FRENCH

Paper 7156/11
Listening (Multiple Choice)

Question Number	Key
1	D
2	A
3	A
4	C
5	B
6	D
7	D
8	A

Question Number	Key
9	B
10	C
11	C
12	B
13	C
14	A

Question Number	Key
15	C
16	E
17	A
18	F
19	B

Question Number	Key
20	A
21	B
22	B
23	A
24	C
25	B
26	C
27	B
28	B

Question Number	Key
29	D
30	A
31	C
32	D
33	D
34	B

Question Number	Key
35	C/D
36	B/E
37	B/E

General comments

The June 2021 Listening paper consisted of 37 questions and was the first time the Listening test was multiple-choice for the June session. Candidates overall performed in a satisfactory way and most attempted all questions. Candidates should take care when they transfer their answers onto the answer sheet and shade **one** letter only for **Questions 1** to **34,** and **two** letters for **Questions 35** to **37**.

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The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and complexity and featured simple transactional exchanges, short monologues, conversations, and interviews. The emphasis of the questions moved from assessing the candidates' ability to identify information contained in short factual pieces to testing their ability to understand specific information, descriptions of events, opinions, emotions, and explanations in longer extracts.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1–8

Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise. The extracts were short, straightforward interactions. For **Question 2**, some candidates did not know *salle d'attente* and chose **B** or **C**. For **Question 4**, some candidates did not recognise *limonade*. For **Question 5**, some candidates were not familiar with *salle de bain* and often answered **D** (*salon).* For **Question 6**, some candidates did not identify *centre commercial* and often chose option **A** (*marché*). **Question 7** was the most challenging and just over half the candidates chose the correct option **D** (*assiettes*), with many incorrectly choosing option **B** instead (*fourchettes*).

Questions 9–14

Candidates heard a longer extract which featured an advertisement for a youth hostel. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise, particularly in **Questions 12** and **14**. In **Question 9**, some candidates did not understand *rivière.* In **Question 10**, some candidates were not familiar with *la pêche* and those who answered incorrectly usually chose options **A** and **D**. For **Question 11**, over two thirds of the candidates correctly selected option **C** (*parasol*). Those who answered incorrectly chose options **A** and **D** in equal numbers. For **Question 13**, many candidates recognised *une serviette;* candidates who answered this question incorrectly tended to choose options **B** or **D**.

Questions 15–19

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard a conversation between two friends about the French city of Lyon. Overall candidates performed well in this exercise. **Question 15** was the most challenging, with just over half of candidates selecting the correct option **C**. The most frequent incorrect answers were **A** and **D**. **Question 16** was attempted well. For **Question 17**, many candidates understood *faire les magasins* and answered **A**. For **Question 18**, over two thirds of the candidates chose the correct option **F**, whilst the most common errors were options **B** and **D**. For **Question 19**, many recognised *voudrait trouver un emploi* in the recording and selected option **B**; those who answered incorrectly usually chose options **C** and **D**.

Questions 20–28

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview in two parts with Maryline who lives in Stockholm in Sweden. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test.

For **Question 20**, only about half the candidates chose the correct option **A**. Many candidates heard *grand-mère* and chose distractor **B**. Many candidates recognised *j'aime surtout* and answered **Question 21** successfully. Those who answered incorrectly chose distractor **C**. Under half the candidates answered **Question 22** correctly and incorrect answers were equally split between options **A** and **C**. **Question 23** was answered correctly by many candidates. Those who answered incorrectly heard *le foot* and chose distractor **B**. Most candidates successfully answered **Question 24**.

Over half the candidates chose the correct option **B** for **Question 25**. Many candidates heard *gratuit* and selected distractor **A**, missing the fact that it only applies to *certains musées*. **Question 26** was the most challenging in this exercise and just under half the candidates chose the correct option **C**. There was no clear pattern of incorrect answers. **Question 27** was also demanding with just over half the candidates correctly choosing option **B**. Many candidates heard Maryline say *les vélos sont partout* and chose distractor **A**. Many candidates chose the correct option **B** in **Question 28**. Those who answered this question incorrectly heard *parkings* and chose distractor **C**.

Questions 29–34

Candidates heard an interview with Sylvain, a photographer. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

Under half the candidates chose the correct option **D** for **Question 29**. Many heard *Paris/grands-parents* and chose distractors **B** and **C**. **Question 30** was successfully attempted by nearly two thirds of the candidates. Those who answered incorrectly usually chose distractor **D**. **Question 31** was challenging with just over a third of candidates choosing the correct option **C**. Those who answered incorrectly usually chose distractors **B** and **D**. **Question 32** was the most challenging in this exercise with just over a quarter of the candidates choosing the correct option. Many candidates heard *en liberté* and chose distractor **C**. Nearly half the candidates answered **Question 33** correctly, with distractor **C** often being chosen. Just over a third of the candidates answered **Question 34** successfully. Those who answered incorrectly usually chose distractor **C**.

