

FRENCH (FRN315114)

External Assessment Specifications inform the development of external assessments. The primary audience for this document is the course Setting Examiner and Exam Critics. It may also be of use to teachers and students.

These specifications must be read in conjunction with the current Course Document on the TASC website.

The external assessment for this course consists of two components:

- A written exam
- An oral exam

The criteria to be externally assessed are:

Criterion 1: Listen and respond to spoken French

Criterion 2: Communicate in spoken French

Criterion 3: Read and respond to written French texts

Criterion 4: Express ideas and information in written French

WRITTEN EXAM STRUCTURE

The written exam is **THREE** hours.

Students will have an additional 15-minute preparation time during which students can take notes on the note paper provided and highlight any key words in the exam booklet during the allocated time. Students will not be permitted to start their exam until advised by the Exam Supervisor.

The written exam includes **THREE** sections, each allocated 60 minutes.

Section A, the listening and responding spoken texts are on CD, which is self-running and will be started at the end of the 15 minutes reading time.

SPECIFIC MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT APPROVED FOR USE BY STUDENTS

You may bring any/all of the following printed dictionaries into your exam:

- A standard English dictionary
- Unannotated English-French dictionary
- French-English (paper based) dictionary/thesaurus.

ASSESSMENT

Criterion 1 is assessed numerically with marks out of 48.

Criterion 3 is assessed numerically with marks out of 60.

Criterion 2 and 4 are both assessed using extended ratings of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, t+, t, t- or z. Note that a C- is a low C, in that it just meets the standards for a C but is not a t.

A set of solutions or a marking tool will be developed by the Setting Examiner, provided to markers at the marking meeting that follows the external written exam; and will be available from TASC in the following year.

The external assessment must include questions that, separately or together, give opportunities to demonstrate the standards from rating C to rating A.

Final results will be awarded as a rating of A, B, C, t or z in the above criteria. These ratings are used in determining the final award according to the algorithm in the course document.

Numerical Mark Allocation

Exam papers are designed so that the number of marks allocated to a section, part or question corresponds to the degree of complexity of the question and/or the complexity and amount of detail required in the response. This is so a student knows that, when answering a 4 mark question, they need to provide more detail or more complexity in their response than when they respond to a 1 mark question. Students may find that they spend less or more time on certain questions throughout the exam, depending on their degree of familiarity with the content and the nature of the questions.

SECTION A – Listening and Responding (Audio Exam)

Structure

- This section will take approximately 60 minutes and be allocated 48 marks.
- This section will include FOUR spoken texts in French for response in English. All questions are compulsory.
- Each question will be allocated 11-13 marks to accommodate variation in the texts, but the total for the section will be 48.
- Each spoken text:
 - Includes introduction with reference to the reading number and spoken text number
 - Is read THREE times
 - Includes details/context of the scenario stated verbally on the CD and in writing in the exam booklet.
- 1st reading, then gap of same length as passage
- 2nd reading, then gap of same length as the passage
- 3rd reading, then gap of double the length of passage

- The listening time for one reading of a spoken text lies between 1 minute 40 seconds and 2 minutes, 40 seconds. Total listening and writing time is to be no more than 60 minutes (including gaps).

This section addresses the following course content:

- Theme 1: The Individual
- Theme 2: French-Speaking Communities
- Theme 3: The Changing World

Topics are chosen to constitute a representative sample of course content in the three themes.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 1 Listen and respond to spoken French.
*All aspects of Criterion 1 standards are examinable, **except** the aspect of requesting repetition and/or rephrasing*

Nature of Questions

Spoken Text

- An approximately equal balance of single-person text and dual-person text
- Two single-person texts – 1 (one) read by a male; 1 (one) read by a female
- Two dual person texts read by 1 (one) male and 1 (one) female
- Text types taken from any relevant text types in the course document
- All non- routine contexts and real-world scenarios.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be assessed numerically.
- Responses are to be written in English.
- All Short, closed-ended responses.
- Students are not required to respond in complete sentences.

SECTION B – Reading and Responding

Structure

- This section will take approximately 60 minutes and be allocated 60 marks.
- This section will be divided into TWO parts and include a total of THREE texts written in French with a total text of 500 – 650 words.

Part 1 – approximately 40 minutes

- TWO texts written in French
- At least FIVE questions written for each text in English, for response in English.

