



National Qualifications 2009

Internal Assessment Report: French (Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher)

Assessment Panel: Modern Languages

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

Component/Coursework in National Courses

Component/Coursework verified

French (Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher): Speaking: Presentation and Discussion

Feedback to centres

General comments

Centres' assessments were again this year largely concordant with verifier judgments, and there were a number of Good and Very Good performances at all three levels. Some of the team commented on the outstanding control of language by some of the Higher students.

As last year, verifiers were happy to note a continuing improvement in the manner in which the test was conducted in the vast majority of centres. While there remain instances of candidate performances in the **Discussion** element of the test being over-prepared and/or over-rehearsed, there were many more instances of real interaction between interlocutor and candidate, with the result that the conduct of the test was much more spontaneous and natural. Indeed, a number of verifiers went out of their way to praise the interlocutors for the supportive manner in which they conducted the test.

There were still some examples of over-lengthy tests, which again usually proved to be to the detriment of the candidate.

Poor pronunciation remains an issue, especially at Higher level. Mispronunciation (sometimes of basic everyday words) and poor intonation detracted in many cases from what might otherwise have been Good or Very Good performances. Centres need to remember that this is one of the key criteria in the assessment of the student performance, given that it is a vital factor in ensuring that successful communication takes place.

Verifiers again commented that candidate performance was sometimes difficult to assess either as a result of background noise, or as a result of centres re-recording on previously-used cassettes on which earlier student recordings had not been completely erased. Some centres had clearly not checked the quality of the recordings.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development

As already stated, more centres would appear to be taking notice of the requirement for the **Discussion** element of the test to be a real and spontaneous conversation. These centres who still show an unfortunate tendency to allow the student to indulge in a series of 'mini-monologues' during the **Discussion** element of the test should be encouraged to listen again to the range of available exemplar materials, more of which were made available at the Professional Development Workshop (PDW) in November 2008.