

2024 specification  
first exams in 2026

# Practice Papers for GCSE Edexcel French

## Writing: Higher

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# Teacher's Introduction

## Purpose:

This pack contains three full practice papers for the Edexcel Higher writing exam. When a new specification is launched, initially, teachers may find it difficult to source quality practice papers beyond those provided by the exam board, thereby making it difficult to accurately assess their students. Besides, there is always a risk that students can find the papers provided online by the exam board. The ZigZag practice papers allow teachers to give their students extra practice without taking this risk.

The author has taken every step to ensure the structure of these papers mirrors that of the Edexcel paper, and has used their extensive experience of resource writing to produce varied and unique content. These papers cover all six thematic contexts:

1. My personal world
2. Lifestyle and wellbeing
3. My neighbourhood
4. Media and technology
5. Studying and my future
6. Travel and tourism

## Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

## How to use this resource:

We recommend setting each paper under exam conditions to give an accurate picture of students' ability at a given point. Papers can be used as teacher-assessed tasks (with the teacher marking the paper and feeding back to the students) or as self-/peer-assessment tasks (with each student or their partner assessing their work).

We are not providing a full mark scheme here as it can easily be obtained from the exam board's website, but the author has provided an explanation of the mark scheme and how to achieve the top marks for each task. They have also provided some self-/peer-assessment grids, which can be photocopied and given to students to assess their own or their partner's work.

*October 2025*

# Structure of the Paper and Mark Scheme

The Edexcel Higher writing paper comprises three tasks:

1. **The 80–90-word task**

Students choose between two questions. Note this is an overlap task (it is the same for both papers). There are 18 marks available for this task. It is marked based on two criteria: AO2 (response to stimulus) and AO3 (linguistic knowledge and accuracy). To score in the top band for AO2, students must address all four bullet points, develop their ideas frequently and write in a manner that is easy to understand. To score in the top band for AO3, students need to vary their vocabulary and grammatical structures, use a range of sentence structures, use a range of tenses (past, present and future events), and the language they use must be generally accurate with no major errors.

2. **The 130–150-word task**

Students choose between two questions. There are 22 marks available for this task. It is marked based on two criteria: AO2 (response to stimulus) and AO3 (linguistic knowledge and accuracy). To score in the top band for AO2, students must address all four bullet points, consistently develop their ideas, and the response must be easily comprehensible. To score in the top band for AO3, students need to use a range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. This can be achieved by creating a range of sentence structures, using complex language. They must be consistently successful at referring to the past, present and future events, and the language they use must be consistently accurate with no major errors.

3. **The translation task**

Students translate a short paragraph into French. There are 10 marks available for this task. It is marked based on two criteria: AO2 (response to stimulus) and AO3 (linguistic knowledge and accuracy). To score in the top band for AO2, students must ensure that the meaning of the paragraph is accurately translated. To score in the top band for AO3, the vocabulary and grammatical structures must be consistently accurate, with no major errors.

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# Self- and Peer-assessment Grid

Use the grids below to self- or peer-assess your written responses. Please note that

## 1. 80–90-word task:

Have you...	What the mark scheme says	What it means
 addressed all four bullet points?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write at least one sentence per bullet point</li> <li>• what you write must be relevant to the task</li> <li>• give an opinion and at least two arguments (e.g. 'the car' or 'the train')</li> <li>• use the correct time frame for the task</li> </ul>
	frequently developed your ideas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give at least three or four ideas</li> </ul>
	responded to the task in a comprehensible manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write in a way that is easy to understand</li> <li>• if you translate it back into English, it should be clear</li> </ul>
	used a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoid repetitions (use each word only once)</li> <li>• include different subject pronouns, verb forms, negatives, etc.</li> </ul>
	formed extended sentences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a range of time phrases ('le prochain', etc.)</li> <li>• use connectives ('et', 'mais', 'donc', 'parce que', 'beaucoup', 'assez', etc.) and 'ensuite', 'finalement', etc.)</li> </ul>
	occasionally used complex language?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a couple of more interesting structures but only if you are confident</li> <li>• you could use relative clauses or infinitive structures such as 'j'ai aimé' or 'j'aime aller'</li> </ul>
 made successful use of present, past and future time frames?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are your present, past and future ideas clear?</li> <li>• are they in the right paragraph? (remember, 'dernier/dernière' = past, 'prochain/prochaine' = future)</li> </ul>
	used generally accurate language?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when you have finished, proofread your work</li> <li>• check spelling, articles (un/une/les/les), agreements (usually you need a subject and a verb), adjectives and an -s at the end of sentences</li> </ul>

