2021 French Continuers Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2021 assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

The folio should consist of between three and five tasks and include one each of interaction, text production, and text analysis. Most schools are choosing to include the minimum number of three tasks.

Many schools used texts from past examination papers for text analysis tasks, which provided little variety. Translations tasks and analysis do not provide the students with enough opportunities for in-depth interpretation and reflection and are not suitable for a Folio Text analysis task. If literary, the texts provided should be related to the French speaking world and not, for instance, an anglophone text/play/extract translated into French.

Whilst students can prepare for oral interactions, they must not be rehearsed, and the questions should not be given to the students prior to the interaction. Some schools chose to conduct interactions which were very similar to the end of year examination. Students and teachers should be encouraged to conduct interactions on a variety of topics studied during the year.

Teachers should provide marked samples and tasks sheets (including texts for text analysis) to facilitate the moderation progress and support their final folio grades.

The more successful responses commonly:

* made clear reference to the texts in text analysis
* used evidence/quotes from the text to support their answers
* used a wide range of complex language and structures in their writing task(s)
* were well prepared for their interaction and were able to provide elaborated answers.

The less successful responses commonly:

* gave short and/or incomplete answers
* did not support their answers with evidence
* did not consider audience, context and text type when writing or analysing texts
* were unable to recognise or name stylistic/linguistic devices
* used basic language and/or did not have good control of basic tenses and grammar.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

Students complete an investigation demonstrating research and personal reflection on a cultural or social aspect or issue of a topic or subtopic associated with ‘The French-speaking Communities’ or ‘The Changing World’ themes. Students should complete three tasks: an oral presentation, a written or multimodal response in French and a reflective response in English.

For moderation, teachers should ensure that they provide a summary of the student’s In-depth Study, including the topic, the text type, audience, context and purpose of the oral presentation and written response.

Teachers should also ensure that their recordings are clear and audible.

The more successful responses commonly:

* used original and engaging topics related to the French-speaking world
* chose a topic which allowed for enough depth
* clearly had a different context, audience, purpose, and text type for the oral and written component
* showed critical depth of thinking in their reflection.

The less successful responses commonly:

* picked topics which did not allow for enough depth/critical reflection (i.e. French cities)
* included a presentation and written response which were too similar in audience, context or purpose
* were not able to critically reflect on their learning but simply reported on the process/summarised their information
* lacked originality
* were too repetitive.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Examination

The examination consists of two assessments: an oral examination and a written examination.

Oral Examination

The oral examination of 10–15 minutes comprises a general conversation and a discussion of the student’s in‑depth study. In the conversation, students converse with the examiners about their personal world. This year the examinations were again conducted on-line. It seems that many students were very comfortable with this process and for the most part the whole oral examination process flowed smoothly in schools and at the SACE Board.

Section 1: Conversation

The more successful responses commonly:

* were elaborate and extended, and on a wide range of topics
* flowed smoothly, demonstrating that students had practised extensively, using a wide range of questions framed flexibly
* were lively and interesting
* were relevant, structured, and detailed
* demonstrated depth of knowledge and the correct use of tenses, agreements, and vocabulary.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth of ideas, grammatical correctness, and detail
* were dependent on questions being asked to encourage interaction
* demonstrated limited ability to maintain interaction
* were dependent on English word order patterns and some anglicised expressions, repeatedly asking for translation of English words into French (comment dit-on … en français?) without any effort to find another expression they might know.

Section 2: Discussion

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a depth of research and exploration of the chosen topic that was of obvious interest to the students
* demonstrated a clear and substantial link to the themes of ‘The French-speaking Communities’ or ‘The Changing World’
* were able to answer a wide range of questions with clear, articulate, and well-referenced responses to aspects of their research highlighted on the in-depth study outline for oral examinations
* involved discussion that flowed smoothly, demonstrating that students had practised extensively and had depth and breadth of knowledge of their research
* involved discussions that were often lively and interesting where students were able to
* were relevant, structured, and detailed
* were aligned with the dot-points suggested as prompts for the discussion.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth, grammatical correctness, and detail of the topic they had researched
* misunderstood specific vocabulary and questions relating to the topic they had researched
* demonstrated limited ability to maintain interaction
* demonstrated limited research and knowledge of the topic.