Questions 35–37

Candidates heard an interview with Camille who talked about judo. For each question in this exercise, candidates had to identify **two** correct statements from a choice of five. This was an appropriately demanding and challenging exercise at this stage of the paper.

For **Question 35**, a quarter of the candidates correctly chose option **C**, and three quarters correctly chose option **D**. Many candidates chose distractor **B**. This was the most challenging question. Candidates needed to listen carefully to Camille when she said *je passe souvent le weekend*, not every weekend as suggested by the distractor statement. For **Question 36**, under half the candidates correctly chose option **B** and just over half selected option **E**. Many chose distractors **A** and **C**. **Question 37** was attempted well with over half the candidates successfully choosing option **B** and three quarters selecting option **E**. Some candidates chose distractors **A** and **D**.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/21
Reading

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:
- ensure that they answer the question asked and avoid giving additional information that is not required
- bear in mind that answers in the first person in **Questions 4** and **6** are unlikely to be correct
- remember that the 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. Where candidates change their mind about an answer, it is important that they make it clear which answer is to be regarded as final. In **Question 3**, if a tick is erased, it must be fully erased. In **Question 5**, if more than one answer is written on a line, the mark cannot be awarded as the examiner cannot be sure which one is the intended answer.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates performed very well on this question. Some candidates confused **F** (*jupe*) with **D** (*pull*).

Question 2

Scores for this question were generally high and full marks were common. For **2(a)**, some candidates answered **B** (*boucherie*) instead of **C** (*boulangerie*).

Question 3

Most candidates found this question to be accessible. In **3(a)**, a few candidates chose option **C**, perhaps not knowing the meaning of *paresseux*. In **3(g)**, a few candidates chose option **B**; there is no reference to *vétérinaire* in the text, but perhaps there was confusion with *vêtements*.

Question 4

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text about Paul who wrote about his daily life with his immediate family and his grandparents. The text used largely familiar vocabulary.

The text was written in the first person, and the questions used the third person. Overall, candidates performed well on this exercise. Most questions could be answered by lifting a small number of words from the text, but the answers to **Questions 4(e)** and **4(f)** also required a minor manipulation to gain the mark. If candidates choose to lift more than is required to answer questions, they must make any manipulation needed in the extra material, for example replacing *je* with *il* and changing the verb if necessary. Candidates are advised to answer with the minimum number of words, as writing too much can introduce irrelevant material which invalidates an otherwise correct answer.

Minor misspellings of words were usually ignored unless the new spelling formed a different word in French. Candidates also need to ensure that their response answers the question. For example, **Question 4(k)** asked *what* the family eats, and a significant number of candidates answered *dans un restaurant*.

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Question 5

This was a new question type in which candidates had to match a series of descriptions with statements from people looking for summer jobs in France. Candidates had five people and eight descriptions to choose from. Candidates had to process a variety of information and match several requirements whilst eliminating responses that did not fit. Candidates with a wide range of vocabulary and knowledge of synonyms performed well on this section.

Each person's statement gave quite specific requirements for what they were looking for and information about their experience and availability, and these details excluded all answers except the correct one. Candidates need to ensure they consider all the information given as this is not a gist comprehension question.

Common mistakes included switching the answers to **5(d)** and **5(e)**, and description **6** was a common wrong answer for **5(c)**.

Question 6

This final exercise is intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. About half the questions can be answered with a careful lift from the text, the others need a small manipulation of the text. Very few candidates achieved full marks, and the questions seem to have discriminated appropriately.

Although verbs do not necessarily have to be correct to score a mark, the tense usually must be appropriate to the question. Some candidates chose to paraphrase the text rather than lift words from the text. There is no need to do this, and although some candidates did this well, others used inappropriate synonyms when paraphrasing and could not gain the mark.

Question 6(f) was the most successfully answered in this exercise and candidates who did not gain the mark usually wrote too much and invalidated their answer. This was also the case for **6(g)**. For **Question 6(e)**, only the stronger candidates successfully answered with a manipulation of the text. Many candidates did not realise that a manipulation was also required to answer **6(d)** and **6(h)**.

