External Assessment Report 2012   Standard Grade French

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

- Decrease in candidate presentation of around 4.5%.
- Overall Grade 1 down 1% and down 1.7% at credit level
- The number of Grade 7 awards was the lowest to date.

Candidate performance in Reading and advice to centres
- Performance at all grades was very similar to last year.
- At Foundation level, candidates coped well with virtually all questions. Performance excellent with few problems, apart from Questions 3 and 8.
- At General level, Questions 1(a), 2, 3, 6 and 8(a) were well done by both F/G and G/C candidates, but insufficient detail and poor English lost candidates marks. Questions 7(a), 8(a) and 10 proved to be the most testing.
- In the Credit paper, Questions 1(c), 4(a), 4(b), 4(d), 5(b) and 6(b) were well answered. Questions 1, 6(a) and 6(c) were the least well answered. 'les auditeurs qui téléphonent' (Q1), 'à l'inverse de' (Q2), 'le chien de la star' (Q3) soirée pyjama' (Q4), 'quelqu'un se cache dans le noir' (Q4) ('saine et sauve' (Q4), 'sans demander' (Q5) caused problems
- Candidates should be trained to give detail in answers at Credit level. They should be trained to pick out detail from longer chunks of language; to choose correct meaning from a dictionary; and to beware of 'false friends'.

Candidate performance in Listening and advice to centres
- Listening performance at Grade 1 was down on the previous three years.
- In Listening at Foundation level, almost all questions were answered extremely well. At General level, candidates scored particularly highly in Questions 1, 4, 5 and 9. In the Credit paper, performance was (as in 2011) more disappointing, but Questions 1 and 8(a) were very well answered.
- Few issues at Foundation level. Q4 and Q6 could have been betetr '
- At General level, 'en car' (Q1), 'fatigant' (Q1), 'étages' (Q2), 'héberger cent personnes' (Q2), 'chauffée' (Q3) caused problems. In Q6, a large number of candidates lost all three points by not including all the detail. Q7, 10, 11 and 12 also caused problems.
- Performance at Credit level was disappointing. Candidates lost marks by not giving sufficient detail, in Q1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. 'depuis l'âge de cinq ans' (Q1), 'dur' (Q3), 'jeux vidéo' (Q6), 'j'étudie les langues' (Q7), 'une croisière' (Q9), 'moins chers qu'en France' (Q10), 'la cérémonie d'ouverture des Jeux' (Q11), 'le dernier jour de compétition d'athlétisme' (Q12) caused problems
- Candidates should be trained to give detail in answers at Credit level. They should be trained to pick out detail from longer chunks of language; to choose correct meaning from a dictionary; and to beware of 'false friends'.

Candidate performance in Writing and advice to centres

- 3.5% fewer candidates achieving Grade 1 compared to 2011.
- Many candidates produced work of outstanding quality at Credit level. Topics were predictable but many excellent pieces of writing where candidates expressed opinions and reasons well and treated topic in a mature way
- At General and Foundation levels, candidates prepared well.
- However, too many pieces that have been over-learned, giving the impression sometimes of candidates not being fully aware of what they are writing.
- Able candidates are being disadvantaged by being set mundane topics such as 'Moi' … 'Ma Routine' … 'Ma Famille' …as the language topics dips to a basic level and leads to pieces not being truly developed.
- Some candidates were disadvantaged by being asked to write lengthy pieces
- Some centres still produce batches of writing that are very similar and candidates have not been allowed to truly engage in the writing process to allow real individualisation.
- Task should be appropriate to the level of the candidate's ability.
- More able candidates should be allowed to create personal pieces expressing their own opinions and reasons and demonstrating their language skills.

Candidate performance in Speaking and advice to centres

- Speaking grades were virtually identical to 2011. External verification provided very positive feedback on good practice. Candidates well prepared for tasks and produced their best efforts.