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FRENCH

Paper 0520/12
Listening (Multiple Choice)

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

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

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

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

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

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

General comments

The March 2024 Listening paper consisted of 37 multiple-choice questions. Overall, candidates 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, an advertisement, 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. The paper differentiated well.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1–8

The extracts were short, straightforward interactions and candidates generally performed well in this exercise.

For **Question 1**, a small number of candidates did not identify le *port*. The most frequent incorrect answer was option **D.** For **Question 2**, many candidates selected the correct price, option **B**. Most candidates answered **Questions 3**, **5** and **7** successfully. For **Question 4**, some candidates did not understand *feu d'artifice;* options **A** and **C** were the most frequent incorrect answers. For **Question 6**, many candidates understood *faire des courses* and correctly selected option **D***.* All candidates answered **Question 8** correctly.

Questions 9–14

Candidates heard a longer extract about an advertisement for a new pizzeria, *Chez Cristina*. Candidates generally performed well in this exercise.

For **Question 9**, most candidates understood the day**.** For **Questions 10**, only the strongest candidates recognised *poivron*; option **A** was the most common incorrect answer. Many candidates understood the percentage in **Question 11**. **Questions 12** and **13** were also attempted well. For **Question 14**, most of the candidates were familiar with *rond-point*; option **B**, *le pont*, was the most frequent incorrect answer.

Questions 15–19

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard a conversation between Clément and his mother about friends Clément could invite to join them on their holidays in Ireland. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

Many candidates were successful in selecting statement **D** in **Question 15** and in **Question 16**, correctly matched *a trouvé un emploi pour les vacances* with statement **E**. In **Question 16**, Option **F** was the most common incorrect answer. **Question 17** was attempted well by most candidates. In **Question 18**, most of the cohort answered correctly and matched *n'aime pas quitter sa maison* with statement **F**. Those who answered incorrectly often chose statement **E**. Only the strongest candidates answered **Question 19** correctly and selected statement **C**. Candidates needed to listen to the whole sentence to link *il connaît bien l'Irlande* and *il y va souvent*; there was no clear pattern in the incorrect answers for this question.

Questions 20–28

In this exercise candidates heard an interview in two parts with Fatou, who talked about her school in Burkina Faso. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test.

Question 20 was attempted well with most candidates correctly choosing option **B**. Distractor **C** was the most frequent incorrect answer. In **Question 21**, most candidates successfully selected option **A**; nearly all those who answered incorrectly missed the comparative *c'était mieux que…* and chose distractor **C**. In **Question 22**, a small majority of candidates successfully selected option **B**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *gentilles,* which referred to Fatou's friends not school staff, and chose distractor **A**. In **Question 23**, most of the candidates correctly matched *matières scientifiques* with option **A**. Nearly all the candidates who answered incorrectly missed the negative at the end of the second sentence (*mais pas ici)* and chose distractor **B**. **Question 24** was attempted well and many candidates successfully matched *poursuivre mes études à l'étranger* with option **C**. Distractor **A**, *être ingénieure*, was the most frequent error and candidates needed to listen to the whole sentence to understand that Fatou was referring to a former student who had given a careers talk at her school, not her own plans.

Question 25 was the most demanding question in this exercise. Only some candidates were familiar with *évier* and *faire un peu de lessive.* Option **B** was the most frequent incorrect answer. **Question 26** was

attempted well with many candidates correctly selecting option **C**; most of those who answered incorrectly chose distractor **A**. In **Question 27**, many candidates correctly chose option **B**. Distractor **A** was the most common incorrect answer; candidates needed to listen carefully to the verbs (*je rentre/j'aimerais rentrer*) as Fatou explained that she would like to go home every weekend, but only goes home once a month because she has a lot of homework. **Question 28** was demanding and just over half the cohort successfully selected option **A.** Most candidates who answered incorrectly chose distractor **C**.

Questions 29–34

In this extract, candidates heard an interview with Yves who runs workshops for an organisation, *Apprendre en Faisant*, in France. This exercise represented another step up in the incline of difficulty. It was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

In **Question 29**, a majority of candidates chose the correct answer **C**. Some heard *mercredis après-midi* and incorrectly chose distractor **B**. They needed to listen carefully to the whole sentence as *sauf pendant les vacances scolaires* negated **B**. In **Question 30**, many candidates correctly matched *je suis arrivé à Luçon il y a trois ans* with **B.** Many incorrectly chose distractors **A** and **C**. **Question 31** was the most demanding question in this exercise. Only the most able candidates understood *balayer les salles à la fin* and successfully chose **C**. Many candidates heard *semaine* and incorrectly chose distractor **D. B** also proved a strong distractor. **Question 32** was also demanding, and the stronger candidates selected the correct answer **A**. Candidates needed to focus on what teenagers enjoy **the most**, introduced by *avant tout* in the passage; distractor **C** was the most frequent error. In **Question 33**, many candidates correctly chose **D**. There was no real pattern in the incorrect answers. In **Question 34**, a majority of candidates successfully matched *un nouveau bâtiment où on aura plus de place* with **B**. Distractor **C** was the most common incorrect answer and candidates needed to listen carefully as the possibility of gardening workshops was ruled out at the end of the sentence by *on ne trouve pas de jardinier.*

Questions 35–37

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview with Mireille who talks about a family holiday in Quebec, in a campervan. For each question, 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.

