2023 VCE French written external assessment report

General comments

Students generally demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the requirements for the examination. Very few students answered questions in the incorrect language.

It is important for students to thoroughly revise their knowledge of French grammar and spelling, in order to avoid basic errors with verb conjugations in various tenses, as well as agreement of verb endings and adjectival endings. Students need to be able to structure both basic and complex sentences in French. It is also important for students to master their usage of dictionary skills, in order to select the appropriate meaning and spelling of words efficiently, especially during the 15 minutes of reading time.

Many students struggled with comprehending general and specific information from the listening texts. Students are encouraged to practise answering questions in English (and in French), and to make use of the note-taking sections, so they can prepare for these answers adequately. Although there is no prescribed vocabulary to learn, students must ensure that they are familiar with the vocabulary from the wide range of prescribed themes and topics found on page 11 of the study design.

High-scoring students included correct reference to the visual stimulus in Section 2 Part B of the examination, and those students took the time to plan detailed responses to both this section and Section 3. As a result, their structure and sequence of events and usage of complex grammar were excellent.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Section 1

Part A – Listening and responding in English

This section assessed the students’ capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts.

Question 1a.

* To buy/get some bread / a baguette
* His baguette has been nominated the best in town.

‘His bakery has been nominated the best in town’ was not accepted.

Question 1b.

* its cultural importance to the (daily) life of the French
* its importance/place in French gastronomy\*
* the skills of the bakers

\* ‘Its importance/place in French food/cuisine’ was not accepted.

Question 1c.

* the quality ingredients used
* it is crusty and light (both terms were needed to be awarded the mark)

Question 1d.

* the large number/millions eaten every year
* a meal without a baguette is seen as impossible/unimaginable
* there are more baguettes eaten than any other bread

Part B – Listening and responding in French

In this part of the examination students were assessed on their understanding of the listening text and their ability to accurately convey appropriate information from the text in French. The information presented in the response needed to be relevant to the question. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language. Responses that included the relevant information and were expressed clearly in French were awarded full marks. Students were required to answer the questions in full sentences in French and remember to listen for specific information. Students need to revise the use of basic prepositions, such as *au bord de* (‘beside’), *le long de* (‘along’), *avant* (‘before’), *au-dessus de* (‘above’), *au-dessous de* (‘below’) and *sur* (‘on’). For Question 2d., many students were not able to understand the use of *venir de* (‘to have just’) and *savoir* (‘to know how to’).

Question 2a.

* habiter et travailler au bord de la mer(living and working by the sea – both verbs were needed to be awarded the mark)
* se coucher au son de vagues (going to sleep to the sound of the waves)
* se promener le long de la plage avant le petit-déjeuner (going for walks along the beach before breakfast)

Question 2b.

* Elle a acheté un café avec un appartement/ au-dessus du café il y a un appartement (She has bought a café with an apartment / above the café there is an apartment). If a student wrote ‘an apartment and a café’, they were not awarded the mark.
* La plage est proche/à 100m du café (The beach is close/100m from the café)

Question 2c.

* Ils aiment se détendre/ s’assoir sur la terrasse (du café) (They like relaxing/sitting on the terrace (of the café))
* Ils n’aiment pas la nourriture (les plats/ les petits gâteaux) qu’elle prépare. (They don’t like the food (dishes / cakes) that she makes.)

Question 2d.

* Il vient de finir ses études à l’école hotellière/de cuisine. (He has just finished his studies at a Hotel/Cooking School.)
* Il sait cuisiner des plats gastronomiques. (He knows how to cook very good / gourmet / high-end food.)
* Il sait gérer un restaurant. (He knows how to manage a restaurant.)

Section 2

Part A – Reading, listening and responding in English

Many students struggled with Question 3b. This was because they did not mention the subjects, who are both ‘players and spectators’. Another common error was to write answers that belonged to other questions. It is essential for students to carefully read questions in order to select the appropriate answer for their response.

Question 3a.

* to promote athletes’ sporting skills/talents
* to promote a healthy lifestyle
* to encourage/promote community development
* to encourage friendly/positive relations between countries

Question 3b.

Any three of the following:

* players and spectators must participate in its success
* players and spectators must welcome each other with open arms
* players and spectators must mix respectfully
* players compete/participate in a friendly atmosphere

Question 3c.

* They show us values to follow (in our life)
* They embrace/encourage diversity.
* They condemn prejudice and discrimination.
* The World Cup unified the Arab world.
* They provide support and stability to the community.
* They provide a social life / outings / ‘making friends’.

Question 3d.

* open days / information days
* friendly matches/games
* discussions/forums/groups/chats
* talks by professional players

Question 3e.

Any three of the following:

* It showed that it is possible for everyone to succeed.
* It demonstrated talent.
* It demonstrated perseverance/tenacity/persistence.
* It gave hope.
* It was an historical moment / it was the first time.

