www.dynamicpapers.com

CONTENTS

FOREIGN LANGUAGE FRENCH 2
Paper 0520/01 Listening 2
Paper 0520/02 Reading and Directed Writing 4
Paper 0520/03 Speaking 5
Paper 0520/04 Continuous Writing 8

www.dynamicpapers.com

FOREIGN LANGUAGE FRENCH

Paper 0520/01
Listening

General comments

The Paper was of a similar standard to last year's Paper and the standard of candidate response was, as last year, encouraging. There was a full spread of marks and a good proportion of the candidates scored over half marks, displaying competent levels in both specific and general comprehension tasks.

Candidates had usually been well prepared for the examination and were familiar with the rubrics. A small number, however, sometimes ticked more than one box on multiple choice questions in ***Section 1*** *Exercise 1* and on ***Section 2*** *Exercise 1* they ticked more than the required number (six) of boxes. Candidates also need to be reminded to cross out incorrect answers which they do not wish the Examiner to consider. They should not write "yes" or "no" alongside multiple choice boxes.

Most candidates attempted all three sections and there was evidence of inappropriate entry at Extended Level for some candidates, for whom the final section must have seemed somewhat daunting. Candidates scoring in the low teens may well be best advised not to attempt ***Section 3***, which is intended to test candidates aiming for the highest grades.

On questions requiring answers in French, long answers/full sentences were not required and were marked for communication of message – accuracy was only an issue if the clarity of the message was in doubt. Answers written in languages other than French were ignored. Misspelt but recognisable French was accepted, provided that the word did not mean something else (e.g. *la mère* for *la mer*).

The extracts heard featured both formal and informal language in a variety of topics and settings, as set out in the Syllabus. ***Section 1*** questions were based on Topic Areas A, B and C, and tested vocabulary items to be found in the Defined Content Booklet.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1 - 8

This exercise tested the comprehension of short conversations. The question type used was multiple choice. Overall, candidates fared well on the last 5 questions. **Question 2** was found to be the most difficult – candidates clearly need more practice on directions in order to avoid confusion between *tout droit* and *droite*.

Question 1: C; **Question 2**: B; **Question 3**: D; **Question 4**: D; **Question 5**: B; **Question 6**: B; **Question 7**: A; **Question 8**: C.

Exercise 2 Questions 9 - 16

Candidates generally performed competently on this exercise. The extract heard was about a variety of tourist activities and candidates were required to tick boxes (one of three) and write in numbers and dates. Weaker candidates found **Question 11** to be the most difficult, often mistaking the 8th and 9th digits in the phone number (08-01-49-15-62). Likewise, the number of euros in **Question 14** (8€ 50) was beyond weaker candidates. **Questions 9**, **10**, **15** and **16** were well done.

www.dynamicpapers.com

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 17

Candidates heard four people talking about leisure activities and had to tick six of the twelve statements provided. The topic was accessible and many candidates scored at least 3 or 4 marks out of the 6 available, with pleasing numbers scoring 5 or 6 marks. **b** was the correct answer most commonly missed by candidates, and **i** was often incorrectly ticked. Correct answers were options **a**, **b**, **d**, **g**, **k** and **l**.

Exercise 2 Questions 18 - 25

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview with a young person talking about a trip to New Zealand. The exercise required candidates to give short answers in French and true Core candidates clearly found this demanding. As last year, only a few failed to answer in French, sometimes giving English or Spanish words. On **Question 18** *avril*/*Pâques* was sufficient to gain the mark; *april/abril* were not accepted. Misspellings in **Question 19 (a)** were common and there were various versions of *ville des voiles*. *Vie des voiles* was not accepted, but *voille* and *voil* were accepted when they appeared with *ville*. On **Question 19 (b)**, candidates had to refer to it being a popular sport or the favourite sport. On **Question 20**, some candidates did not give the two required forms of transport, *avion* and *voiture*. Both were needed for the mark. **Question 21** proved demanding – many missed the idea of bathing or discovering a lake and focused instead on the idea of a picnic or the beach. On **Question 22**, weaker candidates did not recognise the word *bruit* – answers giving *calme*/*pas de bruit*/*aucun bruit*/*silence* gained the mark. **Question 23** proved the most difficult – many did not recognise the idea that the water smelt bad. On **Question 24**, incorrect answers often referred to tours of mountains and there was confusion between *le tour* and *la tour*. On **Question 25**, two concepts were needed – the variety of landscapes and the quality of the light. Incorrect answers sometimes featured mishearing and consequent rendering of *lumière* as *rivière*.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26 - 31