Question 35 was attempted well; many candidates successfully selected options **A** and **E**. Some missed the negative in *on n'en avait jamais conduit un* and incorrectly chose distractor **B**. **Question 36** was the most demanding in this exercise. Only the most able successfully chose **B** and **D**. Many candidates heard *mon mari* and *pêcher du poisson* and incorrectly chose distractor **C**, although *déçu* and *n'a pas eu le temps* indicated that he did not go fishing. Statements **A** and **E** also proved strong distractors. In **Question 37**, nearly half the cohort successfully selected option **A** and over half option **D**. Distractor **C** was the most common incorrect answer and candidates needed to listen carefully to the verbs as *une autre fois on prendrait* and *ce serait plus confortable* made it clear that the campervan that they had rented did not have a shower. Some candidates needed to identify the negative in *on n'a eu qu'une journée de pluie* and incorrectly chose distractor **B**.

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Paper 0520/22
Reading

Key messages

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

- avoid answering in full sentences when it is not required.
- bear in mind that answers will follow the order of the text.
- avoid leaving blanks in multiple choice questions.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper, and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Almost all candidates performed well in this question. Some candidates were less successful in **1(e).** Where an incorrect answer was selected for this question, it was usually **E** instead of **A**.

Question 2

Some candidates found this exercise challenging. Although most candidates did well in **2(a)**, the other four parts, especially **2(b),** gave some problems. **C** was a common mistake for **2(b)** and **G** was often picked wrongly for **2(c).** Some candidates answered **A** for **2(d)**, mistaking *station* for *stationner*. **B** was sometimes picked for **2(e)**.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in this question. **3(d)** and **3(f)** proved to be the most challenging parts, with the most common mistake being **A** for both. In **3(d)**, candidates saw *jardin* and made an incorrect link. In **3(f),** candidates did not always recognise *drôle*.

Question 4

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text in the form of a teenager called Lucien writing about a visit to his grandparents' farm. Many candidates were successful, but others needed to be more precise in their answers.
Candidates do not need to write many words to answer the questions. For example, *vendredi* was sufficient to answer the first question. A significant number of candidates attempted to answer every question with a full sentence. Mistakes in the sections of the answer which were not necessary impacted the marks.

Some candidates did not show sufficient understanding and lifted too much of the text. For example, *le ciel était gris et le bulletin météorologique* in **4(d)**. Some candidates needed to read **4(g)** more carefully, as they gave the reason why he was not there rather than where he was. **4(h)** was another question where adding material tended to impact the mark.

Candidates should remember that there will always be a small number of questions that require a minor manipulation, such as a straightforward verb or a word like *ma*.

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Question 5

For this exercise, candidates had to match a series of descriptions with statements from people looking for holiday destinations. Details included the type of place, such as a seaside resort or somewhere in the countryside. Candidates need to ensure they read carefully all the information given.

Description **8** was frequently incorrectly matched with statements **(d)** or **(c).**

Question 6

This final exercise was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. About half of the questions could be answered with a careful lift from the text and the other half needed a small manipulation of the text to answer the question.

Very few candidates were successful, and the questions seem to have discriminated appropriately.

Candidates often chose the right part of the text for **6(a)** but wrote too much. With **6(b)**, some candidates needed to improve their manipulation skills, while other candidates responded that it was a male friend – *un copain*. Candidates were mostly successful in **6(c)** and **6(d)** but less so in **6(e)**: this could be answered by just a few words, but many candidates lifted too much of the sentence and constructed an answer that was inaccurate. Others lifted *Elle a donc trouvé les premiers jours assez durs* which did not answer the question.

In **6(f)**, a lot of candidates needed to be more confident with the manipulation and wrongly made the verb reflexive. In **6(h)**, a lot of candidates needed to use the correct part of the text for the answers and in **6(i)** the manipulation of the verb needed improving as candidates often missed out the auxiliary.

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Paper 0520/03
Speaking

Key messages

- Centres had generally prepared candidates well for the Speaking test.
- Role plays were conducted correctly by most examiners.
- In the topics section, some centres needed to make greater use of extension questions to elicit fuller answers from candidates. Sometimes, the topic conversations, and particularly the first topic, were too short.
- Most examiners understood the need to read the script **exactly** as printed, observe any pauses indicated and did not try 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 need to ensure that in the topics, if a question is not understood or an ambiguous response is given by the candidate, the question must be read again before the alternative question is used.
- 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, and centres uploaded their work promptly.

General comments

Examiners were usually familiar with the format of the test and were efficient in its conduct. The Speaking test is intended to be a test of **spontaneous** communicative ability. A wide range of performance was again evident across the cohort, and examples of performance at all levels of ability were heard.

Examiners greeted candidates using the prompts provided and nearly all examiners read the scenario for the role plays, as instructed, in French. Most centres correctly 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, if the candidate does not answer a question or gives an ambiguous response. Occasionally, some examiners did not repeat the question and consequently removed the opportunity for the candidate to work for the available marks. It is important for examiners to read the role play tasks **exactly** as printed to ensure that they are not changing the nature and level of difficulty of the tasks. It is useful to note that the role plays (unlike the topic conversations) are **not** timed. New centres should note that extension questions should not be asked in the role plays. It is well worth stressing to candidates that their role play responses should be as concise as possible and be relevant to the set task. Long development is not required.

When there was a **PAUSE** between two questions in the script, most examiners correctly gave candidates the time to answer the first question before asking the second one: it is there intentionally to give candidates the time to process the questions and think best how to answer relevantly.

The **Topic conversations are timed.** Each topic should last 4 minutes. In some centres, the Topic conversations timings were not correct. These were often too short, especially on the first topic and, occasionally, too long. In cases of short timings, examiners needed to make greater use of extension and further questions.

