

# **National Certificate of Educational Achievement**

## **2012 Assessment Report**

### **French Level 3**

**90558 Listen to and understand complex spoken French in less familiar contexts**

**90561 Read and understand written French containing complex language, in less familiar contexts**

**90562 Write text in French using complex language on a less familiar topic**

## COMMENTARY

This was the final year for examinations to assess these achievement standards.

For the Listening task, texts were valid, with interesting cultural content. Questions were overall well worded and gave clues without giving away information; some candidates were confused about where to write particular information (but were credited if it was correct). Candidates writing particularly lengthy responses are best, for the sake of clarity, to use the extra pages to do so.

The reading exam was slightly too long and the two first passages were on the same topic (Rugby World Cup) which was probably not the most challenging. It would have been better to have only two passages or even have the second passage on a completely different topic. The questions need to be a bit more specific so it becomes easier to distinguish between the Achieved, Merit or Excellence students. There was some confusion about where to write the information, suggesting that some questions are a little bit open, with occasional overlap between them. However in general it was a successful paper, written at the appropriate level to allow students to work through the paper with confidence, yet providing a challenge for them. It was very achievable and appropriate for this level.

This year's topics for the writing task were very relevant to student experience and elicited very interesting responses from the students. It was pleasing to note that this year there was a very even spread in the choice of topic, indicating that students found each of the topics interesting and were able to engage with the ideas given in the bullet points. Each of the questions worked well and sought to extract both linguistic and cultural knowledge, with a comparative level of difficulty as regards the tenses each required.

## STANDARD REPORTS

### **90558 Listen to and understand complex spoken French in less familiar contexts**

#### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:**

- recognised isolated pieces of information
- answered most questions
- attempted to write full sentence answers.

#### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:**

- did not answer all questions/parts of questions
- misread/misinterpreted the question
- misinterpreted numbers, dates, tenses
- showed little understanding of the text
- did not use the listening notes box.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:**

- addressed the questions carefully
- made notes in listening notes box before attempting answers
- provided most of the information required
- wrote more complete answers
- filled gaps in their answers with sensible guesses.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:**

- made extensive use of listening notes box
- gave complete answers which appeared to have been proofread
- understood virtually all the information
- understood the use of different tenses in the text and answered in English accordingly
- were able to justify responses with information drawn from the text.

## **90561 Read and understand written French containing complex language, in less familiar contexts**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:**

- showed enough vocabulary knowledge to accurately pinpoint key information
- were sufficiently clear in their understanding of tenses
- focused on basic detail, but missed several points overall in each question
- sometimes had trouble distinguishing what was really required and therefore wrote a lot which was superfluous to requirements
- sometimes used logic and general knowledge, rather than finding the information in the text
- were sometimes vague in the language they used to phrase their answer, not always communicating clearly.

### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:**

- translated large chunks of the text without discriminating what was required to answer the question
- wrote evidence for one part of the question in the space provided for another part of the question
- summarised too liberally in their own words, skipping over the detail and reducing the text to very simplistic terms
- did not distinguish tenses

- left whole sections blank, or wrote only a line or two for each question
- misunderstood key points due to lack of vocabulary knowledge – e.g. talked about the school principal in Question Four instead of the websites which provide answers to examinations
- did not display cultural competence – e.g. the value of the euro.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:**

- showed a wide vocabulary knowledge, but consistently missed two or three details in each question such as adjectives, adverbs and precision of places, events, teams involved
- were inconsistent in their accuracy with tenses, but did display some competence particularly with the pluperfect and future tenses
- gave detail in every question
- explained key points, rather than just lifted passages from the text
- gave clear answers which communicated well.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:**

- had a very strong vocabulary knowledge, missing few details in each question
- were very accurate with tenses
- knew which parts of the text to choose in order to answer each question accurately
- showed perception and a high degree of comprehension
- gave meticulous attention to detail
- were able to order their thoughts and sequence their responses skilfully
- expressed themselves extremely well, removing superfluous detail and explaining clearly, logically and accurately.

## **90562 Write text in French using complex language on a less familiar topic**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:**

- adhered to the suggested word limit
- followed instructions and covered the basic points, without giving detail
- sequenced ideas logically, but did not use paragraphs to structure their essay
- covered two bullet points in detail, but lacked the same detail for the third point
- wrote simply and accurately, with a few phrases of complex language throughout
- included language which was unclear, due to inaccuracy
- displayed a lack of appropriate cultural knowledge in relation to the topic chosen.

## **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:**

- did not adhere to instructions carefully enough and wrote irrelevant material
- did not organise or structure their essay
- did not use complex language and used English vocabulary too often
- were unable to conjugate verbs correctly, hindering meaning
- showed insufficient cultural and linguistic knowledge
- wrote a prepared essay without tailoring it to the requirements of the question.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:**

- structured their essay well
- were attentive to the requirements of each bullet point
- wrote detailed paragraphs to support their main points, although one point may not have been as fully developed
- used complex language in much of their essay
- personalised their writing with anecdotes from their own experience
- manipulated a variety of tenses accurately
- made quite a few minor errors and occasionally more major ones.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:**

- used paragraphs to organise their thoughts
- addressed the requirements of each question with flair and skill
- wrote extensively, giving detail on each of the bullet points chosen
- used complex language throughout their essay, including idiom and proverbs
- wrote with personal conviction, showing authentic engagement with the topic
- used a wide range of tenses accurately
- showed mastery of the more difficult grammar points such as the subjunctive.