

# 2016 VCE French written examination report

## General comments

The majority of students understood and responded adequately to most sections of the 2016 French written examination, demonstrating a sound knowledge and understanding of the examination structure.

High-scoring responses demonstrated the students' ability to incorporate complex language without overlooking basic grammatical features such as gender, verb conjugations in all tenses, prepositions, use of articles and spelling of words. High-scoring responses also demonstrated the ability to deal well with higher-order-thinking questions, which may have required one to analyse, compare and contrast elements within a text.

Students should be aware that answers in the wrong language will not be awarded any marks.

Students should be advised that it is important to:

- re-read answers to ensure that responses are logical for all questions, both in English and French
- attempt all questions
- stick as closely as possible to the suggested times displayed on the front of the examination
- have exposure to authentic texts, and to tackle them in an in-depth and critical manner to better respond to questions that require higher-order thinking skills
- create cohesive paragraphs using connectors to enhance the fluidity of responses when writing in French
- complete practice tasks that require different text types and different kinds of writing.

## 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 – Listening and responding

This section assessed students' capacity to understand general and specific texts.

Text 3, in particular, proved to be a challenge for some students; a significant number of students misunderstood the text. Students who achieved a high score tended to successfully discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information.

## Part A – Answer in English

### Text 1

#### Question 1a.

- They haven't seen each other for a long time.
- She is a Picasso fan/mad about Picasso.

#### Question 1b.

- Most of Patricia's friends are going.
- Her parents have been twice.
- It is the exhibition of the year.

#### Question 1c.

Patricia can buy him a coffee after visiting the exhibition (instead of giving him money).

### Text 2

#### Question 2a.

All of:

- scholarship/grant
- (allowance from) his parents
- student job/part-time job/casual job.

#### Question 2bi.

- cheap living
- comfortable living
- a quiet place to study
- it allows him to undertake his studies in the (capital) city

#### Question 2bii.

Having to spend (too much) time with the elderly person offering the accommodation.

#### Question 2c.

- this site allows him to distinguish between necessary (essential) expenses
- occasional (discretionary) expenses
- it is free

## Part B – Answer in French

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand a text spoken in French by responding in French. Full sentences in French were required for this section of the examination.

**Text 3**

**Question 3a.**

All of:

- *moins de bruit/ pas de voitures* (less noise/no cars)
- *il y a moins de dangers* (less danger)
- *les gens sont moins stressés* (people are less stressed)
- *beaucoup de parisiens sont dans les rues/ ont décidé de sortir* (many Parisians are on the streets/have decided to go out)
- *la qualité de l'air est meilleure/ il y a moins de pollution* (the air quality is better/there is less pollution).

**Question 3b.**

- *Grâce à cette journée, Marie est convaincue qu'il faut réduire la pollution* (the day has convinced Marie of the need to reduce pollution)
- *elle utilisera les transports en commun/marchera* (she will use public transport/walk)
- *elle va vendre sa voiture* (she will sell her car)
- *Paul n'est pas convaincu par cette journée parce qu'il pense que l'impact de la pollution est exagéré/il n'a pas changé d'avis* (the day did not convince Paul, because he thinks that the impact of pollution is exaggerated/it did not change his mind)
- *il n'abandonnera pas complètement sa voiture/ il utilisera son vélo ou ses patins à roulettes pour une journée seulement* (he will not give up his car completely/he will use his bicycle or his rollerskates for one day only)
- *il est d'accord et il aime cette journée* (he agrees and liked the day)

## Section 2 – Reading and responding

This section assessed students' knowledge and skills in analysing and responding to information from a written text. Many students struggled to respond to Questions 4a.–d.

### Part A – Answer in English

**Text 4**

**Question 4a.**

- earlier cities were congested/1960s cities were less congested
- late 1960s cities were closer to nature
- earlier cities consisted of dormitory suburbs/purely residential
- late 1960s cities provided employment and accommodation in the same place/on site/earlier cities were further away from work
- late 1960s cities were different in design/single dwelling houses
- in the late 1960s they built outside/on the outskirts of large cities

**Question 4b.**

All of:

- information and communication technologies
- adapting itself constantly to demand/ongoing adjustment to needs
- relying on the inhabitants for information/dependence on inhabitants for information.