## 2. 130–150-word task:

Have you...	What the mark scheme says	What it means
 addressed all four bullet points?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write more than one sentence per bullet point</li> <li>• what you write must be relevant to the task</li> <li>• give a balanced opinion with reasons (e.g. 'côté / d'un autre côté', etc.)</li> <li>• use the correct time frame for the task</li> </ul>
	<u>consistently</u> developed your ideas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• always give at least three or four ideas</li> <li>• this can be achieved by giving opinions and comparing what life is now vs what it was</li> </ul>

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Have you...	What the mark scheme says	What it means
	responded to the task in an <u>easily</u> comprehensible manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plan your paragraphs</li> <li>write in a way that is easy to understand</li> <li>narrate a story as you would in chronological order</li> <li>if you 'forget' to translate it back into English</li> </ul>
	used a <u>wide</u> variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>avoid repetitions (use each word only once)</li> <li>use different opinion phrases ('à mes yeux', 'en ce qui me concerne')</li> <li>include different subject pronouns ('ne ... jamais', 'ne ... que', 'ne ... plus')</li> </ul>
	formed <u>frequently</u> extended sentences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use a range of time phrases ('dès que j'ai fini mes études', etc.)</li> <li>use connectives ('également', 'et', etc.), intensifiers ('extrêmement', etc.) and sequencers ('d'abord', etc.)</li> </ul>
	used <u>a lot of</u> complex language?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use more interesting vocabulary</li> <li>are confident</li> <li>you could use modal verbs ('je pourrais', infinitive) or infinitive structure ('de', etc.) and reflexive verbs</li> </ul>
	made <u>consistent</u> and successful use of present, past and future time frames?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are your present, perfect and imperfect tenses correct?</li> <li>have you referred to your childhood as having happened in the past, using the past tense?</li> <li>can you place some near future events (will)?</li> <li>did you say what would happen if something else happened (imperfect conditional)?</li> </ul>
	used language which is <u>always</u> accurate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when you have finished, proofread</li> <li>check spelling, articles (un/une/les), agreements (usually you need a plural verb with plural subjects, adjectives and an -s at the end of nouns)</li> <li>add accents where necessary</li> </ul>

### 3. Translation task:

Have you...	What the mark scheme says	What it means
	transferred the meaning appropriately?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>translate the paragraph like for like</li> <li>consider word order carefully</li> </ul>
	translated the paragraph (mostly) clearly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>do not leave any gaps</li> <li>if you translate the paragraph bit by bit, does it make sense?</li> </ul>
	used generally accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when you have finished, proofread</li> <li>check your verbs (present and past tense)</li> <li>check spelling, articles (un/une/les), agreements (usually you need a plural verb with plural subjects, adjectives and an -s at the end of nouns)</li> </ul>

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# ZigZag Practice Exam

## Supporting GCSE Edexcel French: 2024

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Write-on paper

French  
Writing



### Higher Tier Practice Paper 3

Name

**Time allowed:** 1 hour 20 minutes

The maximum mark for this paper is **50**.

#### Information:

- Answer all questions in the spaces provided.
- You should answer **option a or option b** for questions 1 and 2.
- You should answer all of questions 3 to 5.
- Answer all questions in French and use full sentences.
- You may use a dictionary.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets.



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Answer **either** Question 1(a) **or** Question 1(b)  
Only answer **one** of these questions.

1. (a) Write to your friend about your part-time job.

You **must** include the following points:

- a description of your job
- your opinion of the person you work with, with a reason
- what you did at work yesterday
- the job you will do in the future

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 80 and 90 words.

[18 marks]

1. (b) Write to your friend about your part-time job.

You **must** include:

- a description of your job
- your opinion of the person you work with with a reason
- what you did at work yesterday
- an activity you will do in the future

Write your answer **in French**. You should aim to write between 80 and 90 words.

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Answer **either** Question 2(a) **or** Question 2(b)  
Only answer **one** of these questions.

2. (a) Write a blog about language learning.

You **must** include the following points:

- the importance of learning foreign languages
- the pros and cons of learning languages at school
- a time in the past when you spoke a foreign language
- how learning foreign languages will help you in the future

Write your answer in **French**. You should aim to write between 130 and 150 words.

[22 marks]

2. (b) Write about online magazines.

You **must** include:

- what is available
- the pros and cons
- how you can use them
- your opinion on the system

Write your answer in **English**. You should aim to write between 130 and 150 words.

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3. Translate the paragraph into French.