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Some examiners needed to ask more extension questions (e.g., *Donne-moi plus de details?* or *Peux-tu me dire autre chose à ce sujet ?*) so as to give candidates the opportunity **to develop their answers** and go beyond brief or incomplete answers which they did not communicate clearly. 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 should not rephrase the set questions themselves as this can change the nature and level of difficulty of the set task.** It is important to try to cover the 5 set questions within 4 minutes**.** Examiners must also not provide vocabulary or ideas to the candidate. In the conversations, *Décris* and *Parle-moi* are cues that indicate open questions. When responding to such questions, candidates should try and put in as much relevant detail as possible as they are being invited to develop and go beyond straightforward answers.

If a candidate does not understand the first set question or gives an ambiguous response which does not communicate clearly on **Questions 3**, **4** or **5**, the examiner should repeat this first set question. If the candidate still does not understand, the examiner must then go on to ask the alternative question. **Alternative questions** give candidates another opportunity to understand the task and use easier language to test the same points, so they have another opportunity to work for the marks. In some cases, a few examiners asked the first question which was answered quite well, and they then also asked the alternative question on the same task or used the alternative question as an extension question. This was very confusing for the candidates concerned as they thought they had already answered the task. Centres are also reminded not to go straight to the alternative version of a question. The first version of the question should always be used first.

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 their choice on the same topic as the other questions to make sure that the conversation lasts 4 minutes. If after these 2 further questions the topic conversation still lasts 3½ minutes or less, the examiner must stop the conversation. No more than 2 further questions should be asked on a topic. These 2 questions are of the examiner's choosing but should be thought about and prepared before the test. They should be differentiated in nature according to the ability of the candidate and should vary between different candidates covering the same topic. High ability candidates should be given further questions which are open in nature, and which give them the opportunity to say more than a brief response. Sometimes, able candidates were given closed questions which required little more than a '*oui'* or '*non*' response.

Nearly all examiners remembered to introduce the topic area in French at the start of each topic conversation and used French to link the different sections of the test.

Clerical checks and sample size

In most centres, the clerical work had been completed very efficiently. It is essential that all clerical work is checked carefully to ensure that candidates receive the correct mark. **The mark recorded on the centre WMS must match the mark uploaded to the Submit for Assessment portal.** When marks have been internally moderated, it is the internally moderated mark that should be uploaded to the Submit for Assessment portal. Centres generally made efficient use of the Submit for Assessment portal and are thanked for submitting their work promptly.

Centres are reminded to consult the Samples Database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples to check how to submit their sample and the correct format of files to be submitted.

Centres are requested to make sure that the full name of the examiner is printed clearly on the centre's working mark sheet.

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 French speaker and were transactional in nature. Contexts such as arranging sporting and leisure outings with friends, buying a book, going on an excursion, discussing transport and travel, talking about a summer job, and going to a café featured across the cards. Most candidates approached the role plays well and many scored good marks. The weakest candidates also showed that they could score marks for partial communication on some tasks.

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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. Most candidates answered these two opening questions quite 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 well and consequently gave irrelevant information which did not answer the set task. 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 give opinions and simple explanations. Examiners and candidates should remember that on the role plays brief answers can be awarded full marks provided they communicate the set task clearly. Candidates should aim for concise answers that communicate their message clearly and without ambiguity. 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. Candidates should also think about the person with whom they are talking, the country they are supposed to be in and the role that they are playing.

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 used matched 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 (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 they did not conjugate the verb appropriately in their answer, e.g. a question such as *Qu'est-ce que vous allez visiter pendant votre excursion?* was sometimes answered as *j'allez/j'allais visiter.* This resulted in ambiguity due to an incorrect time frame and consequently prevented a mark of 2 from being scored. If a verb is used, the time frame must be a correct for a mark of 2 to be awarded. Likewise, pronunciation of key vocabulary should be clearly recognisable if the message is to be communicated fully and awarded 2 marks.

Card 1 was generally approached well by candidates. On **Task 1,** some candidates found *kilomètres* difficult to pronounce well. Answers such as *Le restaurant se trouve à 5 kilomètres de chez moi* fulfilled the task. On **Task 2** some candidates did not recognise *Qui sort avec nous ce soir? a*nd did not conjugate the verb successfully in a correct time frame. **Task 3** was usually well done despite the pronunciation of *délicieux* not always being successful. **Task 4** was also answered well, with the most popular restaurants being Italian, Chinese or Indian. Most were able to give a suitable reason for wanting to eat there. **Task 5** was usually well answered with the weaker candidates being able to understand *vêtements,* heard in the cue, and say what they intended to wear to the restaurant.

Card 2 was overall approached well be candidates. **Task 1** was answered well. There were some errors of prepositions, but these did not usually impede communication. **Task 2** was well done with most recognising *C'est pour qui?* On **Task 3**, candidates were able to give a type of book and the most popular choices heard were *romantique, comique* or *de science fiction.* Candidates were often successful with brief responses. Those who gave a fuller answer sometimes found it hard to sustain the correct time frames in both parts of the task. On **Task 4** a few examiners and a few candidates mispronounced *magazines* as *magasins.* This resulted in wrong messages being conveyed which could not be credited. **Task 5** was completed well by most candidates with the most popular option being eating out.