Candidates heard an interview with a young writer about her work and life. Candidates were required to tick one box only in answer to each question. Appropriately entered candidates often scored 3 or more marks, but only the most able answered **Question 31** correctly and this proved to be one of the most demanding on the Paper. This can partly be attributed to the fact that in order to answer the question correctly, candidates had to understand the statement made by the interviewer and Marietou's agreement with it. Inference and the drawing of conclusions from what both speakers say may occasionally be tested at this level and it is well worth reminding candidates not to decide too quickly on their answer and to listen to what both speakers say before coming to a final decision.

Question 26: A; **Question 27**: B; **Question 28**: C; **Question 29**: C; **Question 30**: B; **Question 31**: D.

Exercise 2 Questions 32 - 39

This exercise was deemed fair and accessible for the last part of the Paper. Candidates heard an interview with a vet and answers in French were required. There were some difficulties, but good candidates were able to score well. In **Question 32**, *chirurgie* was difficult, but many answered correctly using the word *opérations*. Likewise *consultations* was adequate for the other mark. **Question 33** was well answered – *elle travaille*/*habite en ville* – as was **Question 34**, where some concept of 'recently' was required. On **Question 35** some reference was required to the idea of no longer working irregular/long hours or working regular hours, not at night. Many answered correctly. On **Question 36**, most scored the marks by referring to the vet being from Paris originally, wanting to find a practice in Paris or being nearer to family. On **Question 37**, the word *examen* was misspelt by many and the English *exam* was ignored. On **Question 38**, candidates needed to refer to the *côté relationnel*/*contact humain*; contact with animals did not gain the mark. **Question 39** referred to the reaction of an owner at the death of his/her animal, but Examiners accepted *la mort d'un animal* for the mark.

www.dynamicpapers.com

Paper 0520/02
Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

Overall, candidates achieved a high standard of performance this year, with many scoring nearly full marks on the Core sections of the Paper. They demonstrated a clear understanding of the texts in ***Sections 1*** and ***2*** and although ***Section 3*** was more challenging, the majority of candidates were able to gain some marks here (on the first exercise mainly). Candidates also displayed good writing skills: they understood what was required in the ***Section 2*** composition and most were able to write something appropriate.

On the whole, candidates were well prepared for this examination. Most were clearly very familiar with the test types and observed the rubrics.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1 - 5

Mostly well done. Very few problems except for **Question 3** where the link between *nettoyer* and *produits d'entretien* was not recognised, and B or C were often given incorrectly instead of A.

Exercise 2 Questions 6 - 10

Most candidates obtained at least three of the five marks. Errors occurred most frequently on **Questions 8** and **9**, with many candidates thinking these statements were *Vrai* when they were *Faux*.

Exercise 3 Questions 11 - 15

This exercise did not cause any particular difficulties –- full marks were the norm.

Exercise 4 Question 16

Nearly all candidates managed to communicate the required points sufficiently clearly to score three marks for communication. As far as language was concerned, although there was frequent confusion of tenses and verb forms, there were also many examples of correct, succinct messages.

Surprisingly, there were a number of candidates who did not seem to have the language available to convey the idea of 'bread'. Some candidates appeared unclear of the amount they needed to write and added considerable superfluous detail to their message. As long as the required elements are included, messages can be as brief as the candidate pleases.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 17 - 25

On the whole, candidates did extremely well on this exercise. They understood the text and most were able to score at least eight out of the ten marks available. No question caused any particular difficulties.