Part 2 – approximately 20 minutes

- ONE text written in French
- At least FIVE questions written in French, for response in French.

This section addresses the following course content:

- Theme 1: The Individual
- Theme 2: French-Speaking Communities
- Theme 3: The Changing World

Topics are chosen to constitute a representative sample of course content in the three themes.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 3 Read and respond to written French texts.
*All aspects of Criterion 3 standards are examinable, **except** responses are in written form **only**. The use of 'external references', i.e. dictionary, is not examinable.*

Nature of Questions

For each of Part 1 and 2

- Text types taken from any relevant text types in the course document.
- All non- routine contexts and real-world scenarios.
- For each of the three texts, a range of questions, including at least one question of each of the three types (see Appendix A).
 - For Part 2 only, Type 3 question(s) is multiple choice.
 - Each question requiring understanding is independent.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be assessed numerically.
- All Short, closed-ended responses.
- Approximately 125 words.
- Students are not required to respond in complete sentences.

SECTION C – Writing in French

Structure

- This section will take approximately 60 minutes for students to respond to.
- Students will respond to ONE of FIVE questions in this section in approximately 250 words.
- Questions are written in both French and English, for response in French.

This section addresses the following course content:

- Theme 1: The Individual
- Theme 2: French-Speaking Communities
- Theme 3: The Changing World

Topics are chosen to constitute a representative sample of course content in the three themes.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 4 Express ideas and information in written French (all Elements).

Nature of Questions

- All non- routine contexts and real-world scenarios.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be assessed using extended alpha ratings.
- Responses are to be written in French.
- All open-ended responses in extended response form.
- Responses use a range of text types from the following:
 - Conversation/interview
 - Diary/journal entry
 - Letter/email
 - Narrative
 - Profile

ORAL EXAM STRUCTURE

The oral exam consists of an interaction with one (1) or more markers appointed by TASC and has a duration of 10 – 12 minutes.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 2: Communicate in spoken French (all Elements).

Course Coverage

- Theme 1: The Individual – All topics
 - Personal world
 - Education
 - Daily life

Question type(s)/format

A range of routine to non-routine contexts and real-world scenarios. A range of short to extended responses. Responses range from closed to open--ended responses.

Nature of Responses

10-12 minutes.

Responses will be assessed using extended alpha ratings.

Appendix A – Types of Questions

Context of the question

- Routine context:
 - These questions require rehearsed skills in the use of language and in familiar contexts.
- Non-routine context:
 - These questions require procedures not previously encountered in expected prior learning activities. These require the combination, and sometimes the selection, of a set of skills in unfamiliar contexts.

Scenario of the question

- Real-world scenarios:
 - These questions relate the use of language to the context of the real world.

Questions requiring understanding

- Questions requiring understanding of a written text range in difficulty along a continuum including the following three types:
 - *Type 1*: those where the answer is readily apparent from the information directly available in one or at most two consecutive sentences of the text
 - *Type 2*: those where the answer requires processing the information in a single paragraph – the required answer is not directly stated in this portion of the text
 - *Type 3*: those where the answer requires an understanding of some feature of the text as a whole, and the answer is not directly stated in the text.

Each comprehension item should be independent, in the sense that the correct answer to one item ought not to provide an additional clue to the required answer to another.

Multiple choice questions

- Questions must only have one correct answer. If students mark more than one answer, no marks can be awarded for the question.

Exemplars

(Reference: [ENGLISH TESTS - FCE - reading - part I \(ucoz.com\)](https://www.ucoz.com))

I shifted uncomfortably inside my best suit and eased a finger inside the tight white collar. It was hot in the little bus and I had taken a seat on the wrong side where the summer sun beat on the windows. It was a strange outfit for the weather, but a few miles ahead my future employer might be waiting for me and I had to make a good impression.

There was a lot depending on this interview. Many friends who had qualified with me were unemployed or working in shops or as labourers in the shipyards. So many that I had almost given up hope of any future for myself as a veterinary surgeon. There were usually two or three jobs advertised in the Veterinary Record each week and an average of eighty applicants for each one. It hadn't seemed possible when the letter came from Darrowby in Yorkshire. Mr S. Farnon would like to see me on the Friday afternoon; I was to come to tea and, if we were suited to each other, I could stay on as his assistant. Most young people emerging from the colleges after five years of hard

work were faced by a world unimpressed by their enthusiasm and bursting knowledge. So I had grabbed the lifeline unbelievably.