Card 3 was usually approached confidently by candidates. On **Task 1,** most were able to give a time and understood the cue well. On **Task 2,** most said they were returning to *Inde.* and could give an acceptable pronunciation of *Inde.* Some candidates found this word challenging to pronounce correctly. Brief answers were acceptable but needed to be pronounced well in order to communicate fully. **Task 3** was generally answered well as an opinion in a present time frame or a past time frame was acceptable. Most chose to give positive comments such as *c'était bien/confortable, le service était super*. On **Task 4**, most candidates seemed keen to return the next year and offered reasons such as *c'est une belle région* or *les gens sont gentils.* On **Task 5**, weaker candidates did not recognise the past time frame used in the cue and said instead what they were going to buy, which did not answer the set task fully. Popular choices were items such as *des souvenirs, des chocolats, du parfum.*

Candidates were usually successful on **Card 4**, **Task 1**. Most wanted to go to *Paris* or *Lyon* and went on to answer **Task 2** equally well. On **Task 3** candidates were able to name tourist attractions they wanted to see

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or landmarks such as *les Alpes.* In some cases, candidates gave more than one answer for the first part of the question and then struggled to respond with any other relevant information for the second part. Some candidates did not understand *d'autre* and some repetition of the question was necessary. Those that answered part 2 successfully often mentioned *je vais manger au restaurant, je vais faire du shopping* or *je vais aller au musée.* On **Task 4**, most candidates successfully gave a country as required (rather than a nationality). Those who opted to use a verb sometimes used *je venais/venez* instead of *je viens*, which led to some ambiguity. The second part of the task was usually completed successfully, with most candidates being able to give an opinion about their stay in France. **Task 5** was usually well done, although there were some errors of time frame. Some candidates thought the second part of the task was asking them how they had travelled to their destination, thereby communicating an irrelevant message.

Card 5 was usually approached well by candidates. On **Task 1**, most candidates were able to give a specific day or a suitable moment in time such as *demain soir*. A few candidates replied with more ambiguous answers such as *le week-end* instead of a specific day, and examiners did not always repeat the question to enable the candidate to work for the marks. **Task 2** was well done. Good attempts were made at **Task 3** with most candidates able to give a simple opinion about why they liked such *spectacles.* On **Task 4**, most candidates were able to respond with some relevant information. Some needed to use a verb to maintain the past time frame in the two parts of the task. The final task, **Task 5**, was well done. Most candidates chose to say that they would like to eat out or go to the cinema.

On **Task 1** of **Card 6**, some candidates struggled to respond to requests for their name in the more formal *vous* form. Some weaker candidates needed to consider the *par semaine* heard in the question. Some said at what time they would like to start rather than how many hours a week they were able to work. Others tried to explain why they wanted a job, instead of just giving a number. On **Task 3**, most were able to name a job they had done. They needed to add when it had been in the second part of the task. **Task 4** was well done by the more able candidates. Weaker candidates found it harder to say why they would be a suitable candidate for the job. Better responses mentioned being trustworthy, liking the public, being hard working or just loving pizza. Some of the very best candidates spoke about having previous experience and enjoying the work. On **Task 5,** weaker candidates sometimes confused *projets d'avenir* with school projects. Candidates who understood correctly went on to talk about plans for study and future career ambitions.

Card 7 featured a range of easier and harder tasks**.** On **Task 1** most were able to give an acceptable notion of frequency about going to the club and *combien de fois par mois* was quite well understood. Likewise, on **Task 2,** most were able to give a price (which could be in any currency). Most opted to give a price in local currency or *euros*. **Task 4** required a simple positive opinion to be given and this was usually done well. **Task 5** proved more challenging with only the more able candidates fully understanding that they needed to say where they were going to take photos and giving a reason for going to that particular location. Weaker candidates needed to recognise the time frame of the question and give a place. More able candidates were able to say they were going to the countryside, into town or into the mountains. Some interesting justifications were given by the best candidates on the second part of the task such as *j'aimerais prendre des photos en pleine nature/des animaux* or *pour prendre des photos du coucher du soleil*.

Card 8 was set in a *café* context. **Tasks 1** and **2** were very well answered. **Task 3** was a little more challenging, with candidates being required to say what they liked the most about holidaying in France. Most made good attempts at this task and were able to give an opinion and a reason. **Task 4** was approached a little less confidently by weaker candidates. The vocabulary *les plats* was not always well understood, and some did not realise that they were being asked about which dishes they had already eaten at the village restaurant. Some weaker candidates thought they needed to request a meal and time frame errors were often heard, which impeded communication. The final task, **Task 5** was completed more confidently, and the question was quite well understood, with most being able to say what they wanted to do during the coming week.

On **Card 9**, **Task 1** was well done. On **Task 2,** the cue often needed repeating for weaker candidates as they did not always recognise *location.* Some thought they were being asked where the lake was. Others, however, realised a price was required when they heard *Ça coûte combien…?* On **Task 3**, candidates sometimes struggled to produce a suitable reason for liking wind surfing, although *amusant/intéressant* would have sufficed in a correct sentence. Better candidates were able to give answers such as *parce que ça m'aide à rester en forme* or *parce que je m'amuse avec mes amis.* On **Task 4** quite a lot of candidates needed to recognise the past participle *appris* and understand they were being asked about when they had learnt to windsurf. Some brief responses such as *il y 7 ans* or *l'année dernière* answered that part of the task well but longer answers in which a verb was used required a correct past time frame to communicate fully. Even if the first part of the task was not completed, the second part of the task still needed to be read out by the examiner. In such cases, candidates were given the opportunity to work for one mark and were often

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partly successful on the task overall. On **Task 5,** most candidates were able to name another sport and give a reason for wanting to do it, but some needed to use a future time frame to complete the task successfully.

