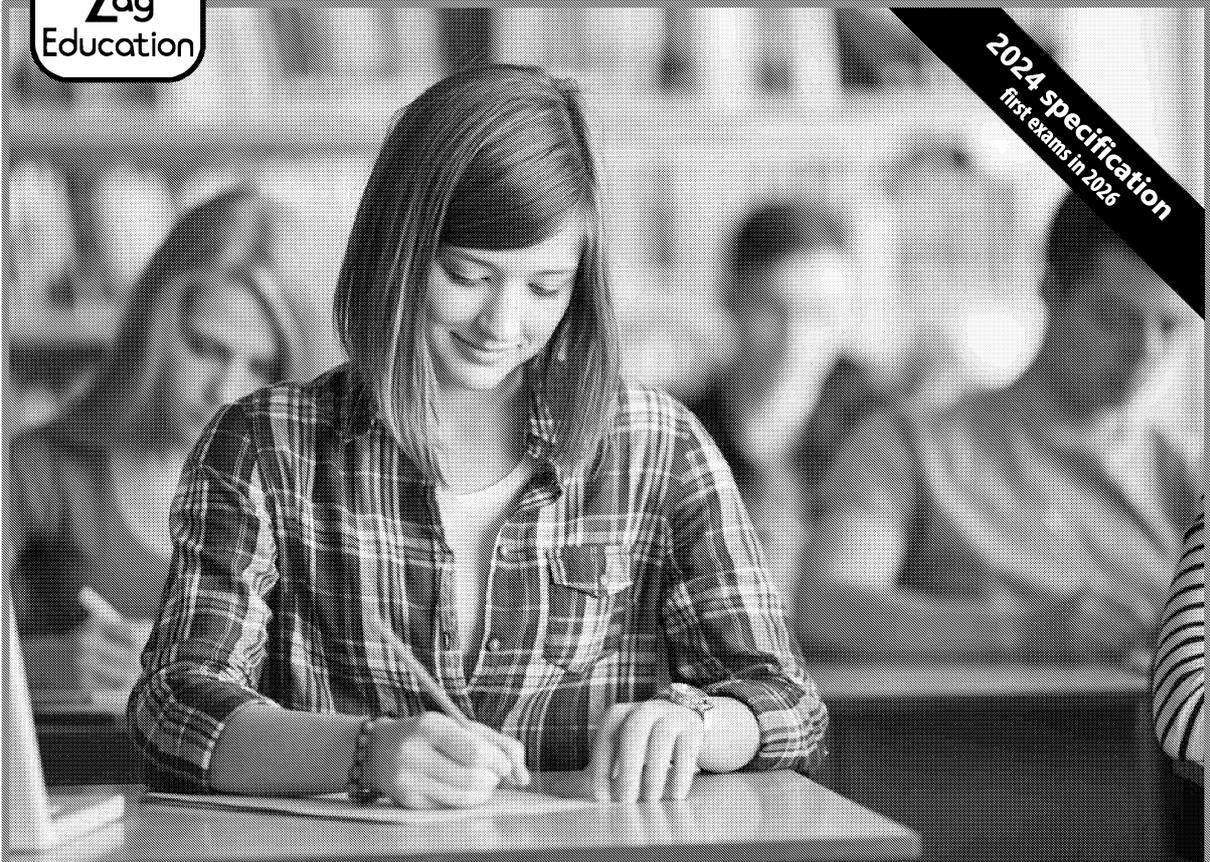




French

GCSE | AQA | 8652



Practice Papers for GCSE AQA French

Writing: Higher

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Teacher's Introduction

Purpose:

This pack contains three full practice papers for the AQA 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.

Remember!

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

The author has taken every step to ensure the structure of these papers mirrors that of the AQA papers, and has used their extensive experience of resource writing to produce varied and unique content. These papers cover all three themes listed below and most of the topics:

1. People and lifestyle
2. Popular culture
3. Communication and the world around us

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.

Although not in exam layout, non-write-on versions of the practice papers have been included in the resource in order to minimise photocopying and reduce costs. Additionally, questions 2.1 and 2.2, and questions 3.1 and 3.2, have been combined onto one page, again to reduce wasteful photocopying. At the end of the resource, there is a lined answer sheet for students to write on. You can photocopy as many as required for mock exams.