The driver crashed his gears again as we went into another steep bend. We had been climbing steadily now for the last fifteen miles or so, moving closer to the distant blue of the Pennine Hills. I had never been in Yorkshire

before, but the name had always raised a picture of a region as heavy and unromantic as the pudding of the same name; I was prepared for solid respectability, dullness and a total lack of charm. But as the bus made its way higher, I began to wonder. There were high grassy hills and wide valleys. In the valley bottoms, rivers twisted among the trees and solid grey stone farmhouses lay among islands of cultivated land, which pushed up the wild, dark hillsides.

Suddenly, I realised the bus was clattering along a narrow street which opened onto a square where we stopped. Above the window of a small grocer's shop I read 'Darrowby Co-operative Society'. We had arrived. I got out and stood beside my battered suitcase, looking about me. There was something unusual and I didn't know what it was at first. Then it came to me. The other passengers had dispersed, the driver had switched off the engine and there was not a sound or a movement anywhere. The only visible sign of life was a group of old men sitting round the clock tower in the centre of the square, but they might have been carved of stone.

Darrowby didn't get much space in the guidebooks, but where it was mentioned it was described as a grey little town on the River Arrow with a market place and little of interest except its two ancient bridges. But when you looked at it, its setting was beautiful. Everywhere from the windows of houses in Darrowby you could see the hills. There was a clearness in the air, a sense of space and airiness that made me feel I had left something behind. The pressure of the city, the noise, the smoke – already they seemed to be falling away from me.

Trengate Street was a quiet road leading off the square and from there I had my first sight of Skeldale House. I knew it was the right place before I was near enough to read S. Farnon, Veterinary Surgeon on the old-fashioned brass nameplate. I knew by the ivy, which grew untidily over the red brick, climbing up to the topmost windows. It was what the letter had said – the only house with ivy; and this could be where I would work for the first time as a veterinary surgeon. I rang the doorbell.

Why did the writer regret his choice of seat as he travelled?

[It was on the sunny side and hot.] (Type 1)

What was the writer wearing?

[His best suit] (Type 1)

What type of work was the writer qualified to do?

[Veterinary surgeon] (Type 1)

What impression had the writer previously had of Yorkshire?

[Heavy and unromantic region; solid respectability; dullness; lack of charm] (Type 1)

Name two things that surprised the writer about how he was offered the interview?

[There was no advertisement; he had been contacted without providing an application; if suitable he would stay on] (Type 2)

Describe one way that the writer's experience of Darrowby differed from that described in the guidebooks?

[For example, Guidebook: grey little town; Writer: clearness in the air] (Type 2)

What did the writer find as unusual on arriving in Darrowby?

[The only visible signs of life were some old men sitting around the clock tower who could have been made of stone; the lack of activity] (Type 2)

How did the writer recognize Skeldale house?

[It was the only house with ivy as it said in the letter] (Type 1)

How did the writer's attitude change during the passage?

A He began to feel he might like living in Darrowby

B He became more uncertain about the outcome of the job interview

C He started to feel that he was lucky to have an opportunity like this

D He started to look forward to having the interview

E He felt that the uncomfortable journey was likely to be a waste of time.

[A] (Type 3)

Which of the pairs of words describes the characteristics of the writer?

A cautious, shy

B positive, confident

C thankful, confused

D relaxed, capable

E unhappy, unwilling

[B] (Type 3)

Format of Response

Short response format (C1 and C3)

These questions are composed of a brief prompt that demands a response to some stimulus material that varies from a single response to a few written points. This sort of item is suited to assessing the student's ability to:

- recall specific information and methods related to key content
- apply rehearsed methods to familiar situations
- demonstrate understanding of key concepts in previously unseen stimulus material.

Extended response format (C4)

These questions involve lengthy structured responses. Greater complexity may be due to one or more of, but not limited to, the following:

- a greater cognitive demand of French language concepts
- the necessity to select appropriate information
- justification of a response via a logical line of reasoning.

For example, a response to a question in the writing section.

Assessment of Response

Closed-ended response (C1 and C3)

These are questions for which there is a single 'correct' or 'best' response.

Open-ended response:

These are questions for which there may be multiple correct responses OR in which the quality of the argument and/or the expression is being assessed.