai dû préparer des activités pour les élèves / on est allé au zoo / nous avons emmené les élèves en classe de ski.*

There were no marks for references to what the children did, e.g. *ils ont lu des livres.*

Candidates were invited to say how they themselves or the children reacted. There was an interesting range of comments, from simple to more complex ideas: *j'ai trouvé le stage magnifique / les élèves étaient bruyants / j'ai trouvé que les élèves avaient beaucoup d'énergie / j'étais surpris car les filles jouaient mieux que les garçons.*

References to the reactions of the children were equally effective: *les élèves ont été très contents / les enfants se sont amusés / les élèves ont aimé jouer au foot / ils étaient contents d'avoir un professeur plus jeune / ils ont pensé que c'était nul et ennuyeux.*

There was some flexibility in the mark scheme. If they had communicated only two activities, candidates were rewarded for both comments on their own and those of the children.

A further 2 marks were awarded to candidates who explained what impact this work experience had on their career plans. There were both positive and negative views: *je sais que je serai professeur / je ne pense pas que j'arriverais à rester calme / avant je voulais être professeur, maintenant je pense que je voudrais faire un autre métier.*

Verbs

Candidates who had wisely chosen this option demonstrated some consistent control of verbs in past tenses. The narrative allowed them to introduce a wide range of verbs and candidates who could use past tenses with confidence established good scores.

Other linguistic features

With the freedom to introduce the timescale and the activities they wished in recounting what happened, candidates could show off a good range of clause types, prepositional and adverbial phrases and adjectives with appropriate agreements. There was more evidence of successful use of object pronouns than in the other questions: *je restais à côté des enfants et je les aidais à comprendre les exercices / j'ai trouvé que les élèves étaient très bruyants et cela m'a le plus choqué / les enfants voulaient tout le temps faire des jeux au lieu d'étudier / j'ai appris que si on est patient, les enfants s'amuse beaucoup.*

FRENCH

Paper 0520/42
Writing

Key messages

- Candidates are advised to highlight keywords in tasks.

General comments

The full ability range was represented. The gradient of difficulty in the questions allowed the majority of candidates to show what they knew and could do.

Question 1

One mark was awarded for each noun which identified an activity represented by the illustrations. Candidates should be reminded that if they cannot recall a particular word, they are free to add different nouns which fit the context of the question. When nouns are used a definite/indefinite articles is not required.

Question 2

Communication

One mark was awarded for each relevant detail. It is a requirement that candidates use a verb for each piece of information in order to gain a mark. Candidates are not required to provide the same amount of information for each task, however candidates should be advised that marks for Communication are awarded only to information directly required by the tasks. Candidates should remember that the most effective way of gaining full marks is to address each task in a new sentence and where possible to add extra relevant detail.

Candidates are also reminded that the maximum of 10 marks for Communication cannot be accessed if they omit a task.

Language

The published criteria offer a clear guide to what is expected. Candidates should use basic sentence structure, using appropriate verb forms, definite/indefinite articles, adjectives, time phrases and prepositional phrases.

Question 3 offered a choice of three options: an email, an article, a story line to be continued.

A crucial decision for candidates is: which question will allow me to show best the French that I know? This is particularly important given the method by which marks are awarded across the three categories. Candidates are advised therefore to read all three options before making their choice. A close reading of the tasks within the questions is recommended: this will allow candidates to think about the vocabulary, verb tenses and structures which will be needed in order to respond effectively and fully to the question.

Frequently the rubric provides key vocabulary. Candidates should always copy correctly key vocabulary items from the rubric and also look for clues of the gender of any significant nouns: this session there was evidence of candidates not taking advantage of the vocabulary and structures provided in the rubric.