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 heard across the different topics. The first two questions on each conversation could be answered briefly and with factual language, although stronger candidates took the opportunity to give more developed responses containing relevant details and this is something to encourage candidates to do. 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 gave candidates the opportunity to express opinions and give their reasons for their opinions. The topics were equally balanced in term of demand and each topic featured easier straightforward questions and others which were more challenging.

To help improve their performance, candidates need to listen carefully to the **whole** question and process it carefully before answering to ensure that their answers contain **relevant** information. Centres need to encourage candidates to develop their answers in a **spontaneous** way and to develop a range of interesting opinions by using varied structures and phrases. Candidates should develop their use of subject pronouns other than *je* as many candidates limited their conversation to the first person. The stronger candidates were also able to include subordination and a good range of linking phrases, adverbs, and conjunctions.

Centres tended to assess generously. Centres are reminded that to place work in the Very Good band for Communication the work should be consistently relevant across the 2 topics with frequently developed ideas and opinions. Such work also needs to show the ability to justify and explain some answers in a confident and spontaneous way and needs little repetition of words or phrases. To place work in the Very Good band for Quality of Language, the work should show a wide range of structures and vocabulary, high levels of accuracy, including pronunciation...

Topic 1, ***La santé et la forme***, was a familiar topic for candidates. **Question 1** was usually understood well, but weaker candidates thought they were being asked at what time they went to bed and sometimes gave some ambiguous responses. The more able candidates sometimes tried to develop their answers and gave some good extra relevant details about normally sleeping for a certain number of hours during the school week but sleeping longer at weekends. On **Question 2,** it was important to listen carefully and process the whole question. Weaker candidates sometimes did not hear the *Où* at the beginning of the question and instead of saying where they went to practise sport, they listed which sports they did. The need to listen to the whole question was also very clear for **Question 3**. The question included *à l'école* and asked about the sport the candidate had done in school. Those who answered about activities which were not at school did not always answer relevantly. Some candidates needed to hear *récemment* in the first version of the question which was the clue to use the past tense. Candidates should think carefully about the whole question before attempting to reply so that their answer is relevant and communicates clearly. **Question 4** was quite well understood, and most were able to say *c'est bon pour la santé.* More able candidates went on to develop and give other reasons such as reducing stress, forgetting worries, sport being good for mental health or avoiding illness. The best candidates were able to add some extra interesting details. **Question 5** was usually quite well understood. Some candidates thought that being vegan represented eating meat and was the opposite of being a vegetarian, which resulted in some confusion. In the first part of the question, many candidates said they were vegetarian and then went on to say why they would never eat meat as they liked animals and did not want to kill them or thought that it was a much healthier diet. When candidates replied negatively to the first question with a full sentence, they often struggled to produce an unambiguous negative sentence**.** The best candidates were able to give some good justifications for their future choice such as *j'aime les produits laitiers, j'aime trop la viande, les produits laitiers contiennent/fournissent du calcium.*

Topic 2, *la musique* was, a familiar topic for candidates and two straightforward questions were asked at the beginning of the topic. *Où* and *quand* were frequently confused in **Questions 1** and **2**. Some candidates responded *sur mon portable* in response to **Question 1,** which did not fully answer the question. Some examiners needed to take the opportunity to repeat the question once when the candidate gave an ambiguous response to give their candidates the opportunity to work for the marks. Candidates need to listen and think carefully about the interrogative adverb used. On **Question 3** most candidates were able to give some elements in their response, but the time frame was not always accurate. Common relevant and appropriate responses were *J'ai joué du piano/de la guitare/de la batterie, j'ai participé à un concert, j'ai*

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organisé une fête musicale, j'ai chanté pour l'école. **Question 4** required a future time frame if a verb was used. Weaker candidates needed to be more successful with using the verb *apprendre* and using a correct time frame. Some thought they were being asked to talk about their favourite instrument. Most of those who answered successfully said that they would like to learn to play the guitar or drums. Weaker candidates frequently needed to use the alternative question as they did not always understand *aimerais* in the first version of the question. Examiners are reminded of the importance of reading the question exactly as printed as sometimes the question was misread as *aimais,* which meant that some candidates then tried to use an incorrect time frame. **Question 5** was one of the more challenging questions on this topic and there was a range of responses. The question was fairly well understood. The most able candidates could go beyond a personal response such as why music was important for them and helped them to relax, work or have a good time. The very best candidates were able here to move from the personal to the general and gave some very interesting answers such as that music was part of their traditions and their culture, and it also played an important role in things such as religious festivals and the Bollywood film industry.

Topic 3, *le cinéma*, was a very accessible topic for most candidates who generally understood the questions quite well and were able to provide at least some basic and relevant information in response to them. The first two questions were generally answered well. On **Question 2**, the price of a cinema ticket could be given in any currency. Most candidates understood that the first part of **Question 3** required to give a type of film rather than a name of a film. Most chose *un film d'action, un film de science fiction, un film romantique or une comédie.* Those who chose to use a verb were not always able to use a correct time frame consistently in both parts of the task. On the second part of the task, the best answers went beyond simple opinions on the film such as *c'était intéressant* and were able to say more about the plot and the characters. On **Question 4,** some candidates responded *je préfère regarder le cinéma chez moi* and did not refer to *regarder des films* heard in the question. This made some responses rather ambiguous. The most commonly heard reasons for preferring to watch at home were *c'est (plus) confortable/c'est pratique/c'est pas cher/je peux manger chez moi/la nourriture est bonne.* Commonly heard reasons for going to the cinema were the size of the screen, good special effects and, again, good food available to eat during the film. Some also enjoyed the idea of going with friends. Nearly all candidates were able to name a favourite actor in response to **Question 5**, although not noticed the *rencontrer* heard in the question. The reasons given were not always as successful and some limited their answers to *parce que j'aime ses films* or *parce qu'il est beau/elle est belle*. The very best answers went beyond describing a favourite actor and in which candidates were able to say why they admired the person such as *J'admire son talent/Il/Elle fait beaucoup de travail bénévole pour des associations caritatives/Il/Elle joue des personnages drôles/Il/Elle joue des rôles très intéressants.* Such answers showed a wider range of vocabulary.

