CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™

FRENCH **0520/42**

Paper 4 Writing **February/March 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 45

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the February/March 2026 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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PUBLISHED

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

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GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5: Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).
GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6: Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Mark awarded on **Question 1**
	Used to show original mark not awarded.
	Task/Bullet point 1 completed. Numbered ticks 1 to 5 refer to tasks/bullet points 1 to 5. One tick = partial task completion. Two ticks = task fully completed.
	Something missing. In the left margin = task omitted. In the body of the text = significant word missing.
	Benefit of doubt given
	Recorded in right margin to indicate that the candidate has provided detailed information that merits awarding.
Highlighter	In **Question 2** – Examples of connectives highlighted In **Question 3** – Examples of cohesive devices, and complex structures and vocabulary highlighted.
 **or IR**	Section of text not relevant to the task. Has to be agreed with Team Leader.

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Annotation	Meaning
	Message unclear
Off page comment	Usually used to annotate practice scripts to standardise examiners.
	To confirm blank pages seen
	Occasionally used to underline examples of errors/inaccuracies

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Additional Guidance

- **Crossing out:**

(a)	If a candidate changes his/her mind over an answer and crosses out an attempt, award a mark if the final attempt is correct.
(b)	If a candidate crosses out an answer to a whole question but makes no second attempt at it, mark the crossed out work.

- **No response and '0' marks:**

(a)	**Award NR (no response):** If there is nothing written at all in the answer space or If there is only a comment which does not in any way relate to the question being asked (e.g. 'can't do' or 'don't know') or If there is only a mark which isn't an attempt at the question (e.g. a dash, a question mark).
(b)	**Award 0:** If there is any attempt that earns no credit. This could, for example, include the candidate copying all or some of the question, or any working that does not earn any marks, whether crossed out or not.

- **Optional questions:**
  Mark all questions attempted by the candidate. Where the candidate attempts more than one of the alternatives in Question 3, the marking system will take the best mark.

- **Using mark schemes with grade descriptors:**
  Start at the bottom of the mark scheme and work upwards through the descriptors when awarding marks.

  The marker should look at the work and then make a judgement about which level statement is the 'best fit'. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

  Once a 'best-fit' level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

  - If the candidate's work convincingly meets the level statement, award the highest mark.
  - If the candidate's work adequately meets the level statement, award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range (where middle marks are available).
  - If the candidate's work just meets the level statement, award the lowest mark.

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Detailed Mark Scheme

Question	Answer	Marks
1	Candidates are required to complete 5 gaps in French. Read all of the items that the candidate has listed and award marks as follows: • **Award 1 mark for each correct item.** • In **Question 1**, award marks for items wherever the candidate has written them provided the candidate has made clear which part of the form they refer to. • Mark for communication. Tolerate inaccuracies, provided that communication is not impeded. • If spelling is inaccurate, start by referring to the table below. Refer to the questions below if no decision on the spelling you have encountered is recorded there. If you read aloud what the candidate has written, does it sound like the correct answer and would a native speaker of French understand it? Does what the candidate has written look like the correct answer, e.g. one letter missing but no other word created? Would a native speaker of French understand it? • Reject misspelt words which suggest a word with a quite different meaning. Where nouns are usually plural, accept the singular and vice versa. • All answers must fulfil the communicative purpose described in the rubric.	**5**

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<table>
<tr><th>Question</th><th>Answer</th><th>Marks</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>
Vous êtes Dominique Moréno. Vous avez acheté un vêtement en ligne.

Complétez la fiche <u>en français</u> pour donner votre opinion sur cet achat.
<table>
<tr><th></th><th>ACCEPT</th><th>REFUSE</th></tr>
<tr><td>Gap 1
(1 mark)</td><td>Any type of clothing, e.g. baskets, manteau, gilet, jupe, pantalon

If two items are offered, both must be acceptable e.g.
veste et gants = 1
veste et gents = 0</td><td>Refuse vocabulary which cannot be considered as an item of clothing</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gap 2
(1 mark)</td><td>Any colour, e.g. bleu, jaune, vert</td><td>Refuse vocabulary which cannot be considered as a colour.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gap 3
(1 mark)</td><td>Any month, e.g. janvier, août, décembre</td><td>Refuse vocabulary which cannot be considered as a month.

Refuse dates in numbers, e.g. 15/09/25</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gap 4
(1 mark)</td><td>Any place or event, e.g. anniversaire, cinéma, fête, vacances, Paris, chez moi, sur mon site web

Accept je vais… / aller…

If two places are mentioned, both must be correct.</td><td>Refuse vocabulary which cannot be considered as a place or event.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gap 5
(1 mark)</td><td>Any appropriate adjective, e.g. bien, chic, cinq étoiles, élégant, mauvais, trop petit/grand</td><td>Refuse vocabulary which cannot be considered as a quality of product / opinion on the product e.g.

reaction: heureux, d’accord
material: en coton,
size: petit, moyen, grand tc</td></tr>
</table>
</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

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Question	Answer	Marks
2	**Mes matières préférées à l'école** • **Quelles sont les matières que vous préférez ?** • **Pourquoi aimez-vous ces matières ?** • **Décrivez les qualités d'un bon professeur.** • **Donnez des détails sur votre emploi du temps.** • **Quelle nouvelle matière voudriez-vous étudier ?** **Écrivez 80–90 mots en français.** Read the whole answer and award a mark out of 12 using the table below.	**12**