Communication: to gain the 2 marks available for each task, candidates must respond to each of the five tasks using a tense which is appropriate. Candidates are strongly advised to answer each task in the tense used in the rubric. The use of a different tense will distort the meaning and invariably lead to the loss of marks. Whilst it is always a good idea to add an extra detail or opinion where possible, it must be

remembered that excessive length often leads to error, repetition and irrelevance. Candidates should be advised to be selective when they are planning their responses.

Verbs: ticks are awarded to correct verbs. The maximum mark of 8 is awarded for 18 verbs. There were instances again this session of candidates who were able to maintain control of verbs and who exceeded this total.

Other linguistic features: the published table of grade descriptors highlights the range of language structures expected. The ablest candidates were able to demonstrate, among other things, varied sentence patterns using subordinate clauses (e.g. *quand, si, parce que, car, qui*) object pronouns, linking words/conjunctions, (e.g. *donc, cependant*), strong negatives (*ne...jamais, ne...plus*), comparative/superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs, prepositions (e.g. *depuis, pendant, pour*) and be familiar with some less common vocabulary, pertinent to the subject matter.

It is important for all candidates to show control of basic structures, including correct spelling, gender, adjectival agreement, possessive adjectives, expressions of quantity, common prepositions, without this they will not access the top most bands.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1: Au club des jeunes

Candidates were asked to write a list of eight activities which they could do at a youth club.

To maximise their chances of scoring the 5 marks available, candidates are well advised to provide a list of eight words. The eight pictures only serve as a guide and candidates are free to use different items provided that they fit the context of the question. *Roller, cuisine* and *danse* were well known by the vast majority. Some candidates were not so secure with their use of *tennis de table* and *photographie*. Nouns and verb forms were equally acceptable.

The vast majority of candidates scored the 5 marks available.

Question 2: On fait du shopping

For this exercise, candidates were asked to write an essay of 80 to 90 words. It was pleasing to see that candidates kept to the recommended word count.

Many candidates did not score more than 7 marks for Communication as they did not provide enough details for each task.

To ensure that they score the 10 marks available, candidates are advised to:

- Check that they have addressed every task and sub-task.
- Produce clear and concise answers which remain focused on the task.
- Offer a variety of choices. Candidates who only provided a couple of details often found it difficult to communicate sufficient relevant points.
- Write in well-defined paragraphs.

In **Task 1**, candidates who were able to list the types of shops found in their town/village often achieved at least 1 mark. *Supermarché, marché, boulangerie* and *boucherie* were well known. *Des magasins pour les vêtements ou l'informatique* were also rewarded. Some candidates who listed brand names without explaining what type of shops they were, did not score the mark.

Even though the word *magasins* was used in the question, some candidates used the word *magazines* in their answer. As this distorted the message, a mark could not be awarded.

Candidates had to provide two details in **Task 2**: when they usually go shopping and with whom they like to go shopping. Candidates who answered *le week-end, je fais/j'aime faire du shopping avec mes amis* gained 2 Communication marks. Some candidates were able to add extra details regarding their shopping habits and, therefore, gained extra marks, e.g. *pour la nourriture, je fais du shopping avec ma mère, mais pour les*

vêtements, je préfère faire du shopping avec mes amis. Some candidates wrote lengthy explanations about why they like shopping with their mother or their friends. These explanations could not be rewarded as they were not part of the task.

To qualify for a Communication mark, an appropriate verb needs to be used. Candidates who wrote *je vais du shopping* instead of *je fais du shopping* did not fulfil this requirement.

In **Task 3**, most candidates were able to clearly state whether they preferred shopping online or in a shopping centre. Those who favoured shopping online said that they like choosing from their home as they do not like going out. However, the vast majority preferred going to a shopping centre as they viewed it as an outing with their friends. Many candidates mentioned going to the cinema or a restaurant as part of the experience. However, their main reasons were being able to see and try on clothes before they bought them.

As in previous sessions, the last task required candidates to use the future tense or conditional to express what they would buy during their next shopping expedition. Many candidates indicated what they would buy for different people.