FRENCH

Paper 7156/03
Speaking

Key messages

- Centres had generally prepared candidates well for the new speaking test.
- Role plays were conducted well by examiners.
- In the topics section, some centres need to make greater use of extension questions to elicit fuller answers from candidates. Sometimes, the topic conversations were very short.
- Most examiners understood the need to adhere **precisely** to the script in the Instructions for teachers/examiners and not to rephrase any questions.
- Most examiners also understood the need to ask **no more than two further questions** of their own if timings were short on topic conversations.
- Centres are reminded to use the alternative questions provided in the topic conversations if a candidate does not understand the first version (and repetition) of the question.
- The randomisation grid in the Instructions for teachers/examiners was usually followed correctly.
- Clerical work was usually very good in centres.
- The quality of recordings was usually very good.
- Centres are reminded to include candidates at the very top and the very bottom of the mark range in the sample.

General comments

The format of the test was new this year. The Speaking test is intended to be a test of spontaneous communicative ability. A wide range of performance was evident across the candidature and examples of performance at all levels of ability were heard.

Centres had usually prepared candidates well for the format of this new test and examiners were mostly aware of how to conduct the test efficiently and correctly. Examiners greeted candidates using the prompts provided and nearly all examiners read the scenario for the role plays as instructed in French. Most centres followed the instructions concerning the randomisation grid and understood the need to test candidates according to the prescribed order of the cards and conversation topics. Centres are reminded that the cards should be distributed according to the grid provided on pages 14–15 in the Instructions, with Card One given to the first candidate who takes the test and so on.

Role plays were generally conducted well. Centres are reminded that questions can be repeated (but not rephrased) once. It is useful to note that the role plays are not timed.

For the **topic conversations**, timings were not always appropriate. These were often too short and, in a few cases, too long. Some examiners needed to ask more **extension questions** (e.g. *Peux-tu me donner plus de détails à ce sujet ?* or *Peux-tu me dire autre chose à ce sujet ?*) to give candidates the opportunity to develop their answers and go beyond brief or incomplete answers which do not communicate fully. Candidates need to understand the wordings of these extension questions so that they know when they need to give more detail. When asking extension questions, examiners can only use vocabulary provided in the printed question or vocabulary already used by the candidate. Examiners must not feed new vocabulary or ideas to the candidate.

If a candidate does not understand **Questions 3**, **4** or **5** in the topic conversations (and a repetition of these questions), examiners must ask the **alternative question**. These alternative questions give candidates another opportunity to understand the task.

When there was a PAUSE between two questions in the script, most examiners gave candidates the time to answer the first question before asking the second one.

Centres are reminded that if a topic conversation lasts 3½ minutes or less, even after asking extension questions, the examiner must ask **up to two further** questions of his/her choice on the **same** topic as the other questions to make sure that the conversation lasts 4 minutes. If the topic conversation still lasts 3½ minutes or less, the examiner must stop the conversation.

Examiners are reminded to introduce the topic area at the start of each topic conversation. This must be done in French.

Clerical checks and sample size

In most centres, the clerical work had usually been completed very efficiently and centres are thanked for this. It is essential that all clerical work is checked very carefully to ensure that candidates receive the correct mark. Centres generally understood the requirements of the sample size and samples were nearly always correct. In the very few cases when extra or replacement recordings were required, centres were quick to respond. Please always remember to include the work of candidates at the top and bottom of the mark range.

Recording quality

A high proportion of the recordings received were of a very good quality. Centres are thanked for this. Please check all recording equipment prior to the live exams and before despatching the sample. The examiner, and **not** the candidate, must introduce the candidate by name and number. The recording for each candidate must be on a separate file and saved as .mp3. Each recorded file in the sample must be clearly named using the following convention: centre number_candidate number_syllabus number_component number. Recordings should be labelled correctly with the candidates' name and number on the box for the CD.

Application of the mark scheme

In the **role plays**, marks can only be awarded for the **set tasks**. To score 2 marks, an answer may be brief, but the language should be appropriate to the task, in an appropriate time frame, substantially accurate and not be ambiguous in terms of the message being communicated. If the meaning of the required message is made ambiguous through poor pronunciation of a key word, an incorrect time frame or an inappropriate form of a verb (if used), then a mark of 1 should be awarded. There were cases of 2 marks being awarded for answers which did not address the set tasks. In such cases, a mark of 0 was appropriate.