Topic 4, *la ville et les magasins* was usually approached quite confidently by candidates. **Question 1** was understood well and most said they went by bus or car. On **Question 2** some candidates were confused with *dépenser* and sometimes talked about how much money they took to the shops rather than what they spent. On **Question 3**, most were able to make a clear choice and say which kind of shop they preferred but found it harder to give a good reason why. Some tried to say there was more variety but often mispronounced *variété.* Other frequently heard answers were *c'est moins cher* and *il y a plus de choix*. The first part of **Question 4** was very open. Weaker candidates tended to limit their answers to a brief statement about when they last visited a large town. Many candidates needed to be prompted to develop answers with the use of the alternative question. There was often some ambiguity of time frame in answers to this question and only the better candidates were able to use the past time frame consistently and coherently throughout. On **Question 5,** quite a few candidates needed to grasp the significance of *ville étrangère* and consequently their answers were often ambiguous and irrelevant to the task. Candidates need to listen very carefully to the whole question and take time to process it carefully before responding, so that their answer is relevant. A request to repeat a question is allowed and it is better for candidates to know how to request a repetition in French than to give an irrelevant answer. Quite a few candidates chose to answer about an Indian town rather than a foreign town or city, and others instead talked about the country where they wanted to live. Many misunderstood the verb *séjourner* and needed the alternative question wording to answer.

Topic 5*, la communication et la technologie,* was a topic about which candidates could say a lot, and their answers needed to be more focussed on the questions. **Question 1** was usually approached well with most candidates being able to suggest a price. Some responses talked more about their phone rather than mobile phones in general. **Question 2** was answered well, with most able candidates saying who owned a tablet in their family. There was some confusion when they referred to *tables* rather than *tablettes.* There was a range of responses for **Question 3**. Weaker candidates needed more confidence to say what they had done recently on their mobile phone and found it difficult to use and sustain a correct past time frame in their responses. Successful responses included *j'ai envoyé des messages, j'ai joué à des jeux, j'ai écouté de la musique, j'ai pris des photos, j'ai communiqué avec mes amis, j'ai cherché des renseignements*. On **Question 4,** there were good attempts to describe the advantages of using the internet for their studies, the

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most common responses cited facilitating research and doing homework and also communicating with teachers. Attempts at describing the disadvantages were less successful and did not always focus on studies. One interesting response quoted the dangers of using an online translation tool to do French homework as it made the student lazy. **Question 5** was the most challenging question on the topic and was answered well be the very best candidates. *Grâce à* was not widely understood and many candidates needed the vocabulary to answer the question meaningfully or did not fully understand what was required. The alternative question was often used on this question. There was quite a lot of repetition of ideas and vocabulary from the previous two questions. Some of the very best answers included *chaque voiture sera électrique, il y aura des voitures volantes, il y aura des bus/voitures sans chauffeur, on pourra faire des opérations sans médecins, on pourra acheter des drones.* Such answers showed that the candidates had really thought hard about the question and could use a wide range of vocabulary and structures accurately to address the question generally rather than in personal terms.

Topic 6, *les langues,* was usually approached quite well. **Question 1** was usually addressed well, as many candidates were able to develop their answers, saying they could speak several languages, and with whom they spoke these languages. Some needed to use *depuis* correctly to be successful in **Question 2.** Many candidates needed more confidence with the conjugation of *étudier.* Most managed to convey some relevant information despite some mistakes. The first part of **Question 3** was often answered correctly with the most able candidates saying which languages they spoke when they were younger. Some weaker candidates were not always familiar with *jeune* and required the use of the alternative question which used *petit(e)* to express the same concept. The second part of the task was easier. There were often challenges of correct time frame for weaker candidates. On **Question 4** some talked about what they liked doing in classes other than French and cited activities such as playing football and swimming, which was not relevant. Relevant responses heard included *chanter des chansons françaises, regarder des films avec des sous-titres, parler avec d'autres jeunes, faire des jeux de rôle.* On **Question 5** some examiners and many candidates found it difficult to pronounce *bilingue* correctly. The more able candidates could respond relevantly and cited benefits of being able to live and work easily in another country and communicating more easily. A few candidates were also able to convey the idea of increasing brain and memory capacity.

Topic 7, le tourisme was completed confidently. **Question 1** was generally answered well, and most candidates could say who organised the holidays in their family in the correct time frame. On **Question 2** most could also say how many weeks their holiday lasted. On **Question 3,** most candidates were able to answer successfully although there were some errors and inconsistencies with the past time frame. Some did not understand *jeune* and needed recourse to the alternative question. Many cited going to the beach or staying with extended family elsewhere in their country. **Question 4** was understood well and nearly all stated that many tourists came to their country. The alternative question was rarely needed. The many reasons for visiting their country included the number of tourist attractions such as the Taj Mahal and other famous historical sites or cities, the diversity of the landscape, the delicious food, and the cultural heritage in general. There were some very interesting and enthusiastic answers. The final question, **Question 5**, was understood well. Nearly all candidates were able to make a clear choice with the majority opting to stay in luxury rather than under canvas. Most could give a very valid reason for their choice and often stated the aspects of comfort, good food and sporting facilities. The few who did want to camp spoke of the pleasure of being outdoors and being in nature.