The vast majority of candidates scored 4 or 5 for the Language mark. They produced pieces of work which were coherent and showed that they could use relevant verbs and vocabulary with a fair degree of accuracy. To maximise their chances of scoring in the top bands for Language, candidates are advised to ensure that they use the time frames used in the tasks.

Section 2

Candidates had to choose between one essay out of three options: an email, an article and a story line to continue. There are 10 marks for Communication, 8 marks for Verbs and 12 marks for Other linguistic features. Candidates were expected to write 130 to 140 words to complete their chosen task. It was pleasing to see that most candidates kept to the recommended word count.

Question 3 (a): Une randonnée à la campagne

This option was the most popular.

For **Task 1**, candidates had to give two details: where **and** with whom they went hiking. As *à la campagne* was provided in the title and the brief, candidates were expected to provide a more specific place (country, region or situation in relation to their own home). The second part of the task was usually well done. Most candidates were able to successfully adapt the sentence *vous êtes allé(e) faire...* to *je suis allé(e) faire...* Some candidates could not score the 2 Communication marks available as they did not use an appropriate verb.

Marks were awarded for any description of the countryside or activity done during the hike in **Task 2**: *il y avait beaucoup d'arbres, le paysage était fantastique, nous avons fait un pique-nique* were all worth 2 marks. For this task, a verb in the past tense was required.

Candidates had to explain why they enjoy hiking in the countryside for **Task 3**. A general comment expressed in the present tense was expected. Some candidates misunderstood the task and explained why they had enjoyed their hike. An opinion beyond *c'est intéressant* was required to score the 2 marks available. Many were able to say *j'aime la nature, il n'y a pas de pollution* or *il y a beaucoup d'arbres*.

In **Task 4**, most candidates agreed that it was important to protect nature/the environment. Their main concern was to protect animals and plants that live/grow there. However, there was much confusion about the verb to use. Many candidates used the verb *habiter* rather than *vivre*.

A further 2 Communication marks were available for candidates who gave extra details for **Tasks 2, 3 or 4**.

The vast majority of candidates who attempted this question scored very highly for Communication as their responses were detailed and clear.

Question 3 (b): Un échange scolaire

This option was the second most popular choice.

In **Task 1**, many candidates were able to list clearly the different activities the French pupils did during the exchange visit. These included attending lessons, taking part in sporting or artistic activities or eating in the canteen.

In **Task 2**, candidates gained 2 Communication marks for saying what the French pupils had enjoyed most or why. This task was very successful as candidates could easily communicate *ils ont préféré faire du sport/visiter les monuments*.

Whilst many candidates agreed that exchange visits were important in **Task 3**, their justifications were not always clear, as their choice of verbs was often inappropriate. *Apprendre* was often used instead of *découvrir* and *connaître* instead of *faire la connaissance*.

In **Task 4**, to score the 2 marks available for naming the country where they would like to go for an exchange visit, the name of the country had to be phonetically correct. There was some confusion between the name of the country and nationality, e.g. *Français* instead of *France* or *Anglais* instead of *Angleterre*. There were 2 marks available for explaining why they would like to go on an exchange visit to their chosen country. Many stated *j'aime la cuisine française, je parle la langue* or *la culture est intéressante*.

Some candidates who opted for this question did not understand the meaning of *échange scolaire* and wrote descriptive essays about their school (buildings and facilities), subjects taught, their likes and dislikes about their school. As these facts were not required by the task, they could not be awarded Communication marks.

Question 3(c): Une mauvaise surprise

Very few candidates attempted this option.

In **Task 1**, candidates who kept their answer simple, e.g. *dans la valise, il y avait des vêtements d'homme/de femme* easily scored the 2 marks available.

Phoning reception/the airport to locate their suitcase was a popular first action for **Task 2**.

In **Task 3**, the hotel manager's help was also to phone the airport or for a taxi. Despite the repetition of the same verb and idea, candidates were awarded the 2 Communication marks for each task.