In the **topic conversations**, most centres awarded the marks for **Communication** consistently but a little generously. It was necessary to think carefully about how well the answers gave the **required information** and how consistently this could be done across the two topics. Performances where answers convey most of the required information but are brief, sometimes irrelevant and with little development, would fall into the Satisfactory category. To score high marks for Communication, candidates need to be able to offer **consistently** relevant information and to show that they can develop their ideas and opinions, adding relevant detail where necessary. The ability to justify and explain is also a feature of performance of the Very Good mark band. It should be noted that if conversations are short, candidates can be disadvantaged as they may not have the opportunity to develop their material.

In most centres, marks for **Quality of Language** also tended to be a little generous. The key descriptors considered here are the ability to use a range of structures as listed in the syllabus, and the ability to use a range of appropriate vocabulary. Pronunciation is also a key descriptor. To score high marks for Quality of Language, candidates need to show control of a **wide range** of accurately used language and structures and pronounce well. The ability to use appropriate time frames and correctly conjugated verbs is assessed here as part of the range of structures.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Examiners generally read the scenario as instructed. The nine role plays were accessible to candidates and set at an equal level of difficulty. They were all set in situations in which candidates could find themselves with a speaker of French and were transactional in nature. Contexts such as arranging outings with friends, giving travel details, finding out or giving details about a job, or obtaining services or goods featured on the cards. Most candidates approached the role plays well with many scoring good marks. The weakest candidates also showed that they could score marks for partial communication on some tasks.

The first two tasks on each card were of a very factual nature and gave candidates the opportunity to answer briefly. They did not require longer and more developed answers. Candidates mostly answered these two opening questions well. It was essential for candidates to be familiar with questioning formulations such as *À quelle heure ? Combien ? Quand ? Où ? Quel ? Comment ?* Weaker candidates did not understand these and consequently gave irrelevant information which did not answer the set task. The last three tasks gave candidates more opportunity to develop responses. The vocabulary used in the role play questions was straightforward and usually notions of time and place were quite well understood.

On each card, the last three tasks were more challenging and gave candidates the opportunity to show that they could use past and future time frames correctly and develop their answers with opinions and simple explanations. A useful technique for candidates to adopt in the 10-minute preparation time is to think very carefully about useful vocabulary and structures which could occur in their given role play scenario. They should also think about the person with whom they are talking. Many candidates understood the key question *Pourquoi ?* and were usually able to give simple relevant reasons and opinions. In each role play, weaker candidates experienced some difficulty in answering in the time frame of the question and this made their responses ambiguous. The best responses heard were ones in which the time frame matched the time frame of the question as this meant the message was relevant and communicated unambiguously. Candidates also need to be aware that sometimes the form of register heard in questions is different according to the nature of the interaction and whether it is informal with a friend, or formal with a stranger when purchasing goods or obtaining services. On cards using the more formal *vous* form of address, candidates heard conjugations of verbs which they sometimes repeated inappropriately and did not conjugate the verb correctly in their answer, e.g. *Où allez-vous ?* was sometimes heard in questions and was sometimes answered as *j'allais/j'aller* which led to some ambiguity of time frame and prevented a mark of 2 from being scored.

On **Card 1**, most approached the tasks well with most candidates able to express their age, but weaker candidates often confused *cinq* and *quinze*. Some also experienced difficulty in saying what work they had already done in an appropriate time frame. Other tasks were generally approached well.

Card 2 was accessible, and the first two questions were answered well. On the third task, some did not recognise the significance of *la dernière fois* and consequently did not realise the need to answer in a past time frame. Stronger candidates answered the fourth task well and could give good reasons as to why they preferred individual or team sports.

Card 3 was approached well with most candidates being able to recognise that they needed to give a destination to which they were flying. If a place was given in France rather than another country this was acceptable. On the third task, some did not recognise the need to use past time frames and sometimes answered in the present tense which created ambiguity. Most were able to say they liked French cooking but the reason for this was frequently expressed incorrectly as *c'est delicious*.

Most candidates made a good start to **Card 4** and were able to communicate their nationality, but found the next task, asking where they were staying, a little more difficult. Other tasks were well done.

On **Card 5**, some tried to say that they wanted to change an item of clothing rather than respond to the question and say precisely which item of clothing. Weaker candidates were often not familiar with *taille*. Most had thought about the scenario during their preparation time and were ready to say what the problem was and when they had bought the item of clothing. The best answers on the fourth task indicated not how much they had originally paid but how they had paid.

Card 6 was also found to be accessible. Some had not realised that the scenario said they were waiting for a taxi to arrive and instead said *j'arrive*, which caused ambiguity. Good answers were heard about their activities the day before at the hotel and most were able to give their opinion about their hotel room.