Exercise 2 Question 26

Most candidates found the topic of this writing task very accessible. They generally had the necessary vocabulary and managed to write accurately enough to convey their ideas on life at school (in most cases how much they enjoyed it). As a result, scores for communication were usually good. Only a small minority of candidates did not understand the task and/or did not have the language to complete it. It was particularly pleasing to Examiners to see the way in which many candidates were careful to tackle all three aspects of the question in order to ensure they did not lose any communication marks. However, there were also candidates who confused the words *matière* and *métier*, and it was disappointing that a substantial number were unable to accurately transcribe language from the rubric.

www.dynamicpapers.com

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 27 - 32

This exercise proved more challenging for the majority of candidates. Very weak candidates attempted only the *Vrai/Faux* element of the exercise and did not try to correct the *Faux* statements.

Question 27 was usually correctly answered by candidates. In **Question 28**, candidates were able to score the mark for identifying the statement as *Faux*, but when it came to correcting it, their main error was to write *Il était moins haut que ses copains* or *Il sautait moins haut que mes copains* (this could not be accepted as it conveyed the wrong message). A large majority gained the mark in **Question 29** for correctly identifying the statement as *Vrai*. Candidates were often able to work out that the statement in **Question 30** was *Faux*, although there were then a large number of unsuccessful attempts to correct it. The statement in **Question 31** was often correctly identified as *Vrai*. Once again, with **Question 32**, although candidates often worked out that the statement was *Faux*, they then got into a tangle in trying to transpose the first person of the text into the third person in order to correct it.

Exercise 2 Questions 33 - 39

Most candidates who attempted this exercise understood the text and the questions sufficiently to score at least 3 marks. **Question 33** was the most difficult for candidates who either misread or did not understand *De quoi les parents ont-ils besoin*. Instead of answering *ils ont besoin de…*– or simply *du temps/de l'argent* – they lifted the section from the text starting with *Leurs parents ne peuvent pas…* This failed to answer the question and could not score. **Question 34** was the most accessible question of this exercise and candidates scored marks for mentioning two from a list including *des excursions/des visites/aller dans des parcs d'attractions/voyager*. **Question 35** was well answered on the whole. **Question 38** proved very challenging for the majority of candidates, who seemed to be confused by the use of the passive (*est servi*) in the text. Many candidates scored at least one of the marks available for **Question 39**, and there were some good attempts to transpose the text to the third person.

Paper 0520/03

Speaking

General comments

This Paper was common to all candidates who had followed both a Core Curriculum and an Extended Curriculum course. The full range of marks was available to all candidates and, as in 2002, a wide range of performance was heard by Moderators.

Generally, the candidature displayed a pleasing level of communication skills and the standard heard was very similar to that heard last year.

Administration

It is pleasing to report that there were fewer clerical errors than last year, but Moderators did report the following problems:

- some Centres failed to submit working mark sheets;
- some Teachers/Examiners did not fill in and/or did not submit MS1 summary mark sheets.

Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to check all additions and transcriptions. It is vital that candidates are not disadvantaged by clerical errors made in Centres.

www.dynamicpapers.com

Quality of recording

Please ensure that all samples are audible. This year, Moderators reported that sometimes microphones were poorly positioned or that there was a lot of background noise on tapes. It is each Centre's responsibility to check cassette recorders before the examination, in the room where the test will take place. Centres are also reminded that it is the Examiner who should announce the candidate name and number, *not* the candidate. Once the recording of each candidate has started the tape must not be stopped - the recording of each candidate should be continuous and should last for the duration of the individual speaking test that is approximately 15 minutes.

Duration of tests/missing elements

Regrettably, some Examiners *missed out elements of the test*, severely disadvantaging candidates who *cannot* be awarded marks for parts of the test which they do not complete. Each candidate must attempt two role plays; a Topic/Conversation section (approximately 5 minutes) and a General Conversation (approximately 5 minutes) (see Comments on Individual Questions).

Preparation

Most Examiners had prepared the role plays well, were confident in what they were doing and were thus able to help candidates who experienced any difficulty. Regrettably, however, there was evidence that some Teachers/Examiners had over-prepared candidates for the Topic/Conversation section of the test. Centres are reminded (i) that candidates must *not* know in advance the questions they are to be asked, and (ii) that *no* written notes/questions are allowed in the examination room. Questioning on the Topic should allow a spontaneous conversation to develop.

Timings

Timing was usually good in Centres, but there were some very short tests and also some very long tests. Candidates must not be examined for more than the stipulated 15 minutes.