In the last task, the use of the plural was an indication that more than one reaction was required. Candidates were rewarded for expressing a reaction wherever it appeared in the essay, from *j'étais triste/en colère/inquiet* at the beginning to *j'étais content(e)* at the end.

To enhance their overall marks for Communication and Verbs, candidates are advised to pay careful attention to the tense required by the task. Using a present tense when a past tense is required (or vice versa) incurs a double penalty as the sentence can only achieve partial communication and the verb cannot get a tick. Candidates are also advised to offer a variety of verbs throughout their essays. The repetition of *avait, était* or *étaient* should be avoided as the verbs can only be ticked the first time they are used.

To maximise their chances of achieving marks in the top three bands for Other linguistic features, candidates need to spend some time checking what they have written. Particular care should be taken with the agreements of adjectives and past participles and the spelling and gender of common nouns. It is also important that candidates offer a variety of complex structures and relevant vocabulary.

FRENCH

Paper 0520/43
Writing

Key messages

- It is vital that candidates be familiar with all the common interrogative adverbs.
- In **Question 2**, candidates must address all the tasks.
- The recommended word count for both **Question 2** and **Question 3** is not mandatory. Candidates should not feel obliged to remove significant detail to meet the word count.
- Candidates should read carefully each of the options in **Question 3** and should choose the one which best allows them to demonstrate the linguistic knowledge they have.
- Candidates aiming for the highest grades should make sure that they use common vocabulary and structures accurately.
- In **Question 3**, to access the top bands for Other linguistic features, candidates must demonstrate that they can use the complex structures which are detailed in the specification.
- Candidates should always aim for a high standard of legibility and presentation. When candidates write in pen over an initial draft in pencil their work is often difficult to read.

General comments

The full ability range was represented. The gradient of difficulty in the questions allowed the majority of candidates to show what they knew and could do.

Question 1

One mark was awarded for each noun which identified a place represented by the illustrations. Candidates should be reminded that if they cannot recall a particular word, they are free to add different nouns which fit the context of the question. When nouns are used definite/indefinite articles are not required.

Question 2

Communication

One mark was awarded for each relevant detail. It is a requirement that candidates use a verb for each piece of information in order to gain a mark. Candidates are not required to provide the same amount of information for each task, however candidates should be advised that marks for Communication are awarded only to information directly required by the tasks. Candidates should remember that the most effective way of gaining full marks is to address each task in a new sentence and where possible to add extra relevant detail.

A significant number of candidates used non-French words in their work. It was especially noticeable with words which are both close in spelling and in meaning in French and Spanish.

Candidates should remember that the word count is a recommendation and not an absolute requirement. If they write over 80 words, they should not indiscriminately remove parts of their response. The act of editing a piece on completion is quite difficult, especially if there is little time available. Unfortunately, some candidates crossed out details which were vital for the successful completion of the task.

Candidates are also reminded that the maximum of 10 marks for Communication cannot be accessed if they omit a task.

Language

The published criteria offer a clear guide to what is expected. Candidates should use basic sentence structure, using appropriate verb forms, definite/indefinite articles, adjectives, time phrases and prepositional phrases

Question 3 offered a choice of three options: an email, an article, a story line to be continued.

A crucial decision for candidates is: which question will allow me to show best the French that I know? This is particularly important given the method by which marks are awarded across the three categories. Candidates are advised therefore to read all three options before making their choice. A close reading of the tasks within the questions is recommended: this will allow candidates to think about the vocabulary, verb tenses and structures which will be needed in order to respond effectively and fully to the question.

Frequently the rubric provides key vocabulary. Candidates should always copy correctly key vocabulary items from the rubric and also look for clues of the gender of any significant nouns: this session there was clear evidence of candidates not taking advantage of the vocabulary and structures provided in the rubric.