On **Card 7**, the first questions were answered well. Nearly all said they preferred clothes shops on the third task but were not always able to say why. Other tasks were done well.

On **Card 8**, some did not realise what a *billet d'entrée* was, but most were able to give an amount of money. Here, any currency was accepted but generally the pronunciation of *euros* was not good. Some detailed descriptions of rides were heard in the best answers on the third task, showing that many had studied extra vocabulary about theme parks. Other tasks about preferences for eating and souvenirs to be bought were also approached well, but weaker candidates found it hard to express an appropriate time frame in the last task.

Candidates made a good start on **Card 9** but found it much harder to give a meeting place at the station showing the need to listen carefully to the whole question. Any place which could feasibly be found in a station was acceptable but answers such as au *cinéma* showed that the question had not been understood and led to ambiguity. Weaker candidates also sometimes gave inappropriate suggestions of activities on the last task which asked what they would like to do when they arrived home.

Topic conversations

Examiners are reminded to introduce the topic area in French just before the start of each conversation. The first three topics were based on one of the sub-topics of Areas A and B as listed in the syllabus. The last four topics were taken from one of the sub-topics in Areas C, D or E of the syllabus. All these sub-topics were familiar to candidates and a full range of performance was seen with each conversation having its easier and more challenging questions. As in the role plays, the first two questions on each conversation were closed and straightforward in nature and were set at an easier level to start off the conversation. They could be answered briefly and with factual language. The time frame used in the first two questions was the present. The final three questions on each card were more open and required candidates to communicate relevantly in past and future time frames. Each topic conversation also gave candidates the opportunity to express opinions and develop where possible their reasons for their opinions.

Topic 1, *la santé*, was a very familiar topic for candidates. It was generally approached quite well but, on **Question 2**, some gave irrelevant information about where they ate or at what time, instead of saying what they had for breakfast. Stronger candidates coped well with the past time frame on **Question 3** as they realised the importance of *récemment* in the question. **Question 4** was the most challenging on the topic as it demanded candidates to talk about what they thought was the most dangerous health risk for young people. Many required the alternative question to be asked here but the best candidates gave good answers which named the problem clearly and then said why it was a problem. Many such candidates quoted fast food, smoking or alcohol. Others also said that excessive screen time was dangerous. Weaker candidates often just stated what they did to be healthy. Most managed slightly better on the last question which focused on changes which could be made to promote a healthy lifestyle. Some were unfamiliar with the word *améliorer* but managed to answer quite well when given the easier alternative question.

Topic 2, *à la maison*, was accessible to candidates. The first two questions were generally answered well. On **Question 3**, some did not know *tâches ménagères* and the use of the alternative question was often necessary. The stronger candidates understood the need to answer in the past tense, realising the importance of the key word *récemment* in the question. **Question 4** was the most challenging question in this topic. Candidates needed to give reasons why young people should or should not help at home. Stronger candidates cited reasons such as the need for all to share tasks and knowing what to do in the future after they had left home. On **Question 5**, most candidates could say where they would like to live in the future and use a future time frame, especially when the alternative question was used.

Topic 3, *les loisirs*, was approached well by candidates. Good answers were given on the first two tasks. The third question required responses to be given in a past time frame. Again, weaker candidates did not always realise the importance of *le week-end dernier* and consequently gave inappropriate time frames in their answer which caused ambiguity. **Question 4** was more challenging as candidates needed to talk in more general terms about the importance of leisure activities for young people. Stronger candidates gave a variety of responses and could explain that it was important to have such activities to relax, combat stress and remain healthy. **Question 5** was approached well but some did not realise the significance of *essayer* and instead answered about what they already did. Those who made use of the alternative question here fared better.

Topic 4, *l'environnement construit*, was accessible to candidates, with both **Question 1** and **Question 2** being well done. On **Question 3**, candidates needed to relate a past visit to a large town and most were able to give relevant descriptions. Weaker candidates had some difficulty in using relevant time frames here. If candidates chose to talk about a town they had visited in another country this was quite acceptable. On **Question 4**, many could go beyond a simple list of tourist attractions and the stronger candidates could develop their answers and talk about the activities for tourists rather than just places where they went. **Question 5** was well done with most being able to state their preference for living in a town or in the countryside and give a valid reason why.