Marks	Descriptor	Guidance
10–12	• Completes all tasks in the required level of detail. • Provides consistently relevant information and opinions. • Meaning is clear and communication is achieved, although there may be some linguistic inaccuracies. • Uses straightforward vocabulary and structures. • Links words and phrases using a range of simple connectors.	Examples of linguistic inaccuracies: lapses in agreements, tenses/time frames, spelling. Examples of linking words and phrases: *and*, *or*, *but*, *because*, *then*
7–9	• Completes most tasks in the required level of detail. • Provides mostly relevant information and opinions. • Meaning is mostly clear and communication is generally achieved, despite linguistic inaccuracies. • Uses limited vocabulary and structures with some repetition. • Some attempt to link words and phrases using a range of simple connectors.	
4–6	• Completes some tasks with some of the required detail. • Provides some relevant information. • Meaning is sometimes clear and some communication is achieved, despite linguistic inaccuracies. • Uses basic vocabulary and structures with frequent repetition. • Some attempt to link words or phrases using a limited range of simple connectors repetitively (e.g. *and*, *or*).	
1–3	• Attempts task(s), with little or none of the required detail. • May provide information; is almost always irrelevant. • Meaning is unclear and communication is rarely achieved. • Uses isolated words/phrases appropriate to the task. • Little attempt to link words or phrases.	
0	• No creditable content.	

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Question	Answer	Marks
Répondez à la question 3(a) ou à la question 3(b). **Écrivez 130–140 mots en français.**		
3(a)	**Une soirée dans le quartier** **Vous avez organisé une soirée dans votre quartier. Écrivez un e-mail à votre ami(e) suisse pour raconter votre expérience.** • **Pourquoi avez-vous organisé la soirée ?** • **Qu'est-ce que les gens ont fait pour s'amuser ce soir-là ?** • **Quel est votre meilleur souvenir de la soirée ?** • **Quelle a été la réaction des invités ?** • **Si vous organisiez un autre évènement, que feriez-vous ?** Read the whole answer, award a mark from each of the three tables below and add up the total. Marks are available for: • task completion (maximum 10 marks) • range (maximum 10 marks) • accuracy (maximum 8 marks).	**28**
3(b)	**Un voyage difficile** **Récemment, vous avez fait un voyage. Malheureusement, vous avez eu des problèmes. Écrivez un blog sur votre expérience.** • **Donnez des détails sur le voyage que vous avez fait.** • **Vous avez eu quelques difficultés : décrivez ce qui s'est passé.** • **Comment avez-vous réagi ?** • **Selon vous, quels sont les avantages de voyager ?** • **Décrivez un autre voyage que vous aimeriez faire.** Read the whole answer, award a mark from each of the three tables below and add up the total. Marks are available for: • task completion (maximum 10 marks) • range (maximum 10 marks) • accuracy (maximum 8 marks).	**28**

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Task completion

Marks	Descriptor
9–10	• Completes all tasks. • Provides detailed information, opinions/reactions and explanations. • The writing is focused and wholly relevant.
7–8	• Completes most tasks. • Provides straightforward information, opinions/reactions and explanations. • The writing is mostly relevant.
5–6	• Completes some tasks. • Provides some information, opinions and simple explanations. • The writing is more relevant than irrelevant.
3–4	• Attempts some tasks with some success. • Provides basic information and opinions. • The writing is occasionally relevant.
1–2	• Attempts task(s) with little or no success. • Provides some information and is almost always irrelevant.
0	• No creditable response.

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Range

Marks	Descriptor
9–10	• Uses extended, well-linked sentences frequently. • Uses a wide range of simple and complex structures listed in the syllabus to produce sentences of varying length. • Uses a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the task(s).
7–8	• Uses some extended sentences, mostly well linked. • Uses a range of structures listed in the syllabus, including some complex structures, to produce sentences of varying length. • Uses a range of vocabulary appropriate to the task(s) with occasional repetition.
5–6	• Uses some extended sentences, with some evidence of linkage. • Uses simple structures and attempts to use some complex structures listed in the syllabus. • Uses mostly straightforward vocabulary appropriate to the task(s) with some repetition.
3–4	• Uses simple structures and makes no attempt at using the complex structures listed in the syllabus. • Relies on repetition of a small range of straightforward vocabulary.
1–2	• Uses isolated phrases and makes some attempt at basic structures. • Relies on repetition of a small range of basic vocabulary.
0	• No creditable response.

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Accuracy

Marks	Descriptor
7–8	• Accurate spelling and grammar; not necessarily faultless. • Occasional errors in spelling and grammar do not impede communication.
5–6	• Mostly accurate spelling and grammar. • Errors in spelling and grammar sometimes impede communication.
3–4	• Some accurate spelling and grammar. • Errors in spelling and grammar frequently impede communication.
1–2	• Rarely accurate spelling and grammar. • Errors in spelling and grammar persistently impede communication.
0	• No creditable response.

Irrelevance

- Sections of material unrelated to any of the bullet points will be disregarded.
- If the whole answer to **Question 3** is irrelevant (e.g. contains no evidence of being related to the bullet points set), award 0 for *Task completion*, *Range* and *Accuracy*.
- If **Question 3** is attempted but communication is not achieved (i.e. the candidate misunderstood the question), award a maximum of 4 for *Range* and a best fit for *Task completion* and *Accuracy.*

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