Application of the mark scheme

Generally, marking in Centres was close to the agreed standard and adjustments, where necessary, were usually small. Centres requiring larger adjustments tended to fall into one of the following categories:

- failure to complete all the tasks in the role plays;
- short Topic and/or General Conversation sections;
- lack of questions designed to elicit past and future time frames (required to score a mark of seven or above on category **(b)** - linguistic content) in the Conversation sections.

In Centres where more than one Examiner was used, the marking was usually consistent across Examiners, but in a few Centres, there was not a consistent standard between Examiners. Centres are reminded that where more than one Examiner is used, permission must be sought from the Product Manager prior to each examination session. In Centres of two or more Examiners, internal moderation must take place and a common standard of marking must be applied across all candidates. The sample submitted should cover the work of all Examiners.

<u>Comments on specific questions</u>

Role Plays

A Role Plays

Centres are reminded that candidates can only score marks for carrying out the tasks specified in the Teachers' Notes Booklet and Role Play Cards. Where tasks are changed by Teachers/Examiners and the prescribed tasks are not carried out, candidates will be disadvantaged. Teacher/Examiners should encourage candidates to attempt all parts of each task: if only one part of a task is complete, only one mark can be awarded. Care must also be taken not to change the wording of the Examiner's prompts: if the Examiner gives the candidate's answer away in the prompt, then the mark cannot be scored.

www.dynamicpapers.com

As last year, the ***Section A*** role plays were all perceived to be of equal difficulty, and a fair test at this level. They are designed to be easier than ***Section B*** role plays and are set using vocabulary from the Defined Content Booklet, Topic Areas A, B and C. Generally, candidates found them accessible and even the weakest candidates were often able to score at least one mark per task. Candidates should be reminded to greet and thank as appropriate as these are often 'part-tasks'. If a task is not fully completed, a maximum mark of one only can be scored.

At the railway station

Candidates coped well with these tasks. **Task 4** was the least well done; weaker candidates found it difficult to formulate a question regarding the time of arrival in Lyon.

Phoning the tourist office

Candidates again performed well on this role play. Nearly all communicated well on the first three tasks, but did not always ask for the price of both the house and the flat. The last task, in which candidates had to formulate a question, proved to be the most challenging for weaker candidates.

At the bank

Tasks 1 and **2** were generally well done, but on **Task 3**, not all were able to explain where their passport was. On **Task 5**, most were able to formulate a question concerning the bank closing times.

B Role Plays

The ***Section B*** role plays were more demanding in that they required the ability to use different time frames, and to explain and justify where necessary. Regrettably, a few Examiners had not prepared their own roles adequately, which meant that they sometimes prevented candidates from fulfilling the tasks. It is quite acceptable for longer tasks to be split by Examiners. There were, pleasingly, some good natural performances from candidates.

At the hospital

Task 1 was well done, but weaker candidates did not always cope well with *depuis* in **Task 2**. Most were able to explain how the accident happened, but they did not always give two details. **Task** 4 was well done, but on **Task 5** some Examiners asked when the candidate was returning, rather than how.

At the campsite

On **Task 1**, some candidates did not introduce themselves, consequently not gaining an 'easy' mark. Some candidates, surprisingly, were not familiar with the pronunciation of *eau* and *douche*. Most, however, conveyed the two problems as set out in the rubric, but were less confident about explaining the consequences of the flood. **Task 4** was well done and the better candidates were able to convey polite insistence! **Task 5** proved difficult for weaker candidates who found it hard to formulate a question in the third person about the owner's intended arrival time. Some forgot to say what they would be doing whilst waiting.

In the car park

Some candidates were not very familiar with car vocabulary and had not read the opening contextualisation or thought that they had hit the French person's car. **Tasks 1** and **5** were approached more confidently, but weaker candidates found it very difficult to explain in **Task 2** that their car was damaged, despite all the crucial vocabulary being given in the prompt. Most were able to say when they had collected the car, but a few did not understand the relevance of *neuve*. The better candidates explained in **Task 4** that the friend had a camera and wanted to take a photo.

www.dynamicpapers.com

Topic (prepared) Conversation

As in 2002, an interesting range of presentations was heard, with most candidates choosing appropriate topics such as Holidays, Free time, Family, Festivals, School, Life in another country. Unfortunately, a few Centres ignored the advice given in the instructions and continued to allow candidates to choose *Moi-même* as a topic. This must be avoided as it can pre-empt the General Conversation section.