Communication: to gain the 2 marks available for each task, candidates must respond to each of the five tasks using a tense which is appropriate. Candidates are strongly advised to answer each task in the tense used in the rubric. The use of a different tense will distort the meaning and invariably lead to the loss of marks. Whilst it is always a good idea to add an extra detail or opinion where possible, it must be remembered that excessive length often leads to error, repetition and irrelevance. Candidates should be advised to be selective when they are planning their responses.

Verbs: ticks are awarded to correct verbs. The maximum mark of 8 is awarded for 18 verbs. There were instances again this session of candidates who were able to maintain control of verbs and who exceeded this total.

Candidates should be reminded of the correct use of verbal structures such as *avant de* and *après avoir / après être*. There were many who seemed not to be aware that these constructions can only be used when the action refers to the subject of the main verb: e.g. *en arrivant en ville, il a commencé à pleuvoir*, there is no reward for the first element.

Some candidates confused the verbs *penser* and *prendre*.

When some conjunctions are used, grammar rules require strict observance of a sequence of tense e.g. *si j'ai le choix, je mangerais plus de fruits* is incorrect by these rules. The candidate should have written either *si j'**avais** le choix, je mangerais plus de fruits* or *si j'ai le choix, **je mangerai** plus de fruits*.

Other linguistic features: the published table of grade descriptors highlights the range of language structures expected. The ablest candidates were able to demonstrate, among other things, varied sentence patterns using subordinate clauses (e.g. *quand, si, parce que, car, qui*) object pronouns, linking words/conjunctions, (e.g. *donc, cependant*), strong negatives (*ne...jamais, ne...plus*), comparative/superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs, prepositions (e.g. *depuis, pendant, pour*) and be familiar with some less common vocabulary, pertinent to the subject matter. This session, there was less evidence of many of these structures, particularly object pronouns.

It is important for all candidates to show control of basic structures, including correct spelling, gender, adjectival agreement, possessive adjectives, expressions of quantity, common prepositions, without this they will not access the top most bands.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1: On fait du tourisme

This straightforward question provided candidates with an opportunity to establish a base for further success.

The context was a familiar one inviting words for places around town. The vast majority of candidates scored the 5 marks available. Most candidates listed the words shown in the pictures. Other acceptable words used by candidates are listed in the published Mark Scheme.

There were some common items of vocabulary which were not as well-known as might be expected: *château, église, marché, musée, plage* were commonly written either in English or Spanish.

Question 2: Mon école

There was mixed success for candidates on this question. Too many candidates seemed to have focused exclusively on the heading (*mon école*) and seemed not to have read the individual tasks carefully enough. As a result, there was much irrelevant detail which could not be given credit.

Task 1 invited candidates to write about what they did after arriving at school in the morning. Many candidates did not provide the information required: they wrote extensively about their morning routine at home before leaving for school. Only information about events *après votre arrivée à l'école* were rewarded. Those who understood the question variously offered *je vais à la salle de classe / je parle à mes amis / je joue au foot / je mange une pomme / nous attendons le professeur*.

In this task and others, there was evidence of some confusion over the meanings of important school vocabulary: *cours / classe / leçon / matière*. Candidates should be able to distinguish between these.

Some candidates, thinking that they might gain additional marks, went on to describe their whole school day: this information gained no reward as it was not required.

There was some confusion in **Task 2** over the use of *petit déjeuner* and *déjeuner*. However, because that may have stemmed from a difference of routine in their home countries, candidates were rewarded for either. *Je prends le petit déjeuner à la cantine à dix heures / je mange le déjeuner dans la salle de classe à midi* were typical of the types of responses expected.

There was clear evidence that many did not know how to express the time using one of the French conventions e.g. *à 10 heures / à onze heures et demie / à 14h*. It was common to find English patterns (*à 10am*) and Spanish patterns (*a las 15*). Such responses were not rewarded.

Candidates understood well what was required in **Task 3**. They managed it very well, writing quite extensively about what they liked and disliked about school and giving reasons. Many gained a significant proportion of their marks here as each idea and each reason earned a mark.