Part B – Reading and responding in French

Students were required to demonstrate an understanding of the stimulus text and to address the requirements of the task by conveying the relevant information from the textthat was appropriate for the audience and the prescribed writing style and text type.

The reading text included a visual stimulus. High-scoring responses were able to successfully incorporate information from the visual stimulus in their response.

Student responses were assessed holistically according to the assessment criteria and the expected qualities published on the VCAA website. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language accuracy; however, language accuracy was an important expected quality that was considered in the assessment.

It was possible to achieve a high score for this question without exceeding the specified word/character limit, which is shorter than the limit specified for Section 3.

Students need to understand that this part of the examination is a reading comprehension task and must not produce a creative writing piece. Many students wrote a whole page or more about recently leaving the family home and failed to mention any relevant information from the text or the visual stimulus. It is important for students to know how to interpret basic information from a graph. Many students mistook *hebdomadaire* (weekly) for *quotidien* (daily), or did not even refer to the visual stimulus, even though it was specified that they should do so in the question.

Students need to carefully plan this part of the examination, to be succinct and mention the required number of points in the required word length. They need to adhere to the writing style and text type, and structure and sequence their responses with clear paragraphs and linking words.

High-scoring students were able to successfully incorporate correct information from the visual stimulus. They rephrased the content and avoided hijacking large chunks of text from the prompt.

Question 4

The importance of the younger brother/sister participating more in household chores was any two of the following:

* partager les bons et les mauvais moments (realising that life is made of good and bad times)
* respecter les autres / ne pas s’attendre à ce que tout soit fait pour soi / contribuer à la vie de groupe (respecting others / not expecting everything to be done for you / idea of contributing to a group)
* préparer les jeunes à être autonome / à vivre seuls (prepares for autonomy / living on their own)

How to encourage the younger brother/sister to help with household chores was any two of the following:

* négocier les tâches (negotiate tasks)
* donner de l’argent (cash incentives)
* passer du temps ensemble (spending time together)
* transmettre des compétences / partager du savoir-faire (pass on skills / sharing knowledge)

From the visual stimulus, the following point had to be mentioned:

* combien de temps le frère / la sœur peut passer à aider avec les tâches ménagères suivant son âge (how long the younger brother/sister can spend helping with household chores according to his/her age).

Section 3 – Writing in French

Questions 5–8

Students need to be able to adhere to the conventions/characteristics of the specified VCAA writing styles and text types. They need to practise planning and writing extended responses within a time limit and remember to use paragraphs and linking words.

Questions 6 and 9 were the most popular questions, followed by Questions 7 and 5.

Question 5

Students were required to write a short story to be published in a science fiction magazine for teenagers about waking up to find themselves inside a game on their computer and describing what happened next.

Some students wrote dialogues with basic vocabulary and no clear storyline, paragraphs or linking words. They also did not include basic characteristics of a short story, such as a title and author.

High-scoring responses may have contained:

* why/how they became a part of the imaginary world
* why/how they tried everything possible to escape the imaginary world
* an element of surprise, such as deciding to stay in the game (e.g. found the prince or princess or won the game)

Question 6

Students were required to write an informative speech to deliver to their peers about ways to lead a sustainable lifestyle.

Some students did not adhere to the prescribed writing style and wrote a persuasive speech.

High-scoring responses may have contained:

* the use of vous
* examples of a sustainable lifestyle (such as environmental, physical or psychological)
* practical tips and ideas

Question 7

Students were required to write an evaluative report for language teachers who had organised a Francophone Festival at their high school. After participating in the event, students had to evaluate the way it was celebrated.

High-scoring responses may have contained:

* the use of vous
* the use of a real festival/tradition from a French-speaking country, such as la Fête nationale du 14 juillet or la Fête de la musique
* pros and cons of the event (such as: activities offered, inclusion of all students, authenticity of the event)
* a conclusion through the logical presentation and discussion of facts and ideas (including possible suggestions for future events)

Question 8

Students were asked to write a letter of thanks to their host family from a French-speaking country, in which they had to mention some personal experiences.

Some students did not adhere to the prescribed writing style and wrote an informative letter.

High-scoring responses may have contained:

* strong feelings and emotions (such as joy or sadness) regarding their homestay and the impact that it had on them
* the recollection of some shared memories / random experiences of times spent together

The following is an example of a high-scoring response:

… Et bien, je voulais vous écrire pour vous exprimer mes sentiments de reconnaissance après avoir habité avec vous pendant mon programme d’échange. Vous étiez une famille d’accueil magnifique et je garderais toujours de bons souvenirs … Avant d’aller en France, j’avais peur de quitter l’Australie et ma famille. Mais vous étiez tous très accueillants et chaleureux et vous m’avez aidé à sortir de ma zone de confort. (… Well, I was wanting to write to you in order to express my feelings of gratitude after having lived with you during my exchange program. You were a magnificent host family and I would always have happy memories ... Before going to France, I was afraid of leaving Australia and my family. But you were all very welcoming and warm and you helped me to step outside of my comfort zone.)