Written Examination

The written examination was only 130 minutes in length in 2021 with the removal of two texts from the Listening and Responding section and one text from the Reading and Responding, part A section. No changes were made to Reading and Responding part B and Writing in French. It was also the first time that students experienced an e-Exam in French (Continuers).

It is recommended that future students access the online electronic examinations as early as possible to familiarise themselves with this new process, particularly concerning the limits on playing the Listening passages and the use of the online keyboard for accent use. Some students managed this process very well, but some students used their own process of inserting accents or did not use them at all.

Section 1: Listening and Responding

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated an understanding of the two texts
* read and interpreted the questions to provide correct information, in both detail and number of points required
* provided detailed answers to stylistic and language feature questions
* used evidence from the texts paraphrased into English to support their answers
* provided thoughtful reflection where required.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth, detail, and accuracy of information, including confusing the roles of speakers, or attributing details to the wrong speaker
* lacked depth, detail, and accuracy of stylistic and language features, often providing incorrect or untranslated evidence to support their answers
* contained limited evidence from the texts to support their answers.

Text 1

The more successful responses commonly:

* identified the two pieces of evidence required to support their answer about the stressed owners of naughty puppies
* identified all of the suggested solutions.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were confused about who the advertisement had been written for
* identified only one or no pieces of evidence to support their interested person
* misunderstood the role of the vet and obedience classes mentioned as solutions in the advertisement.

Text 2

The more successful responses commonly:

* identified that the text was a ‘celebration’ of Frederic’s life on the occasion of his 18th birthday party
* Identified six (or more) challenges that Frederic had overcome
* explained three linguistic or stylistic devices used by the speakers, supported with evidence from the text.

The less successful responses commonly:

* identified that the text was about Frederic’s life without further elaboration and misunderstood that the speakers were his parents and that it was a birthday celebration
* identified only one or two challenges Frederic had overcome in his life
* stated only one or two linguistic or stylistic devices used by the speakers, without supporting evidence.

Reading and Responding Part A

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated an understanding of the text
* provided detailed answers to the questions, including all required details, and supporting evidence, when the question asks for it
* used extensive evidence from the texts paraphrased into English to support their answers
* provided thoughtful reflection where required.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth and detail, often providing incorrect or untranslated evidence to support their answers
* provided limited evidence from the texts to support their answers.

Text 3

The more successful responses commonly:

* explained how Inès (not her mother) felt about how her mother spent her youth, with extensive supporting evidence from the text
* identified Inès’ current attitude to her parents and gave three examples of stylistic devices used to convey it
* justified the assumption they made about the relationship, with extensive examples from the text.

The less successful responses commonly:

* explained how her mother (not Inès) felt about how she spent her own youth, with some confused supporting evidence from the text
* identified Inès’ current attitude to her parents but gave limited examples of stylistic devices used to convey it
* justified the assumption they made about the relationship, with limited or confused examples from the text.

Section 2: Reading and Responding

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated an understanding of how to write an email to a local dignitary and address it appropriately
* provided relevant and detailed examples for their opinion about the building of the fast-food restaurant in their area and the various impacts it would have on them and their local community
* presented their views passionately, logically, and thoughtfully for the context of the original text
* demonstrated an excellent knowledge of grammatical concepts, tense, and connectors.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth, grammatical correctness, and detail
* did not meet the required minimum word count
* demonstrated limited ability to structure an email or provide opinions about the various impacts the building of the fast-food restaurant in their area and the various impacts it would have on them and their community.

Section 3: Writing in French

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a passion for and interest in the topic selected
* provided a well-written, structured, and interesting response, which engaged the reader
* demonstrated an excellent knowledge of grammatical concepts, tense, and connectors
* contained appropriately selected idiomatic expressions and grammatical concepts
* demonstrated evidence of planning
* adhered to the conventions of the text-type, and the stated context, audience and purpose
* contained a few errors, but they did not impede the meaning.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth, grammatical correctness, and detail, which impeded meaning
* did not write in the required text-type
* used Anglicism or invented French expressions to communicate their ideas
* did not meet the required minimum word count
* needed to consider the context, purpose and audience and the conventions of the text-type
* were superficial in their treatment of the selected topic.