Topic 5, *le travail*, was approached well by candidates but, in **Question 2**, some missed the relevance of *combien* in the question and instead said where they did their homework. On **Question 3**, some candidates missed the importance of *l'année dernière* in the question and consequently talked in the present tense which caused ambiguity in the message. **Question 4** was more challenging as it required an opinion and

reason why further study was necessary, or not, to find a good job. Stronger candidates gave some very good reasons here, but weaker candidates often needed to make use of the alternative question. It was important to listen carefully to **Question 5** as many rushed to answer and did not realise the significance of the verb *travailler* and then answered irrelevantly about wanting to spend a holiday abroad. Some also needed to make use of the alternative question as they were unfamiliar with *à l'étranger.*

Topic 6, *l'éducation,* was a familiar topic. **Question 1** was answered well but, on **Question 2**, many candidates seemed unaware of how to express larger numbers or talked about the number of candidates in their class. **Question 3** was answered well by candidates who could use past time frames to talk about what they had done the day before, but weaker candidates needed to show greater control in their use of past time frames. **Question 5** stated very clearly *après avoir fini tes études* in the question, but some candidates answered with what they would like to do that evening rather than outlining their future work intentions.

Topic 7, *la culture, les coutumes et les fêtes*, was generally approached well by candidates. The first two questions were answered well. Some good well-developed responses were heard on **Question 3** with most choosing to talk about a birthday or a national or religious festival they had celebrated. Descriptions were heard of food and drink, clothing worn, and the stronger candidates also gave their impressions about such celebrations. **Question 5** was usually answered well with many saying they would like to go on holiday with friends or have a party.

FRENCH

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Paper 7156/41
Writing
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Key messages

Candidates are advised to:

- use words when completing the form in **Question 1**
- respond to all parts of **Question 2**
- use linking words in **Question 2**, for example when giving opinions/explanations
- choose the option in **Question 3** which allows them to show what they know
- expand on the basic details of their responses to **Question 3**
- plan and organise answers into a coherent piece of writing, using extended sentences where possible
- edit and review work carefully to avoid removing important information: the word count is for guidance and is not mandatory
- present all work legibly and not to write in ink over a draft in pencil.

General comments

Many candidates presented their answers in a coherent way. In the responses to both **Question 2** and **Question 3**, candidates organised their ideas, linking them appropriately with conjunctions (e.g. *cependant, donc, ensuite, et, mais, ou, pourtant*), subordinate clauses (e.g. *comme, où, quand, que, si*) and adverbial phrases (e.g. *d'abord, d'habitude, pendant le voyage, plus tard*). The mark scheme seeks to reward well organised pieces of writing. Some candidates responded to each of the tasks in the questions as if they were discrete items and, in such instances, the writing tended to be disjointed and lacking a coherent thread.

Candidates are strongly reminded to use the vocabulary and structures given in the rubrics and questions carefully, as miscopying nouns can compromise the intended message. In **Question 2**, *maison* was often written as *masion* or *mason*; in **Question 3(b)** *avantage*, *campagne* and *vacances* were frequently rendered incorrectly as *advantage*, *campange* and *vancances*. It is important to remember that possessive adjectives in rubrics and questions, e.g. *votre maison*, *votre chambre*, must be changed to *ma maison*, *ma chambre* for the message to be understood. Similarly, candidates must remember to adapt the interrogative verb form, as answers such as *je voudriez habiter* do not convey a clear message.

In both **Question 2** and **Question 3**, candidates used the verb *préférer*. They were not always secure in their spelling, sometimes rendering it as *je prefer*. It would be helpful for candidates to be able to distinguish between the verb *préférer* and the adjective *préféré*, both of which feature frequently in questions and answers. In both questions, candidates who wished to express the idea of relaxing were not always successful as they did not use a reflexive verb. The three verbs commonly used to convey this idea are all reflexive: *se détendre, se relaxer, se reposer*.

Candidates should remember to frame their answers in the tense used in each individual task, especially when planning their answer to **Question 3**. It is important also that candidates fully understand what is required by the question. A number of candidates who chose **Question 3(b)** did not know the precise meaning of *gîte.*

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Vous allez assister au mariage de votre cousin(e).

Candidates must use French words to gain marks. The majority of candidates were able to provide a month for **Task 1**; however, *juillet* was frequently misspelt. When there is the option to provide any relevant word,

candidates are advised to choose one which they know well. Candidates who chose obvious items of furniture/equipment (e.g. *chaise*, *lit*, *table*, *télévision*) for **Tasks 2**, **3** and **4** generally fared better than those who attempted less familiar items or wrote words which can convey different meanings, for example candidates who answered *ver*, *vers* or *vert* instead of *verres*.

Question 2: Chez moi

The topic of home was clearly a familiar one and candidates had much to say. They often provided additional information, but some of the details were not always relevant.