September 2025

Structure of the paper and mark scheme

The AQA Higher writing paper comprises three tasks:

1. The translation task (10 marks)

Students translate five sentences into French, of approximately 50 words. The difficulty, and later sentences may contain modal verbs and more complex clauses, themes and tenses on the AQA specification. The task is marked for AO3 only and accurate application of the grammar and vocabulary prescribed in the specification as a whole and there are two criteria: rendering of the original meaning, and grammar. For the translation, teachers will apply up to 15 ticks to elements translated correctly. A student to get 5 marks in the 'rendering of the original meaning' ticks is required. To score in the top band in 'knowledge of vocabulary and grammar' very good knowledge of the vocabulary in the specification, and their grammar. Only minor errors are tolerated, and there should be few, if any, omissions.

2. The 90-word task (15 marks)

Students choose between two questions, which will be on two different themes (question 5 on the Foundation paper). Students must cover three bullet points on two different time frames. It is marked based on two criteria: AO2 (understanding and using language in speaking and in writing) and AO3 (demonstrating understanding and using grammar and vocabulary prescribed in the specification). To score in the top band for AO2, students must address all three bullet points, communicate clearly, and regularly develop their ideas with relevant information. To score in the top band for AO3, students must use a good range of grammar and vocabulary. They must also regularly try to use complex language and structures and successfully use future time frames. There may be minor errors and a few major errors in complex structures.

3. The 150-word task

Students choose between two questions on two different themes. There are two questions: one is narrative in the present tense, the other in a different time frame. It is marked based on two criteria: AO2 (understanding and using language in speaking and in writing) and AO3 (demonstrating understanding and using grammar and vocabulary prescribed in the specification). To score in the top band for AO2, students need to convey a lot of relevant information and communicate clearly. For AO3, students are assessed according to their use of language, and their accuracy. To score in the top band for range and use of language, students must use a very good variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures. They must use complex language. To score in the top band for accuracy, students must use a very good range of grammar and vocabulary. There may be some minor errors and occasional major errors in complex structures only. The writing must be secure.

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Self- and peer-assessment grid

Use the grids below to self- or peer-assess your written responses. Please note that BP stands for bullet point.

1. Translation task:

For the 'rendering of the original meaning' criterion, check the mark scheme and give a tick if the response is correctly translated.

Then convert those ticks as follows:

13–15 ticks = 5 marks

10–12 ticks = 4 marks

7–9 ticks = 3 marks

4–6 ticks = 2 marks

1–3 ticks = 1 mark

0 ticks = 0 marks

For the 'knowledge of vocabulary and grammar' criterion, you can check your work against the following:

Have you...	What the mark scheme says	What it means
	shown very good knowledge of vocabulary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> translate all or nearly all the words in the message
	translated the message appropriately?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not leave any gaps if you translate the message back into English, it is correct
	used highly accurate grammar?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check your verbs (present and perfect)
	if you have made errors, are they only minor?	<p>When you have finished, proofread your work for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> spelling articles (un/une/des/le/la/l'/les, etc.) adjective agreements (usually you need to check adjectives and an -s at the end of plurals)

2. 90-word task:

Have you...	What the mark scheme says	What it means
	addressed all three bullet points with relevant information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write at least one sentence per BP what you write must be relevant to the question use the correct time frame for BP2 and BP3
	communicated clearly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write in a way that is easy to understand if you translate it back into English, do you understand it?
	regularly developed your ideas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give at least three or four ideas per BP
	used a good variety of vocabulary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid repetitions (use each word once) include different subject pronouns and verbs
	regularly tried to use complex language and structures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use a range of time phrases ('le week-end', 'un jour', 'un soir', etc.) use connectives ('et', 'mais', 'donc', etc.) and sequence ('finalment', 'ensuite') you could use relative clauses using 'qui', 'où', 'où', etc.
	used present, past and future tenses correctly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are your present, past and future verbs correct? are they in the right paragraph, with the 'dernier/dernière' = past, and 'prochain/prochaine' = future?
	if you have made errors, they are mainly minor, but some major ones may have occurred in complex structures?	<p>When you have finished, proofread your work for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> spelling articles (un/une/des/le/la/l'/les, etc.) adjective agreements (usually you need to check adjectives and an -s at the end of plurals)

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3. 150-word task:

Have you...	What the mark scheme says	What it means
	conveyed a lot of relevant information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> break down the BP (it might be useful) what you write must be relevant to the topic use the correct time frame for BP2
	regularly developed your ideas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> always give at least six to eight ideas things achieved by giving other points of view (what it is now vs what it used to be, disadvantage, etc.)
	communicated clearly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plan your paragraphs write in a way that is easy to understand narrate a story as you would in English if you translate it back into English, does it make sense?
	used a very good variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid repetitions (use each word or expression only once) use different opinion phrases ('selon moi', 'à mon avis', 'en ce qui me concerne', etc.) include different subject pronouns and object pronouns ('jamais', 'ne ... que', 'ne ... personne', etc.)
	used complex language regularly and successfully?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use more interesting vocabulary and structures are confident you could use modal verbs ('je peux', 'je devrais', etc.) or infinitive structures (after 'pour', 'avant', etc.)
	used present, past and future time frames successfully?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are you present, perfect and near future? have you referred to your childhood / past, using the imperfect? can you replace some near future verbs with ones (will)? did you say what would happen (conditional) / what happened (imperfect tense)?
	if you have used them occasionally, are they in complex structures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> when you have finished, proofread your work for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> spelling articles (un/une/des / le/la/l'/les, etc.) adjective agreements (usually you need to add adjectives and an -s at the end of plurals) add accents where necessary

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ZigZag Practice Exam

Supporting GCSE AQA French: 2024

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Write-on paper

French
Writing



Higher Tier Practice Paper 1

Name

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

The maximum mark for this paper is 50.

Information:

- Answer all questions in the spaces provided.
- In **Section A**, you should answer **question 1**.
- In **Section B** you should answer **either question 2.1 or question 2.2**. Do not answer both questions.
- In **Section C** you should answer **either question 3.1 or question 3.2**. Do not answer both questions.
- Answer all questions in **French**.
- You must not use a dictionary.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets.
- You can write your first draft in the answer book. Clearly cross out everything that should not be marked as part of your answer.

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Section A

Translation into French

1. Translate the following sentences into **French**.

I want to become a Maths teacher.

.....
.....

Having kind friends is essential for me.

.....
.....

After my exams, I will travel abroad with my family.

.....
.....

Last week, I went to the library where I read an interesting book.

.....
.....

My parents have lived in the same house for ten years.

.....
.....

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Section B

Answer **either** Question 2.1 **or** Question 2.2.
Only answer **one** of these questions.

EITHER

2.1 You are emailing your Canadian friend about school.

Write your answer in **French**. It should be approximately **90** words.
You must write at least **one detail** for each bullet point.

Describe:

- the school facilities
- what you did during lunchtime yesterday
- what you will do next week at school

[15 marks]

OR

2.2 You are writing a postcard about your local area.

Write your answer in **French**. It should be approximately **90** words.
You must write at least **one detail** for each bullet point.

Describe:

- what there is to see
- what you did last weekend
- where you live

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Section C

Answer **either** Question 3.1 **or** Question 3.2.
Only answer **one** of these questions.

EITHER

3.1 You are writing a post for a website about positive relationships.
Your post is about friendship.

You must write your answer in **French**, and it should be approximately **150 words**.
Your answer must have information to cover **both bullet points**.

Describe:

- what makes a good friend
- what you will do with your friends in the future

[25 marks]

3.2 You are writing a post for a website about cinema.
Your article is for a website about cinema.

You must write your answer in **English**, and it should be approximately **150 words**.
Your answer must have information to cover **both bullet points**.

Describe:

- the advantages of watching the cinema
- a film you would recommend

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ZigZag Practice Exam

Supporting GCSE AQA French: 2024

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Non-write-on paper

French
Writing



Higher Tier Practice Paper 1

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

The maximum mark for this paper is 50.

Information:

- Answer all questions.
- In **Section A**, you should answer question 1.
- In **Section B** you should answer **either** question 2.1 **or** question 2.2. Do not answer both questions.
- In **Section C** you should answer **either** question 3.1 **or** question 3.2. Do not answer both questions.
- Answer all questions in French.
- You may use a dictionary.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets.
- Clearly cross out everything that should not be marked as part of your answer.



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Section A
Translation into French

1. Translate the following sentences into **French**.

I want to become a Maths teacher.

Having kind friends is essential for me.

After my exams, I will travel abroad with my family.

Last week, I went to the library where I read an interesting book.

My parents have lived in the same house for ten years.



Section B

Answer **either** Question 2.1 **or** Question 2.2. Only answer **one** of them.

EITHER

2.1 You are emailing your Canadian friend about school.

Write your answer in **French**. It should be approximately **90 words**.

You must write at least **one detail** for each bullet point.

Describe:

- the school facilities
- what you did during lunch time yesterday
- what you will do next week at school

[15 marks]



OR

2.2 You are writing a postcard about your local area.

Write your answer in **French**. It should be approximately **90 words**.

You must write at least **one detail** for each bullet point.

