GCSE French Writing Foundation tier

Paper 4 Mark scheme

General guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

Step 1 Decide on a band

- You should first of all consider the answer as a whole and then decide which descriptors most closely match the answer and place it in that band. The descriptors for each band indicate the different features that will be seen in the student's answer for that band. As an examiner you must be positive in your approach; look for opportunities to reward rather than penalise.

- When assigning a band, you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not focus disproportionately on small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different bands of the mark scheme you should use a 'best fit' approach for defining the band. You should then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the band. For example, if the response is predominantly band 3-4 with a small amount of band 5-6 material, it would be placed in band 3-4 but be awarded a mark of 4 at the top of the band because of the band 5-6 content.

- You must also use the *Additional guidance*, the *Exemplification of the mark scheme,* exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation and your professional judgement to decide which band is most appropriate.

Step 2 Decide on a mark

- Once you have decided on a band you will then need to decide on a mark within the band.

- You will decide on the mark to award based on the quality of the answer; you will award a mark towards the top or bottom of that band depending on how students have evidenced each of the descriptor bullet points. The number of bullet points in the band descriptor does not directly correlate to the number of marks in the band.

Additional guidance

Interaction between AO2 and AO3 marks (all questions)

- The response to stimulus mark (AO2) does not limit the mark for linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3), except where a student produces a response that is wholly irrelevant to the task set. In this circumstance, 0 marks for both (AO2) and (AO3) will be awarded.
- Linguistic and grammatical errors are accounted for in the AO3 grid and should therefore be disregarded when applying the AO2 grid.

Errors (AO3 grids: all questions)

A minor error - inaccurate but does not prevent meaning, i.e. the message may take time to understand but is still understood (see tables below).
A *major error -* inaccurate and prevents meaning, i.e. the message cannot be understood (see tables below).

Minor errors – inaccurate but do not prevent meaning	
Adjective agreement	La mer est ver**t**. Mon frère est intelligent**e**.
Spelling (slight)	J'aime le from**m**age.
Gender	Dans **le** ville il y a **un** piscine.
Accents	Mon anniversaire est le deux f**e**vrier.
Contractions	Ma maison est près **de le** parc.
Word order (incorrect)	Je **n'ai mangé pas** à midi.
Mother-tongue interference	Mon père est **un** professeur. C'est mon anniversaire, je **suis** 16 ans.
Relative pronouns	Mon frère, **que** aime le foot, joue tous les samedis.
Vocabulary	Mon équipe a joué très **mauvais**. Mon ami est **dans** France.
Constructions	En France **il y a** chaud en été.
Missing/incorrect accents	Mon anniversaire est le deux f**e**vrier/f**è**vrier

Major errors – inaccurate and prevent meaning	
Incorrect verb formation	Est-ce que nous **allez** au cinéma ce soir? J'**alle** au marché. Je **recève** des cadeaux
Spelling (misleading)	J'aime la **nation** et le tennis.
Tenses (incorrect)	**Demain il est allé** au collège en bus.
Vocabulary	Ma mère est **courante**.
Use of infinitive instead of conjugated verb	Lucie **avoir** un accident de voiture.
Mismatch of subject and reflexive pronoun	Je veux **s'**amuser.
Mother-tongue interference	Mon père travaille dans un **office**.

NB: These are examples only and do not constitute a finite list. Some errors may fall into more than one category.

Glossary of terms (questions 2 and 3)

AO2 grids

Addressed *(Bullet points):* the mark grids for AO2 indicate the minimum number of bullet points in the task that must be addressed before a student may be placed in any particular band. A bullet point in a task will be considered addressed if there is evidence of a response to it. Before awarding a mark, examiners should consider coverage of the task bullet points alongside the other assessment criteria in the band, as a best fit in a lower band may be more appropriate. For example, a student who addresses all four task bullet points in question 3 may still be placed in the band below (8-10) if they do not meet the requirements in the 11-13 band for development of ideas and comprehensibility. See Example response 2 in Exemplification of mark schemes for an illustration of this. Candidates may address the task bullet points in any order.

Development refers to an additional clause or sentence that elaborates or provides additional detail to the response to a task bullet point. There is no requirement for equal development of the task bullet points.

Comprehensible relates to how easy it is to understand the main points and ideas of the response when read as a whole. Linguistic and grammatical errors are accounted for in the AO3 grid and should therefore be disregarded when applying the AO2 grid.