I love to go to the shopping centre. My mum prefers to shop online. Normally I find a present for my brother's birthday. Yesterday, I chose a funny card and I will go to town to meet him.



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# ZigZag Practice Exam

## Supporting GCSE Edexcel French: 2024

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Non-write-on paper

French  
Writing



### Higher Tier Practice Paper 3

**Time allowed:** 1 hour 20 minutes

The maximum mark for this paper is **50**.

**Information:**

- Answer all questions in your exercise book.
- You should answer **option a or option b** for questions 1 and 2.
- You should answer all of question 3.
- Answer all questions in French and use full sentences.
- You must not use a dictionary.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets.



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Answer **either** Question 1(a) **or** Question 1(b)  
Only answer **one** of these questions.

1. (a) Write to your friend about your part-time job.

You **must** include the following points:

- a description of your job
- your opinion of the person you work with, with a reason
- what you did at work yesterday
- the job you will do in the future

Write your answer in **French**. You should aim to write between 80 and 90 words.

[18 marks]

1. (b) Write to your friend about your part-time job.

You **must** include:

- a description of your job
- your opinion of the person you work with with reasons
- what you did at work yesterday
- an activity you will do in the next week

Write your answer in **French**. You should aim to write between 80 and 90 words.

Answer **either** Question 2(a) **or** Question 2(b)  
Only answer **one** of these questions.

2. (a) Write a blog about language learning.

You **must** include the following points:

- the importance of learning foreign languages
- the pros and cons of learning languages at school
- a time when you spoke a foreign language
- how foreign languages will help you in the future

Write your answer in **French**. You should aim to write between 130 and 150 words.

[22 marks]

2. (b) Write about your favourite online magazine.

You **must** include:

- what the magazine is about
- what is available on the website
- the price of the magazine
- how you can subscribe
- your favourite article

Write your answer in **French**. You should aim to write between 130 and 150 words.

3. Translate the paragraph into **French**.

I love to go to the shopping centre. My mum prefers to shop online. Normally I go to the shopping centre to find a present for my brother's birthday. Yesterday, I chose a funny card and I will go to town to meet him.

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## **Preview of Questions Ends Here**

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# Indicative Content

## Practice Paper 1

1. (a) Mon collègue est assez grand. Il y a plusieurs bâtiments et beaucoup de piscine. J'adore mon professeur d'anglais car il est sympa et toujours devoirs. Hier, pendant la pause déjeuner, j'ai mangé avec mes amis puis terrain de sport. C'était vraiment sympa. La semaine prochaine, nous classe d'histoire. Je pense que ça va être un peu ennuyeux !
1. (b) J'habite dans une grande ville près de Paris. Dans ma ville, il y a beaucoup de magasins mais il n'y a pas de boulangerie. Pendant les vacances, j'aime aller dans un petit village car c'est vraiment intéressant. La semaine dernière, j'ai vu mes amis. Nous avons regardé une comédie mais elle n'était pas amusante. J'aimerais aller dans un village car c'est plus calme.
2. (a) Selon moi, un bon ami est une personne en qui je peux avoir confiance. Un ami fidèle qui écoute toujours mes problèmes. J'ai quelques amis que j'ai rencontrés facilement grâce aux nouvelles technologies, il me semble que ça marche en vrai. Il faut aussi faire attention car certaines personnes volent l'argent. La semaine dernière, je suis allé(e) au centre commercial avec mon meilleur ami. C'était un excellent moment. Cependant, nous n'avons rien acheté car tout était trop cher. J'aimerais faire du camping avec mes amis. On ira sûrement à la campagne mais pas de la mer pour me reposer.
2. (b) Je suis fan de cinéma et de tous les genres de films. J'aime surtout les films d'action car je les trouve passionnants mais je pense aussi que les acteurs ont un don. Ça vaut la peine d'aller au cinéma pour voir les films sur grand écran. De plus, ça coûte moins cher à la maison. Cependant, j'ai un désaccord avec mes parents qui disent que les films sont trop chers. Le mois dernier, j'ai regardé Retour vers le futur à la télé. C'est un vrai plaisir à voir à la télé car je le trouve génial ! Cependant, j'aimerais vraiment aller au cinéma. La semaine dernière, donc j'irai au cinéma ce week-end avec mes amis.
3. Je joue au foot avec mes ami(e)s. Nous allons souvent au centre sportif. Je fais du sport. La semaine dernière, j'ai participé à un concours et j'ai gagné. À l'avenir, je veux continuer car je veux être en bonne santé.

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## **Preview of Answers Ends Here**

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