There was a wide range of performance, from basic straightforward topics and discussions to the very fluent. Although most candidates were given good opportunities to perform at a level appropriate to their ability, it was regrettable that some of the poorest performances were due to *very* short discussion follow-ups to the presentation by the candidate. Candidates should be allowed to talk for a minute or so on their chosen topic and then Examiners need to initiate discussion of the same topic. The discussion must *not* be pre-learnt - it is vital that as natural a performance as possible is elicited from candidates. It is also important that questions to test past and future time frames are included, as otherwise candidates cannot access marks of seven or more for category **(b)** (linguistic quality).

General (unprepared) Conversation

As in the Topic/Conversation, a wide range of performance was heard. Again, the best performances featured a variety of tenses and a range of structures. It was pleasing to hear candidates talking for the full five minutes accorded to this section and covering at least two or three topics. There were some pleasing natural conversations at all levels of candidate ability. Frequently, the question/invitation to respond "*Parle-moi de"* elicited good responses from candidates. It was also pleasing to hear candidates able to give and justify their opinions.

Moderators commented on the rich variety of life experiences talked about by the candidature. Candidates had usually been well prepared for the test, but Centres are reminded not to exceed five minutes in this part of the test, as five minutes is adequate to assess a candidate's strengths.

Paper 0520/04

Continuous Writing

General comments

Examiners were again encouraged to find an overall improvement in the standard of work presented for this component. Answers were almost uniformly appropriate and the command of French, while variable in quality and precision, was usually at least adequate to attempt the required tasks. As in previous years, candidates approached this Paper with commendable enthusiasm, but lapses in accuracy were costly on weaker scripts. Inappropriate entries were few in number this time.

Advice on previous Reports regarding Communication marks seems to have been heeded in many Centres. There were fewer incidences of excessively long answers, and it was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates do now attempt to write within the limit of a hundred and forty words. This has the benefit of ensuring that the 'bullet points' for Communication may each be given credit. It was also noticeable that more candidates followed the detailed requirements of the Rubric in an orderly and disciplined fashion and that marks for Communication were correspondingly higher than in past years. However, candidates should be reminded that marks for content are not awarded when *serious* errors of tense occur or when meaning is impaired by a lack of clarity.

Those who achieved the highest marks for Language showed an ability to sustain fluent and idiomatic French, with an appropriate selection of vocabulary, structure and register. However, there is a growing tendency to 'force in' adjectives for the sake of it (as in *j'ai gagné une grande auto rouge blanche et bleue*) and hackneyed proverbs (especially *tout est bien qui finit bien*) often used out of context and inappropriately. This practice tends to produce an unnatural and wordy piece of work and does not impress Examiners.

www.dynamicpapers.com

All three elements of the Paper inspired lively and original answers by the more able candidates, who combined linguistic accuracy with ambition. Less gifted candidates, in the average to below average range, were usually able to respond to the tasks set, although in more simple language, and to give a good account of themselves. There were relatively few cases of the candidate failing to understand what was required and only a small incidence of irrelevant material.

The standard of presentation was disappointing. A number of scripts were barely legible and contained much crossing out. Where Examiners cannot read what the candidate has written, marks cannot be awarded.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Letter to a holiday centre

(a) About a quarter of the candidates chose this question. The best answers revealed familiarity with the formal letter style. They set about the letter in a firm but polite manner, observing the necessary etiquette. Less successful candidates who adopted the inappropriate register of the informal letter fared less well: no credit was given to *Salut! Ça va*? or the use of *tutoiement*.

The shortcomings of the holiday centre were varied, the most common being faulty plumbing, hard beds, inadequate facilities, bad food and uncivil staff. Unfortunately, a number omitted to respond to *Quand vous étiez au Centre?* and lost a Communication mark. The key verb, *se plaindre*, was not well known. It would have been safer to retain it in its infinitive form, as in the rubric. Reactions to these *problèmes* were usually outrage or at least discontent. A minority overlooked the requirement to express any feelings. Demands to be reimbursed were not always well handled. *Remboursé* was sometimes taken to be a noun, resulting in *Je veux un remboursé* or the equivalent. A minority clearly did not understand the term *Centre de vacances*, but few marks were lost on this account.