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FRENCH

Paper 0520/42
Writing

Key messages

Candidates are advised to:

- use single words and not to reuse examples when completing the form in **Question 1**
- respond to all parts of **Question 2** in the tense indicated
- use simple 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
- give brief additional details in response to individual tasks in **Question 3**
- plan and organise answers into a coherent piece of writing, using extended sentences where possible.

General comments

Candidates showed a secure and varied knowledge of vocabulary and structures in both **Question 2** and **Question 3**. There was evidence of improved performance with more candidates achieving marks in the upper ranges.

There were some common errors which prevented candidates from progressing as high up the range as they could have done. This was particularly noticeable in **Question 2**, although some of the same errors were seen in **Question 3**.

- Candidates must copy correctly from the question paper. The misspelling of *maison* or *restaurant* sometimes compromised the mark for Task Completion.
- There was some inconsistency in the identity of the friend who, mentioned as *mon amie* in the first task of **Question 2**, was later referred to as *il habite….*
- When describing the friend's house, able candidates wrote *la maison de mon ami… , sa maison…* , while other candidates compromised the message by stating *mon ami's maison… , il maison / elle maison / lui maison… .* Candidates should be familiar with basic expressions of the possessive.
- Some candidates varied their information by using *chez mon amie… / chez lui, chez elle… .* Others used *chez* as a noun e.g., *le chez de mon ami est… , chez lui est moderne…* , thus making the meaning unclear.
- The use of *il y a* and *c'est* was inconsistent e.g., *la maison il y a grande…, c'est trois chambres… .*
- Some candidates knew the difference between *parce que* and *à cause de… .* Candidates need to be able to use these correctly e.g. *parce qu'il y avait beaucoup de circulation… / à cause de la circulation….*
- Candidates must remember that *d'accord* cannot be used as an adjective e.g. *ma maison est d'accord* and that such statements cannot be rewarded.
- There has been an increasing trend to use *trop / plus* instead of *très*. Candidates need to understand that *trop* and *plus* are not synonyms of *très,* and that their use can convey a different and sometimes ambiguous meaning.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Vous êtes Max Durand. Vous voulez étudier au lycée St Martin.

Candidates were clearly familiar with the context; many gained full marks. They should remember that a single answer is sufficient: if candidates give multiple answers, these must all be correct.
The most frequent language given was *anglais*; others included *espagnol, hindi, japonais.* For Gap 2, *biologie* was the most common correctly spelt science; *chimie* was often written as *chemie.* Candidates were

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at liberty to write any other subject for Gap 3. Sciences and languages were acceptable but not *français* as this appeared in the rubric; *géographie, histoire, mathématiques, musique* were commonly seen. Most candidates understood that an indication of future career was required for Gap 4: *ingénieur* was a regular answer, although there were misspellings which could not be rewarded. Almost all candidates were able to give a hobby, whether using a noun e.g., *cinéma, lecture, musique, sport,* or using an infinitive structure such as *faire du vélo, jouer au tennis, regarder des films.*

Question 2: La maison de mon ami(e)

The topic and tasks were managed well by a broad range of candidates. Some candidates misunderstood and wrote exclusively about their own homes. There were some unnecessarily lengthy answers, more than the recommended 90 words.

Most candidates responded simply to the first task: *mon amie habite à Bangalore… , mon amie habite un appartement en ville… .* Higher quality answers gave precise details of location e.g., *près de notre école.*

Many candidates responded well to the second task using the same verb: *il habite avec ses parents…, elle habite chez ses grands-parents…* . Those who attached the required detail to their first statement: *elle habite dans une grande maison avec ses parents…* were rewarded. Some candidates needed to be more consistent in their use of personal pronouns. Some responses did not fully respond to the task e.g., *il y a cinq personnes dans sa famille… .*

Candidates often gave very detailed descriptions of their friend's home with mention of the size, range of equipment and quality of facilities e.g., *la maison de mon ami est grande et moderne; il y a cinq chambres. Il y a aussi une piscine dans le jardin. C'est très confortable.* Answers to this task led on to candidates' preference, which was often in extended form e.g., *je préfère la maison de mon ami parce qu'il a une piscine chauffée et j'adore nager… , je préfère ma maison, même si c'est plus petit, car j'adore ma chambre… .*

Successful candidates responded to the final task using a future verb e.g., *le week-end prochain je vais jouer au tennis avec mon amie… , la prochaine fois, mon amie et moi irons en ville pour faire du shopping.*

All candidates made some attempt to link ideas even if in a modest way.

Question 3

Two third of candidates favoured **Question 3(b)** over **Question 3(a)**.

There was some impressive work at the top of the range, especially for **Question 3(a)**. This was an open-ended task, allowing candidates to choose their own topic The environment was the most popular. Other themes included food, cinema, sport, and travel.

It is important that candidates can adapt the question to formulate an answer e.g., in **Question 3(a) Task 3** *j'ai mentionné*. Candidates who chose to use a different verb to convey their ideas were often more successful.