Describe:

- what there is to do in your town/village
- what you did last weekend
- where you live

Section C

Answer **either** Question 3.1 **or** Question 3.2. Only answer **one** of them.

EITHER

3.1 You are writing a post for a website about positive relationships.
Your post is about friendship.

You must write your answer in **French**, and it should be approximately **150 words**.
Your answer must have information that covers **both bullet points**.

Describe:

- what makes a good friend
- what you will do with your friends in the future

[25 marks]



OR

3.2 You are writing a postcard about your local area.
Your article is for a website.

You must write your answer in **French**. It should be approximately **150 words**.

Your answer must have information that covers **both bullet points**.

Describe:

- the advantages of living in your town/village
- a film you watched recently

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Preview of Questions Ends Here

This is a limited inspection copy. Sample of questions ends here to avoid students previewing questions before they are set. See contents page for details of the rest of the resource.

Practice Paper 2

Section A

Indicative content:

	Element of original language	Indicative content	Alternative acceptable renderings
1	I use the Internet	J'utilise Internet	utilise l'Internet
2	all the time.	tout le temps.	
3	This weekend,	Ce week-end,	
4	my sister will go	ma sœur ira	ma sœur va aller
5	to Paris by train.	à Paris en train.	
6	In my opinion,	À mon avis,	Selon moi / Je pense que Je trouve que
7	the biggest problem	le plus grand problème	
8	for the planet	pour la planète	
9	is pollution.	est la pollution.	
10	If I have time,	Si j'ai le temps,	
11	I hope to visit	j'espère visiter	j'ai l'intention de / je voudrais / j'aimerais
12	the natural history museum.	le musée d'histoire naturelle.	
13	My friends and I played	Mes ami(e)s et moi (nous) avons joué	Mes copains/copines et moi, on a joué
14	on the football field	sur le terrain de foot	
15	during break time.	pendant la récréation.	à la récré.

Section B

Indicative content for 2.1:

J'adore tous les mariages car je pense que c'est une belle journée pour tout le monde. J'ai dansé toute la nuit. L'année dernière, à mon anniversaire, ma famille et moi sommes allés au restaurant nous avons mangé au restaurant nous avons mangé de la viande avec des frites mais ma mère a mangé végétarienne. C'était très bon ! L'année prochaine, je voudrais passer Noël avec mes amis en Belgique.

Indicative content for 2.2:

Je pense que je suis en bonne santé. Je mange au moins cinq fruits et légumes chaque jour et je fais du sport, comme de la natation. À mon avis, c'est une activité sportive qui est bonne pour la santé. Hier, j'ai mangé du poisson et j'ai bu de l'eau, c'était sain. À l'avenir, j'aimerais essayer de résoudre tous ses problèmes. Hier, j'ai mangé du poisson et j'ai bu de l'eau, c'était sain. À l'avenir, j'aimerais essayer de résoudre tous ses problèmes. Hier, j'ai mangé du poisson et j'ai bu de l'eau, c'était sain. À l'avenir, j'aimerais essayer de résoudre tous ses problèmes.

Section C

Indicative content for 3.1:

À mes yeux, il est essentiel de prendre des vacances car elles aident à se reposer, surtout après avoir travaillé dur au collège. Partir en vacances est aussi une excellente manière de passer du temps avec ses amis. Pourtant, je ne suis pas d'accord avec mon frère qui trouve que les vacances entre amis sont ennuyeuses car qu'elles peuvent être amusantes mais il faut être vraiment sûr(e) de bien connaître les personnes avec qui on va. Les problèmes. L'été dernier, j'ai voyagé en train dans toute l'Europe et je recommande ce mode de transport tellement de choses. Même si les gens avec qui j'ai voyagé étaient très sympa, je n'oublie pas de la France et les vieux châteaux que j'ai visités.

Indicative content for 3.2:

Protéger l'environnement n'est pas seulement un conseil, c'est une nécessité. Selon moi, la pollution de la planète est l'un des plus grands problèmes. À cause de cela, de nombreux animaux sont en danger et nous devons agir immédiatement pour couper un si grand nombre d'arbres. Une chose que tout le monde peut faire est de réduire ses déchets. En séparant le papier et le verre, nous pouvons réduire la pollution des mers, et je vais participer à une manifestation en ville. À l'avenir, je ferai également partie d'une association pour protéger l'environnement et ensemble, nous allons écrire une lettre au président. Quand je serai adulte, je ne compterais pas sur les transports en commun ou je marcherai car je veux absolument améliorer la situation de l'environnement est concerné.

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