Most candidates gained marks in **Task 4**. Many stated that they would not like to become a teacher and various reasons were offered: *c'est un travail difficile / je ne suis pas capable de parler en public / on doit faire les mêmes choses tous les jours*. There were some who had a positive view: *j'aime travailler avec les petits*. A small number chose to respond rather differently: *je voudrais être journaliste, je veux pouvoir voir le monde*. Such ideas were also rewarded.

Language

Most candidates could formulate sentences. Although the verb forms were not always secure, meanings were conveyed effectively which meant that most candidates scored 4 or 5 marks. However, many were not able to formulate a correct future/conditional tense. It is important that candidates be able to use a straightforward structure such as *je voudrais* followed by an infinitive.

Section 2

Candidates must look carefully at each of the three options in order to choose the question which they are best equipped to answer.

Question 3 (a): Un travail pendant les vacances

This was a very popular option attracting 62% of candidates.

Communication

In **Task 1**, candidates needed to say why they had decided to look for a summer job. Many candidates were able to adapt the question, moving from *vous avez décidé* to *j'ai décidé* and give their reason: *pour acheter un vélo / parce que je voulais de l'argent / parce que j'aimerais acheter des vêtements avec mon propre argent*. However, some candidates did have difficulty conveying the reason: either they thought that the verb *nécessiter* was appropriate here or they did not know the idiomatic *avoir besoin de*. The latter was often written as *je besoin*.

In **Task 2**, candidates responded in a variety of ways with details about the campsite owner, commenting on age, physical appearance or personality/character. Some used the adjective *joli* and it was not always clear whether they had used it correctly, as the context suggested perhaps the English *jolly*. The adjective *agréable* was also not well-known and was often rendered in Spanish.

Most candidates could adapt the question in **Task 3** and write *le propriétaire était sympa* but struggled to give a successful explanation as to why. There were some who suggested *parce qu'il était rigolo / nous avons parlé de musique / elle m'a donné tous les détails*, whereas a small number took a negative view: *il n'était pas sympa, il n'a pas souri du tout*.

In **Task 4**, candidates were required to give some indication of what work they were going to do at the campsite: *je vais travailler dans la cuisine / je vais faire de la publicité / j'espère jouer au foot avec les enfants*. The use of the appropriate tense was a challenge for some candidates, some of whom wrote in the past, giving the impression that they had already completed the job.

The vast majority scored the marks available in **Task 5** for explaining why they were good candidates for the job. They were able to identify their qualities (*je suis responsable, honnête / je suis sportive*), their interests (*j'aime l'environnement / j'adore faire du camping / j'aime cuisiner*) or to refer to their previous experience of camping or working (*j'ai déjà travaillé dans un camping*).

Verbs

Candidates had some success with the present tense verbs to describe the proprietor and also to convey their suitability for the job. A few negotiated the first task well: *j'ai décidé de travailler pendant les vacances parce que j'ai besoin d'argent pour acheter un vélo*, a sentence which earned four ticks. For the fourth task requiring the future: *je vais jouer au foot avec les enfants* earned two ticks. At this level candidates should be able to produce accurately these or similar sentences.

Other linguistic features

There were few candidates who demonstrated the level of range and consistency to reach the top bands. The following examples illustrate the structures used by the more successful candidates: *j'aimerais gagner un peu d'argent pour m'acheter un ordinateur / le propriétaire était de taille moyenne mais il était plus petit que moi / il était vraiment sympa parce qu'il a dit que / il m'a offert un emploi / je suis un bon candidat parce que je suis responsable et j'adore aider les autres*.

Question 3 (b): Être en forme

This option was quite popular, attracting 31% of candidates. However, candidates were not as successful as those who chose **Question 3 (a)**.