**Question 4c.**

All of:

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Solution</b>
(public) transport	more trains (at peak hour)
greenhouse emissions/global warming/pollution	better management of energy
(protection of) nature/from city expansion	transforming existing buildings into new dwellings/reusing old or existing buildings
improvement of air quality/less space to grow/pollution	housing with green roofs and walls
(social) isolation/infrastructure reorganisation	better design of cities to encourage a better age mix/greater community spirit

**Question 4d.**

Both:

- inhabitants required to provide personal details (willingly or not)/lack of privacy
- reduced living space in houses.

**Part B – Answer in French**

In this section, students were asked to show their ability to understand general and specific aspects of the text and to convey information accurately and appropriately in French.

**Text 5**

**Question 5**

Any five of:

- *nous n'habitons pas loin de l'école* (we do not live far from school)
- *nous ne voyageons pas souvent* (we do not travel often)
- *mon frère n'est ni malade ni handicapé* (my brother is neither sick nor disabled)
- *à l'école, il peut avoir des contacts avec d'autres élèves* (he can mix with other students at school)
- *il peut faire de la musique et du sport à l'école en prenant part à des activités extra-scolaires* (music/sport can be undertaken at school as an extracurricular activity)
- *l'école permet aussi l'apprentissage de la vie de tous les jours* (one can also learn about everyday life at school)
- *l'école répondra à ses besoins* (the school will cater for his needs)
- *vous n'êtes pas forcément aussi qualifiés que des enseignants* (you may not be as qualified as schoolteachers)
- *seulement 3600 enfants ne sont pas inscrits à l'école en France* (only 3600 children are not enrolled in school in France).

## Section 3 – Writing in French

In this section, students were asked to show their ability to write an original text of 200–300 words in French on one of five topics. Responses were assessed using the following criteria.

- relevance, breadth and depth of content
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Most students were familiar with the various text type features and were also able to integrate complex structures and idiomatic expressions in their writing; however, basic grammatical features, such as gender, verb conjugations in all tenses, prepositions, use of articles, and spelling of words, need to be thoroughly checked. Many students seemed to be using memorised material from their Detailed Study, which often had little relevance to the question or had been adapted inadequately to a new situation. Students tended to be very descriptive, and many did not take into account the vocabulary and structures required, as well as the kind of writing required, for each piece of writing.

Question 8 was the most popular question, followed by Question 7 and Question 10.

### Question 6

Students were asked to continue a story about an accidental lead singer of a group that is about to perform on stage.

Many responses focused too much on describing what happened before the performance rather than focusing on the present.

Responses could have included some of the following features:

- descriptions of people, surroundings, emotions and atmosphere
- heightened drama
- final resolution.

### Question 7

Students were asked to write an informative speech as a famous athlete who has been asked to inform members of a youth club about the importance of regular physical activity.

Many responses would have benefitted from incorporating statistical data or personal examples to enhance their speech.

Responses could have included some of the following features:

- a description of their own training routine and/or an appropriate training routine that could be prescribed for younger people
- a discussion of the benefits of regular activity
- a description of the impact of regular exercise on life in general.

### Question 8

Students were asked to write a letter to the principal of their school to persuade them of the benefits of the school trip to France, which had been cancelled.

Many letters were more descriptive than persuasive and did not use persuasive language as required.

Responses could have included some of the following points:

- improvement of French language skills
- immersion in French culture
- personal growth.

**Question 9**

Students had to write an article for a local newspaper, evaluating the benefits of farmers' markets compared with supermarkets.

Responses indicated that students had good general knowledge as to what a farmers' market and a supermarket had to offer.

Responses could have included the following features:

- a presentation and discussion of two or more benefits offered by farmers' markets
- a presentation and discussion of two or more benefits offered by supermarkets.

**Question 10**

Students had to write a journal entry in which they included their thoughts and expectations about their first day at their new job, which was commencing the following day.

Students were expected to address all three points listed in the task regarding their new job: thoughts, expectations and concerns.