

2021 VCE French oral external assessment report

General comments

The 2021 French examination assessed the *VCE French Study Design 2020–2024* and examination specifications. It is important that students and teachers familiarise themselves with the specifications for oral examinations, available on the VCE French examinations webpage of the VCAA website. Students and teachers are also reminded that a [series of videos](#) has been produced to help with preparation for the oral examinations.

It should be noted that during the oral examination:

- students may be asked a variety of questions of varying levels of difficulty. Questions may also be asked in a different order from the one that students anticipate
- assessors may interrupt students to ask questions during either section of the examination; this should be regarded as a normal process in a discussion
- assessors may also repeat or rephrase questions
- normal variation in assessor body language is acceptable.

Overall, students were prepared for both sections of the oral examination, although they appeared better prepared for the general conversation than the discussion. Students need to remember that in both sections of the examination there are no set or prescribed questions and it is in their best interest not to rely on a rote-learned script for their examination. Students who memorised specific answers for specific questions found it difficult to answer questions that were different from those prepared. Students should familiarise themselves with being asked questions on different subtopics in a variety of ways and should expand their vocabulary knowledge in preparation for both the conversation and the discussion.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Section 1 of the examination involves a general conversation between the student and the two assessors about the student's personal world and their interactions with the French language and culture as learners. It is an organic conversation about the student's personal world.

For the most part, students handled the requirements of the conversation well. They seemed well prepared and were able to respond to questions relating to their personal world and their interactions with the French language and culture. Students who scored highly provided interesting, detailed and well-prepared responses and demonstrated good repair strategies. They were able to carry the conversation forward, using sophisticated vocabulary and complex grammatical structures when responding to unrehearsed questions.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

J'aimerais ne pas devoir porter l'uniforme, de cette manière, j'aurais l'opportunité de choisir quoi porter en fonction du temps qu'il fait. (I wish I didn't have to wear a uniform, that way I would have the opportunity to choose what to wear depending on the weather.)

Je dirais que j'ai de la chance puisqu'avec ma sœur nous avons beaucoup d'atomes crochus. (I would say that I am lucky since my sister and I have a lot in common.)

Je trouve que participer à des activités en équipe est amusant. En effet, ça me permet de développer mon esprit d'équipe. Prenons l'exemple d'un match de foot, on ne peut gagner que si les joueurs sont solidaires et se soutiennent. On peut dire qu'il en va de même dans la société puisque souvent c'est en travaillant en équipe qu'on réussit le mieux. (I find that participating in team activities is fun. Indeed, it allows me to develop my team spirit. Let's take the example of a football match, you can only win if the players are united and support each other. We can say that the same is true in society since often it is by working as a team that we are most successful.)

Students who did not score well were unable to develop their responses beyond the factual and expressed very few opinions. Some students made a number of basic grammatical errors with verb tenses (present, future and past), adjectives and gender, for example:

- *Especiallement, il est bon idée jouer le sport pour mon sante physique.*
- *Sur le weekend, j'adore cuisinaire une gâteau.*
- *Il est 20 et il est à université pour devenir une medecine.*
- *Elle est travaillé tout le temps.*
- *L'école provide les étudiants.*
- *Je n'ai jamais allé en France.*
- *Je voudrais un ingénieur.*

Section 2 – Discussion

Following the conversation, the student was required to discuss their chosen subtopic and the supporting visual material that they brought with them.

The specifications require the student to explore aspects of the subtopic, including information, opinions and ideas. It is important to carefully consider the choice of subtopic and supporting image when preparing for this section of the examination. Images that included rich information provided more opportunity for students to be able to offer a greater depth and range of information, ideas, opinions and reflections about the subtopic. While the quality of the visual stimulus was not assessed, students who selected images that were easy to share with the assessors found it easier to communicate their ideas.

Students are reminded that it is not the image that is being assessed – it is the quality of the discussion. Students should therefore select an image that adequately enables them to integrate that image into a discussion about their selected subtopic.

In this section, students presented a broad range of subtopics for their discussion. The more successful subtopics were those with enough depth to be explored by the students. Students need to choose subtopics that are of interest to them and that enable them to elaborate on their responses when prompted and respond to more than one aspect of the subtopic.

Students who scored highly were able to give information, express opinions and use their image skilfully to support their discussion. The choice of the image helped these students to steer the conversation into areas they wanted to discuss. They selected an image that would easily lead to discussing wider areas of their

subtopic. They demonstrated the depth and breadth of the information they had prepared and successfully carried the conversation forward. Some students added an interesting 'take' on their subtopic, which created an engaging discussion and enabled them to demonstrate their knowledge.

Students who scored satisfactorily were able to describe their image, but had only a superficial knowledge of their subtopic. They relied on pre-prepared responses, which were not always used appropriately in the context of the discussion and they struggled to expand their ideas on their subtopic.

It is important for students to state clearly what their subtopic is so that the assessors are aware of what the student would like to discuss with them.

Well-selected subtopics gave students the opportunity to demonstrate their depth of knowledge using an appropriate image. Some examples of these subtopics included:

- *Comment la valeur de la liberté se manifeste dans la société française* (How the value of freedom manifests in French society)
- *Le changement du rôle des femmes à travers les siècles* (The changing role of women through the centuries)
- *La tendance des français à manifester* (The tendency of the French to demonstrate)
- *La collaboration des femmes pendant la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (The collaboration of women during the Second World War)
- *L'impact des réseaux sociaux sur la vie des jeunes* (The impact of social networks on the lives of young people).