Communication

Candidates either had misunderstood the question or had ignored the tasks set. Very many wrote in general terms about being healthy, giving lengthy explanations about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Tasks 1 and 2 invited candidates to say what they had done to stay fit and healthy. There were some well expressed responses: *je suis allé courir avec mon père / j'ai fait de la natation / j'ai joué au tennis / j'ai mangé beaucoup de fruits et légumes / j'ai évité le sucre*, all of which gained 2 marks. The question was in the past tense. Candidates who missed *récemment*, and there were many, and who used the present tense to refer to these activities, gained only 1 mark.

In **Task 3**, most agreed that young people were lazy, blaming technology for their lack of activity. Some of the relevant responses included: *ils jouent trop à l'ordinateur / ils ne passent pas assez de temps à faire du sport / ils préfèrent regarder la télé / ils mangent trop de sucreries*.

Task 4 was not attempted by a fair number of candidates. Perhaps they did not understand that they needed to give their opinion about sport in school. Those who did respond appropriately offered *il y a trois cours d'éducation physique chaque semaine / j'ai seulement une heure de sport par semaine / je ne fais pas de sport à l'école mais je fais du sport dans le parc avec mes amis*.

In **Task 5**, candidates largely understood that they were required to say what they would do to keep healthy. Some focused on physical activities: *je vais essayer le yoga / je voudrais faire le triathlon / je vais jouer au volley*, whilst others mentioned diet: *je vais manger beaucoup de fruits / je vais manger plus sain*.

Verbs

Candidates who understood fully the need to refer to past activities were able to establish a good mark here, especially if they gave a number of details. There was evidence that among those who understood what was required there is still some uncertainty about the form of the perfect tense e.g. *je mangé / je joué / j'allé*. Candidates seemed to be more confident about using the future and conditional tenses, as can be seen from the examples above. Generally, however, there was a measure of insecurity in control of verbs: this affected both the marks for Communication and the marks for Verbs.

Other linguistic features

Candidates who chose this question were a little more successful here than those who responded to **Question 3 (a)**. They were able to demonstrate a little more confidence in using complex structures: *faire beaucoup d'exercice est bon pour la santé / pour rester en forme on devrait s'entraîner tous les jours / les jeunes sont devenus paresseux en raison de la technologie / par exemple mon frère qui a treize ans ne fait rien car il préfère les jeux vidéo / je trouve que nous ne faisons pas assez de sport à l'école / je ne vois jamais de jeunes au gymnase*.

Question 3 (c): Un vélo volé

Only 7% of candidates attempted this option.

Communication

The question required candidates to write throughout in the past tense: there were very few who were able to do this. A few candidates had not understood that the bicycle had been stolen from a youth hostel while they were away on holiday and wrote instead about it disappearing from their own garage. However, there were a number who did not understand at all the significance of the stolen bicycle and who wrote in general terms about their holiday.

In **Task 1**, some candidates were able to convey what they did to find their bicycle, albeit with a faulty verb. *J'ai téléphoné à la police* was one of the better responses.

Task 2 was relatively straightforward as candidates could gain marks for any reference to what they did during the rest of the holiday: *j'ai joué au foot avec mes amis / j'ai fait du shopping / j'ai nagé dans la mer.*

For **Task 3**, marks were awarded for any additional detail given in response to the first two tasks.

Some candidates were able to convey a reaction to what happened in **Task 4**: most gained the marks for a simple idea such as *j'étais triste.*

In **Task 5**, there were few who understood that they were required to comment on why they felt happy/unhappy about what had happened.

Verbs

Few candidates were able to use verbs correctly and consistently in the past tense. Examiners would have expected to see some of the following: *j'ai cherché / j'ai appelé / je suis allé(e) / j'ai regardé / j'ai trouvé / je n'ai pas trouvé / je suis retourné(e) / je me suis amusé(e)...*

Other linguistic features

Few candidates could present a coherent simple sentence. Most would quite probably have gained more marks had they attempted **Question 3 (a)** or **Question 3 (b)**.