Candidates found it easy to give information about where they lived, and some were very precise (e.g. *j'habite dans la rue 13 octobre au Caire*). Most candidates gave a more general idea of the location (e.g. *j'habite au Kenya; j'habite au centre-ville; j'habite à la campagne avec ma famille*) and some focused on the accommodation itself (e.g. *j'habite une grande maison avec quatre chambres*).

Candidates were generally positive about their home and their reasons were varied (e.g. *j'adore ma maison parce qu'elle est grande; j'aime ma maison parce que c'est près de l'école; parce que j'ai ma propre chambre*). Some candidates provided explanations for being less happy (e.g. *je n'aime pas trop mon appartement parce que quelquefois il n'y a pas d'eau; je n'aime pas ma maison parce que je dois partager ma chambre; il y a beaucoup de bruit dans le quartier*). Credit was also given to candidates who focused on a particular aspect of their home (*j'aime ma chambre parce qu'il y a un balcon*).

Many candidates successfully conveyed details of how the family spent time together at home during the weekend. They adopted a variety of approaches, e.g. *nous jouons aux cartes; nous jouons au foot dans le jardin; on regarde un film comique; on range la maison; je fais la cuisine avec ma mère.* This was the most challenging task in the question and some candidates made no mention of the family. Others responded in a past tense or described activities outside the home.

Candidates gave a wide range of information about how they spend time in their bedrooms, with many candidates mentioning a number of activities (e.g. *j'écoute de la musique; j'écris à mes amis; j'étudie; je fais du yoga; je joue aux jeux vidéo en ligne*). Candidates used common verbs in this section, but it was not always sufficiently accurate (e.g. *je dorme, j'étude, je fait, je travail*, *je détends, je relaxe, je repose*). Some candidates misunderstood the task and gave descriptions of the bedroom and its decoration that were not appropriate.

Candidates were expected to use a conditional verb when stating the type of region they would like to live in (e.g. *j'aimerais habiter dans un petit appartement en ville*). Many favoured a seaside location (e.g. *je voudrais habiter au bord de la mer*), others focused on the quality of the environment (e.g. *je voudrais vivre dans un quartier calme*) or on the climate (e.g. *j'aimerais habiter dans une région où il fait chaud*). Candidates commonly added a reason, this was not required but such ideas often brought their pieces to a neat conclusion. Candidates who chose to mention particular places (e.g. *je voudrais habiter à Paris; j'aimerais vivre aux États-Unis*) needed to add a detail which fulfilled the requirement for a type of place, such as *je voudrais habiter à Paris, c'est une ville animée; j'aimerais vivre aux États-Unis parce qu'on peut trouver du travail.*

Question 3 (a): Vous avez bavardé avec quelqu'un dans le train.

88% of candidates chose this option.

Task completion

For a task to be considered completed, candidates must respond using the tense required by the task with the production of an accurate verb.

Candidates offered a range of different details about their journey by train in an appropriate past tense. Some focused on the timing (e.g. *samedi dernier, je suis parti en train; le train a quitté la gare à neuf heures; le voyage a duré huit heures*), others mentioned what they did during the journey (e.g. *j'ai lu un livre; j'ai beaucoup dormi; j'ai mangé un sandwich*) and some gave the purpose of the journey (e.g. *je suis allé à Paris pour passer les vacances avec mon frère*).

The second task was the most challenging element of the question. Many candidates managed to convey some relevant information (e.g. *j'ai parlé de mes vacances à Paris; elle m'a parlé de sa vie avec sa sœur aux États-Unis; il m'a raconté des histoires sur ses aventures en Afrique*). Candidates were free to convey

this information from their own perspective, from the perspective of the other person or by using *nous/on*. Not all candidates understood that they were supposed to refer to an exchange with the person they met; a generous view was taken of those who spoke with their family members or friends.

Candidates were successful in conveying some personal details about the person they met, whether it was their physical appearance, their character, what they were wearing or their job. In this instance, both past and present tense references were considered acceptable. Some candidates found ways of conveying their ideas using complex structures (e.g. *je l'ai trouvé sympa; elle avait le même âge que moi; il était un peu plus grand que moi*).

Candidates often introduced more than one idea about train travel. More candidates appeared to approve (e.g. *les trains sont assez confortables et les billets ne sont pas très chers; le train est un moyen de transport très pratique; on peut faire la connaissance de gens intéressants*) than to disapprove (*les voyages en train sont très ennuyeux; les trains sont sales*). A number of candidates made reference to the environmental benefits of train travel. This was a part of the question where candidates could show their command of more complex structures, especially when advancing more than one argument.