AO3 grids

Complex language includes features such as:

- longer sentences with coordinating conjunctions (e.g. and, or), subordinating conjunctions (e.g. because, when)
- other complex structures such as relative and infinitive clauses
- varied use of pronouns
- multiple conjugated verbs in one sentence or clause
- use of grammatical structures and word order that is very different to English in form and/or function.

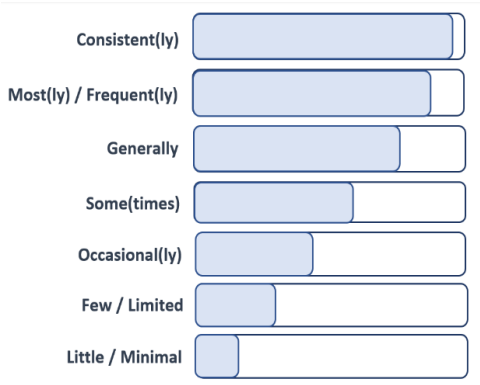
Variety refers to the range of vocabulary and grammatical structures listed in the specification for each tier. Any grammatical structures or vocabulary used which is outside of these lists is rewarded with equal (but not extra) credit.

If the response is in the top band for variety but in the bottom band for accuracy, then a mark in the middle band is likely to be the most appropriate. Equally, if the response is in the top band for accuracy but in the bottom band for variety, then a mark in the middle band is likely to be the most appropriate.

Timeframes refers to expressions of past, present and future. Various tenses can be used to express a timeframe. For example, the present tense in the following sentence is used to express a future timeframe: 'I'm seeing my friends next week.' In the following sentence a future tense is used to express a future timeframe: "I will go to the cinema".

Differentiation terms within the mark scheme

As guidance, the illustration gives an indication of the relative relationship of terms used in the mark grids.



Note: The illustration should be referred to in conjunction with individual mark grids as each term does not necessarily equate to high or low marks. For example, although "***frequent*** *development…*" equates to higher marks "***frequent*** *errors…*" would conversely equate to lower marks.

Question 1 – Foundation tier (8 marks)

For this question, students are expected to produce four short sentences describing the picture. The mark grid is applied once to each individual sentence. There is a maximum of 2 marks for each sentence. Students are awarded marks for clear communication and relevance in relation to the picture.

Mark	AO2: Response to stimulus
2	Relevant information clearly communicated in a sentence or clause.
1	Relevant information partially communicated in a sentence or clause.
0	No rewardable material.

Guidance on application of mark grid for Question 1 Foundation tier

To exemplify application of the marking criteria, the grid below demonstrates a possible range of performances based on the mark grid.

2 marks	La mer est bleue.	Je vois la bleue mer.	Le pere est content.	Le père est contente.	Il y a cinq personnes ils sont camo la plage*
	Relevant information clearly communicated in a complete sentence or clause with a verb; may or may not contain minor errors which does not delay understanding of the sentence such as lack of or incorrect accents, minor spelling errors, incorrect word orders, missing punctuation.				
1 mark	Mer bleu.	Le mer sont bleu.	Le père content.	Le père être content.	Il as cinq personnes.
	Relevant information partially communicated, not a complete sentence or clause with a verb, or some ambiguity due to incorrect forms of verbs or other major errors.				
0 marks	Bleu.	Je vois un arbre.	Content.	Un pear content.	Ils sont camo
	No rewardable material, no relevant information clearly communicated, or not a complete sentence or clause.				

Specific guidance for Question 1

*Students can still gain 2 marks for a sentence where only one clause contains clear, relevant information, e.g. "*Il y a cinq personnes ils sont camo la plage.*"

Question 2 – Foundation tier (14 marks)

There are two mark grids to be applied to this question:

- AO2: Response to stimulus
- AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

This question contains three bullet points that form part of the task. Examiners must use the Additional guidance, the Exemplification of the mark scheme, exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation and their professional judgement before deciding on a mark.

Students are expected to produce 40–50 words for this task. The suggested word count is designed to guide students and they will not be penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended. All work produced must be marked.

AO2: Response to stimulus	
Mark	**Descriptor**
7-9	• All three bullet points addressed • Some development of ideas • Most of the response is comprehensible; some messages may be unclear.
4-6	• Two or more bullet points addressed • Limited development of ideas • Some parts of the response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down.
1-3	• One or more bullet point addressed • Little or no development of ideas • Few parts of the response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down.
0	• No rewardable material.

AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	**Descriptor**
5	• Some variety of vocabulary and phrases • Simple grammatical structures with some variety, some linking of sentences with conjunctions • Some accurate language, mostly minor errors.
3-4	• Limited variety of vocabulary and phrases • Simple grammatical structures with limited attempt at variety, limited linking of sentences with conjunctions • Limited accurate language; errors occur, some of which may be major.
1-2	• Minimal variety of vocabulary and/or phrases in isolation • Minimal use of simple grammatical structures, likely to be repetitive • Minimal accuracy in the language, frequent errors both major and minor.
0	• No rewardable material.

Question 3 – Foundation tier (18 marks)

There are two mark grids to be applied to this question:

- AO2: Response to stimulus
- AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

This question contains four bullet points that form part of the task. Examiners **must** use the *Additional guidance*, the *Exemplification of the mark scheme,* exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation and their professional judgement before deciding on a mark.

Students are expected to produce 80–90 words for this task. The suggested word count is designed to guide students and they will not be penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended. All work produced must be marked.

AO2: Response to stimulus	
Mark	**Descriptor**
11-13	• All four bullet points addressed • Frequent development of ideas • Response is comprehensible; an occasional message may be unclear.
8-10	• Three or more bullet points addressed • Some development of ideas • Response is generally comprehensible; some messages may be unclear/difficult to understand immediately.
5-7	• Two or more bullet points addressed • Occasional, brief development of ideas • Some parts of response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down.
1-4	• One or more bullet point addressed • Little or no extra detail added to ideas • Limited parts of response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down.
0	• No rewardable material.

AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	**Descriptor**
5	• Some variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, some extended sentences; occasional complex language • Generally successful use of three timeframes • Generally accurate language; some minor errors, there may be an occasional major error.
3-4	• Occasional variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; occasionally extended sentences • Some successful use of at least two timeframes • Some accurate language; mostly minor errors with some major errors.
1-2	• Limited variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; short, simple sentences • Limited success with timeframes • Limited accuracy in the language; frequent errors both major and minor.
0	• No rewardable material.

Exemplification of the mark scheme: open response questions

The purpose of this exemplification is not to provide a standard for marking, but to demonstrate the following aspects of the mark scheme:

1. Application of the best fit approach, including:
   i. how a mark can go down the AO2 mark bands, even if the coverage descriptor is met, if the other descriptors in the mark band are not met.
   ii. how a mark can go up or down the AO3 mark bands depending on how the response reflects the descriptors.
   iii. how to apply the AO3 grid if a response is highly accurate but with limited variety, or uses a wide variety of language but is less accurate
2. Distinct marking for AO2 and AO3 grids, showing that the mark for AO2 should not limit the mark for AO3 (except where the response is wholly irrelevant) and vice versa
3. Awarding marks for range of vocabulary within the specified vocabulary list (and giving equal, but not extra credit to other vocabulary used).

Exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation will provide further guidance on marking live paper series.

The two example responses below are based on the following crossover question which appears in both the Foundation and the Higher tier *Sample Assessment Materials*, but is applicable as guidance to all open response questions. The example responses are based on trialled student answers.

Write to your friend about shopping.

You **must** include the following points:

- types of shops in your area
- your opinion of one shop with reasons
- what you have bought recently
- where you will go for your next shopping trip.

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 80 and 90 words.

Example response 1: open response questions

Il y a beaucoup de magasines dans ma village par example un boulangerie et un centre commercial. Il a deux restaurants et un enorme centre sportif qui est ideal. A mon avis, j'aime le centre commercial parce que j'adore acheter des vetements la, cest increyable. Je la visite suvent avec la famile pour faire des magasines. Grâce a l'aniversaire de mon frere, la weekend prochain je vais aller a un cafe avec mon pere pour achete un gateaux chocolat. Reccement, je achete frommage beacoup parce j'adoe manger.