Question 3(a): Mon premier blog

Task Completion

Successful candidates indicated the theme of their blog in the perfect tense: *j'ai écrit mon premier blog, c'était sur le thème de l'environnement… , j'ai choisi un thème très intéressant: les films… , j'ai choisi le thème « la gastronomie ».*

For the second task, candidates needed to explain their choice. This could be done simply: *le sport est ma passion… , j'adore le cinéma…* . Many candidates used more complex explanations: *l'environnement est très important pour moi parce qu'il y a beaucoup de pollution dans mon quartier… .*
There were some interesting, well-expressed details about the content of the blog. Candidates needed to introduce these in the perfect tense e.g., *j'ai partagé beaucoup de choses, comme mon amour pour la nature… , j'ai décrit comment j'aime admirer les étoiles scintillantes… , j'ai donné des conseils pour protéger l'environnement… , j'ai parlé des problèmes comme le réchauffement de la terre…* . Candidates who did not adapt the rubric appropriately achieved partial communication e.g., *j'ai mentionnées les repas sains de ma mère….*

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There was a variety of ways of communicating young people's interest in social media e.g., *les jeunes surfent sur internet pour voir les photos des acteurs… , pour regarder des vidéos… , ils aiment surtout la mode et les jeux vidéos… , on peut rester en contact avec sa famille et ses amis…* . The ability to adapt the rubric was again important. Less able candidates used the wrong verb form e.g., *les jeunes intéresse aux jeux video.*

Candidates were generally enthusiastic about the experience, stating: *je voudrais continuer parce que je pourrais gagner beaucoup d'argent… , je voudrais devenir journaliste… , c'est une façon merveilleuse d'exprimer mes idées… .* There were some equally acceptable negative responses e.g., *je ne voudrais pas continuer parce que cela prend beaucoup de temps… .*

Range

Some candidates organised their work well, beginning each paragraph or new idea with an appropriate adverbial or prepositional phrase. Some candidates could vary sentences with common conjunctions and relative pronouns e.g., *car, donc, parce que, qui.* This is the minimum required to access the top marks. Candidates need to be more accurate using *parce que,* which was variously rendered as *parce ce que, pas que, parce,* or did not make the necessary elision e.g., *parce que il y avait*.
An increased number of candidates used more complex language. More able candidates offered structures such as: *en racontant mon histoire personnelle et en expliquant mes intérêts, j'ai pu… , la plupart des gens jettent les déchets n'importe où… , parce que cela me permet de sensibiliser les autres… , pour ceux qui n'ont pas une voiture, je les ai encouragés à prendre les transports en commun… .*

Accuracy

Correct subject/verb accord is important for success in Task Completion: it also has a bearing on the mark for Accuracy. The most able candidates demonstrated that they could use definite/indefinite articles and possessive adjectives correctly and make necessary adjectival agreements. This topic allowed candidates to choose their own theme. Some needed a more secure knowledge of the vocabulary necessary. Common errors included: *l'environment; le nourriture / la norriture; le cuisine / la cusine; la repas….* The misspellings/incorrect genders affected the mark.

Question 3(b): Un repas entre amis

Task Completion

Candidates had very similar reasons for going out to eat. Success depended on an accurate past tense verb e.g., *pour fêter l'anniversaire de mon ami nous sommes allés à un restaurant indien dans le centre ville… , je suis sortie manger avec mes amis pour fêter la fin de l'année scolaire… .*

With regard to the problem encountered, candidates reported a range of issues relating to travel: *notre voiture est tombée en panne… , il y avait des embouteillages,* to personal problems: *j'avais perdu mon porte-feuille…* , to difficulties at the restaurant: *nous avons dû attendre longtemps… , la nourriture n'était pas bonne… , la serveuse a renversé une boisson chaude sur mon amie… , le restaurant était sale… , le serveur était impoli… ,* and to health issues: *mon ami était malade… .*

Candidates were required to describe their reactions. Among those offered were: *j'étais triste et inquiète… , j'ai essayé de rester calme… , nous étions très fâchés… , j'ai été choqué… .* Less able candidates needed to improve their use of past tense e.g., *j'été furieux*…, *j'était malheureux*.

Candidates largely favoured eating at home, explaining: *je préfère manger chez moi parce que les repas sont plus sains… , parce que c'est plus confortable et il y a moins de bruit… , je peux manger en regardant la télé… .* Those who preferred eating at a restaurant mentioned: *je préfère manger au restaurant parce qu'il y a beaucoup de variété de plats… .*
In the final task, candidates were successful in communicating future plans: *je vais organiser un repas pour le prochain anniversaire de mon père… , j'organiserai un repas pour mon amie parce qu'elle va se marier… , je voudrais organiser un barbecue pour ma mère….*

Range

In addition to the examples quoted for Task Completion, the following, with object pronouns, strong negative, comparison, perfect infinitive are drawn from the work of candidates who gained higher marks: *lorsque nous*

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y sommes arrivés, nous avons vu que le restaurant était un peu sale… , le serveur m'a dit qu'il n'y avait plus de poulet… , *pourtant, après avoir fini de manger nous avons réalisé que personne n'avait apporté son porte-feuille… , chez moi les repas sont plus sains qu'au restaurant… , manger à la maison me donne l'occasion de passer plus de temps avec ma famille… .*

Accuracy

Some candidates needed to be more familiar with basic items of vocabulary associated with this topic in order to access higher marks. Errors included: *le fête; le anniversaire; le cuisine / la cusine; la repas; delicious* were quite typical. There was some confusion in meaning and use of *moi, mois, moins.* and plural subjects were sometimes followed by singular verbs e.g., *les repas est sains.*

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