Most candidates appreciated the need for a verb in the conditional tense to identify how they would like to travel next time (e.g. *la prochaine fois je prendrais l'avion; j'aimerais voyager en voiture avec ma famille; j'aimerais voyager en vélo parce que le vélo est bon pour la santé*). Candidates commonly included a reason for their choice. This was not required but it made for a coherent conclusion to their email and provided another opportunity to use more interesting language structures.

Range

Some candidates were able to link their ideas using complex structures listed in the syllabus. There was much evidence of an orderly approach with the use of adverbs to frame the narrative (e.g. *après*, *cependant*, *d'abord*, *ensuite*, *normalement*, *pourtant*, *puis* etc.).

When giving their opinions about train travel, candidates sometimes used *je pense que* or *à mon avis,* as well as comparative adjectives when explaining their preference (e.g. *les voyages en train sont plus rapides que les voyages en voiture; si vous allez loin, je pense que c'est mieux de voyager en avion*). These examples show how candidates can make their writing more interesting and meet the criteria for marks in the upper band.

To achieve high marks for *Range*, candidates need to use a wide range of structures and avoid the repeated use of *car / parce que*.

Accuracy

The accuracy of spelling and gender, the use of the appropriate article, the placing and agreement of adjectives and elisions are all critical, as is the correct choice of verb tense and form. There were some frequent errors which had an impact on the critical messages, for example candidates frequently wrote *chevaux* for *cheveux* when describing the person to whom they spoke, or *avoin* for *avion* in the comments on their possible future travel plans. The question provided the verb *voyager* but some candidates wrote *je voudrais travailler en avion la prochaine fois.* There was also evidence of some insecurity in the use of common prepositions (e.g. *je suis allé à Paris sur en train; je voudrais voyager dans en avion*). Verbs are critical to the effective passing of information. It is vital that candidates show their ability to manipulate verbs consistently in a variety of tenses and persons.

Question 3 (b): Un problème au gîte

Approximately 12% of candidates chose this option. Some did not know exactly what a *gîte* was and did not see the connection with the references to *une maison de vacances* in the rubric.

Task completion

For a task to be considered completed, candidates must respond using the tense required by the task with the production of an accurate verb.

Most candidates provided a simple detail in the past tense about their arrival (e.g. *je suis allé au gîte en voiture; nous sommes arrivés au gîte à trois heures*). Some chose to register their first impressions of the *gîte* (e.g. *la maison était petite mais belle*).

Candidates offered a variety of information about the problems with the holiday home, such as *le lit n'était pas confortable; la télévision était cassée; la piscine était sale.* Some reponses showed a more sophisticated use of structure (e.g. *le salon n'était ni propre ni confortable; il n'y avait pas d'eau, donc je ne pouvais pas me doucher*).

The variety of advantages for renting a holiday home included economic reasons (e.g. *c'est moins cher qu'un hôtel*), personal freedom (e.g. *on est libre de manger à n'importe quelle heure*) and environmental advantages (e.g. *c'est calme et ce n'est pas pollué, parce que c'est loin des grandes villes*). This task gave another opportunity to use more complex structures to convey relevant ideas.

The majority of candidates preferred to be near the sea (e.g. *je préfère louer une maison de vacances au bord de la mer parce que j'adore pratiquer les sports nautiques*). Preferences for the countryside were fewer and focused on peace and quiet (e.g. *je préfère la campagne parce que c'est tranquille*).

Candidates were able to convey their plans for the next holiday and it was important to use a future tense to complete this task. Candidates frequently offered a reason or an explanation, which was not required but the addition of such information brought the piece to a natural conclusion.

Range

To achieve high marks for *Range*, candidates need to use a wide range of structures and avoid the repeated use of *car / parce que*. When adding relevant details or giving opinions and explanations, there is an opportunity to combine ideas into a more complex sentence*.*

Accuracy

The accuracy of spelling and gender, the use of the appropriate article, the placing and agreement of adjectives and elisions are all critical, as is the correct choice of verb tense and form. Common errors of spelling and gender included: *advantage* for *avantage*, *campange* for *campagne, vancances* for *vacances, beacoup* for *beaucoup, hereux* for *heureux, mois* for *moins, mon familie* for *ma famille, mes aimes* for *mes amies*. Candidates should review their work carefully. Verbs are critical to the effective passing of information. The following examples show how the communication of important detail was compromised: *il est beau* for *il fait beau, il et* for *il est, ces* for *c'est.*