Candidates should be reminded of the importance of tense. The question was framed in the perfect and imperfect tenses and correct responses also needed to be expressed in the past.

A summary on the Internet of one's imagined past life, aged 30

(b) This was the more popular choice for **Question 1**. Many seized with relish the opportunity to imagine their future lives. Brilliant successes at College or University were followed by long journeys around the world. Professional ambitions were uniformly achieved as candidates became doctors, lawyers, or, just occasionally, teachers. Some hoped to be living in the same place, while others were in more exotic locations, usually the USA. Most imagined themselves to be happily married with two children. All assumed they would be affluent. The tone throughout was refreshing.

One common source of linguistic error was in the choice of prepositions with place names as many attempted variations of *Je suis allée aux Etats-Unis/au Japon/en France/à Londres*. The verb 'to study' regularly appeared as *J'ai étudé* instead of *J'ai étudié*. *Médecin* and *médecine* were routinely confused, as were *mari*, *se marier* and *être marié*. Few knew *épouser*. *Votre travail* commonly led to *Je travail*.

The most frequent errors involved the misuse of tenses, and present and past were used sometimes interchangeably. Agreements of adjectives and past participles with the first person narrator varied frequently, e.g. *je suis allée* was followed by *j'étais content*. The subjects *ma famille* and *tout le monde* were followed by plural verb forms. Weaker answers tended to be repetitive and the descriptions of the imagined future family (*Mon fils s'appelle Daniel. Il a 2 ans. Ma fille...* etc) and travel (*je suis allé à... et à* etc) ran to unnecessary length and detail with little variety of language. Better candidates avoided the pitfalls and addressed each item systematically and in appropriate detail, thereby securing most, if not all the Communication marks and maintaining interest.

This question concerned the candidate's personal life and as usual this tended to produce the better answers.

www.dynamicpapers.com

Question 2

The prize

Understanding of the stimulus was almost total and some lively and original work was received for this question. The best answers seemed to be those which related the situation of winning a prize to the writer's own experience rather than to wild fancy. Prizes were won for writing articles, dancing, music, poetry and especially sporting achievement. Sometimes, the competition was a lottery with huge financial gains. Less likely wins involved chocolate cake eating competitions or, curiously, large cash prizes for doing charity work.

Communication marks were relatively accessible and the majority scored well for content. Some lost a mark for omitting to address *ce que vous avez fait pour gagner*. Prizes included medals (rarely correctly spelt), cash, free holidays, houses and especially cars. The more modest won books or bicycles. The visit to the capital to receive the prize was usually well handled. Winners were often able to bring along the family, enjoy lavish hospitality and even meet the president himself. The experience was described as *fabuleux*, *super* or *fantastique* and candidates declared themselves to be *très content*. Stronger candidates were able to express pride, nervousness, excitement and joy. The last point, *comment le prix a changé votre vie*, led to some solemn sentiments. The experience had taught candidates that all is possible in life if you persevere, or their newfound wealth enabled them to help the needy. The more materialistic enjoyed lasting prosperity or luxury or simply found their new car to be highly convenient. Some said they did not change at all much, but it was nice to give money away to worthy causes, the poor or the homeless, or quite often to those suffering from AIDS.

As ever with questions requiring a narrative, errors were frequent in the use of past tenses. Many alternated indiscriminately between perfect and imperfect tenses and few managed the pluperfect in attempting *On m'a dit que j'avais gagné*. A minority wrongly thought the story should be in the future and related how they would be going to the capital and would be very happy. As with **Question 1**, the gender of the narrator varied in past participles and adjectives. The agreement in *On m'a invitée* for feminine narrators was often missed. A large proportion of errors occurred as usual, not so much due to lack of knowledge as to carelessness. Candidates should be reminded as ever to revise their work most thoroughly and check for elementary slips.

Despite these weaknesses, Examiners were generally impressed by the quality of the answers they received. Candidates had been well prepared for the demands of the Paper and undertook their work diligently and with enthusiasm.