91 words

Total marks: 15 out of 18	
Response to stimulus (AO2): 11 marks	**Linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3): 4 marks**
• The candidate has addressed all four bullet points, though not in order of the question, which is appropriate. The candidate is given the benefit of the doubt about going shopping in a café, since they explain what they will purchase there. The response sits in the 11-13 mark band for coverage **(1.i)**. • There is frequent development shown (e.g. "…*cest increyable. Je la visite suvent avec la famile pour faire des magasines*", "*parce que j'adoe manger*", and "*Grâce a l'aniversaire de mon frere….pour achete du gateaux chocolat"*). For development, the 11-13 mark band best fits **(1.i)**. • The response is generally comprehensible, despite errors which are accounted for in the AO3 grid. The final sentence is a little unclear and results in a delay to understanding. For comprehensibility, the response sits best in the 8-10 mark band **(1.i)**. Overall, the best fit approach when considering the three bullet points of this mark grid is at the lower end of the mark band 11-13 for response to stimulus **(1.i, 2)**.	• Despite minor errors, there is some variety of vocabulary shown (e.g. "*enorme", "ideal", "boulangerie" etc.)*. Although misspelt **(1.ii)**, the word '*incroyable*' does not appear in the vocabulary list so is given equal but not extra credit for variety **(3)**. Variation in grammar includes phrases such as "*A mon avis*", and "*Grâce a…*". There are some conjunctions and evidence of complex language. The response best sits in mark band 5 for variety **(1.iii.)**. • The response shows some success at using the present and future timeframes but is not successful in using the past timeframe. The response sits best in the 3-4 mark band for use of timeframes. • There is some accurate language, but many minor errors such as misspellings, lack of accents or incorrect articles (e.g. "*ma village*", "*suvent*" etc.) exist, along with major errors such as the missing 'que' on "*parce que*", and the use of "*qui*" in "*qui est ideal*". Because of this, the response would be placed at the bottom of the 3-4 mark band for accuracy **(1.iii)**. The best-fit approach results in this response being placed at the upper end of the mark band 3-4 for linguistic knowledge and accuracy **(1.ii, 2)**.

Example response 2: open response questions

Il y a beaucoup de magasins dans ma village. Il y a un magasin des vêtements et un magasin de sport. Je pense que le magasin des vêtements est bien parce que j'adore acheter des vêtements, c'est génial. Récemment, j'ai acheté les vêtements beaucoup. J'ai acheté une jupe un robe et un pull. Les vêtements sont bon. Cependant ce n'etait pas tres sympa. La weekend prochain, je veux aller a un café.

72 words

Total marks: 10 out of 18	
Response to stimulus: 6 marks	**Linguistic knowledge and accuracy: 4 marks**
• The candidate has addressed the first three bullet points but not the final bullet point, instead talking about where they want to go next weekend. The response would therefore sit no higher than the 8-10 mark band for coverage, and for AO2 overall **(1.i)**. • There is little extra detail shown (e.g. "*c'est génial* "). For development, the 1-4 mark band best fits **(1.i)**. • The response is generally comprehensible, but the message sometimes breaks down (e.g. "*Cependant ce n'etait pas tres sympa…").* For comprehensibility, the response sits best in the 5-7 mark band **(1.i)**. Overall, the best fit approach when considering the three bullet points of this mark grid is in the middle of the 5-7 mark band for response to stimulus **(1.i, 2)**.	• There is limited variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures shown, with repetition of some words like *"vêtements*". All vocabulary appears in the Foundation tier vocabulary list, which is appropriate **(3)**. There is the occasional extended sentence using "*parce que*". The response would best sit in the 1-2 mark band for variety **(1.iii)**. • The candidate is generally successful at using timeframes (e.g. *"j'ai acheté*" and "*je veux aller*"). The response would best sit in the top band for use of timeframes. • The language used is generally accurate, but with some minor errors such as incorrect articles (e.g. "*ma village*") which detracts from the accuracy of the response **(1.iii)**. For accuracy, it would be best placed in the 3-4 mark band. The best-fit approach results in this response being placed at the top of the 3-4 mark band for linguistic knowledge and accuracy **(1.ii, 2).**

Comparison of example responses 1 and 2

Response to stimulus (AO2):	**Linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3):**
• Response 1 addresses more task bullet points than Response 2 • Response 1 shows more development than Response 2 • Response 1 is more comprehensible than Response 2	• Response 1 shows more variety of vocabulary than Response 2 • Response 1 shows less success at different timeframes than Response 2 • Response 1 shows less accuracy than Response 2
Overall, Response 1 scores higher on the AO2 grid when compared with Response 2, but due to application of the best fit approach, both are awarded the same mark for AO3 despite differences in variety, use of timeframes and accuracy.	

Question 4 – Foundation tier translation (10 marks)

There are two mark grids to be applied to this question:

- AO2: Response to stimulus
- AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

The Response to stimulus grid (AO2) assesses how appropriately the meaning of the original language is transferred. Any appropriate wording is rewarded. The linguistic knowledge and accuracy grid (AO3) assesses the accuracy of the target language. Examiners **must** use the *Additional guidance*, the *Exemplification of the mark scheme,* exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation and their professional judgement before deciding on a mark.

AO2: Response to stimulus	
Mark	**Descriptor**
5-6	The meaning of the original language is appropriately transferred; only the occasional message may be unclear or incomplete.
3-4	The meaning of some parts of the original language is appropriately transferred; the message sometimes breaks down or is incomplete.
1-2	The meaning of limited parts of the original language is appropriately transferred; messages are frequently unclear and/or incomplete.
0	No rewardable material.

AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	**Descriptor**
4	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are generally accurate; some minor errors, there may be an occasional major error.
3	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are sometimes accurate; errors include some major errors.
2	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are limited in accuracy; frequent errors occur, both major and minor.
1	Minimal instances of accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures; errors throughout, most of them major.
0	No rewardable material.

Exemplification of the mark scheme: Translation

The following model response shows an appropriate transference of meaning of Question 4, Foundation tier in the *Sample Assessment Materials*.

Question number	Question	Model response
4(a)	I love school.	J'adore l'école.
4(b)	My favourite subject is history.	Ma matière préférée est l'histoire.
4(c)	The teacher is interesting and I learn alot.	Le professeur est intéressant et j'apprends beaucoup.
4(d)	Last year, I studied at home every evening.	L'année dernière, j'ai étudié chaque soir chez moi.
4(e)	If I work well, I can find a good job.	Si je travaille bien, je peux trouver un bon métier.

Example Response 1

(a) J'adore l'ecole.
(b) Mes matière préféré est l'histoire.
(c) Le prof est interessant et j'etudie beaucoup.
(d) L'année dernière, j'ai étudié a maison chaque soir.
(e) Si je travail bon, on peux trouver une bonne metier.

Total marks: 9 out of 10	
Response to stimulus (AO2): 5 marks	**Linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3): 4 marks**
The meaning of the original language is appropriately transferred; only the messages in the second clause of (c) is slightly different from the original meaning, since it refers to 'studying' rather than 'learning' alot.	Grammatical structures and vocabulary are generally accurate; but there are some minor errors (e.g. *"mes"),* and an occasional major error (e.g. *"travail bon").*

Example Response 2

(a) J'aime college.
(b) Mon maiteres preféré est l'histoire.
(c) Le professeur est interessant et j…....beaucoup.
(d) l'annee dernier je vais etudier a mes ...
(e) Si je traville, je vais au belle traville.

Total marks: 6 out of 10	
Response to stimulus (AO2): 3 marks	**Linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3): 3 marks**
The meaning of some parts of the original language is appropriately transferred, but the messages sometimes break down or are incomplete such as in (c), (d) and (e), and the message in (a) is slightly different from the original meaning.	Grammatical structures and vocabulary are sometimes accurate such as in (a), the second part of (b), and the first part of (c). Errors include both minor errors (e.g."*mon maiteres*") and major errors (e.g. *"…dernier je vais…*").

Example Response 3

(a) J'adore le ecole.
(b) mon subject prefer l'histoire
(c) le prof est interesant et …..trop
(d) lannee prochain j'ai.....
(e) …..

Total marks: 3 out of 10	
Response to stimulus (AO2): 2 marks	**Linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3): 1 mark**
The meaning of limited parts of the original language is appropriately transferred, such as "*le prof est interesant et…*". The other messages are frequently unclear and/or incomplete. The candidate did not attempt (e).	There are minimal instances of accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures, with the candidate using English words and French words of incorrect meaning (e.g. *"subject", "prochain")*. There are both minor errors (e.g. "*historie*") and major errors throughout (e.g *"prefer,"* "*trop*").

This document was informed, directly or indirectly, by use of the tool: Finlayson, N., Marsden, E., & Anthony, L. (2022). MultilingProfiler (Version 3) [Computer software]. University of York. Accessed March 2023 at https://www.multilingprofiler.net/