

FRENCH (MAURITIUS)

Paper 3014/01
Reading and Usage

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success in this paper, candidates should:

- Read texts and questions thoroughly.
- Ensure that all questions are attempted.
- Provide short, precise and relevant answers aligned with the requirements of the questions.
- Avoid lengthy, irrelevant responses.
- Respect the number of elements/details requested in each question.
- Demonstrate accurate and appropriate use of grammar in the given context.

General comments

The new Cambridge O Level French 3014/01 Reading and Usage paper consists of **five exercises**, each assessing different skills:

- answering a series of questions and sub-questions
- making brief notes under a given heading based on a text
- matching the beginnings and endings of statements summarising ideas in a text
- reading several short paragraphs and matching them to given statements
- completing a cloze passage with multiple-choice options.

These tasks assess candidates' ability to identify and understand factual information, select relevant ideas, opinions and attitudes, recognise implied meaning, grasp the writer's intention or feelings, extract necessary details for a specific purpose, and choose appropriate grammatical structures and vocabulary within context.

Performance in **Exercises 3, 4 and 5** was better than that in **Exercises 1 and 2**. This was because **Questions 3, 4, 5** consisted of multiple-choice items which guides candidates and makes selecting the correct answer easier as compared to **Exercises 1 and 2** where candidates had to produce their answers.

Candidates who performed well clearly understood the questions and identified exactly what information was required. They inferred implied meanings, linked ideas logically and produced complete, meaningful answers. Their responses were focused, avoided unnecessary details, and contained all relevant points. Stronger candidates demonstrated good control of grammar, especially French temporal prepositions (e.g. distinguishing **depuis** from **pendant**, relevant to **Exercise 5 Question 23**), and used accurate vocabulary. Others need to read more carefully, identify the precise demand of each question, and develop stronger comprehension skills to provide coherent, accurate and complete responses. Semantic confusion relating to prepositions indicating duration and timing also impacted on performance.

Comments on specific questions

Candidates must read questions carefully and understand exactly what is being asked in order to give accurate, fully valid answers.

Exercise 1

In general, most candidates performed well in the most straightforward questions in **Exercise 1 – (a), (e), (f) and (g)**. Performance was weaker on the other items due to imprecise answers, addition of irrelevant

material, or omission of essential details. In Question (i) many candidates only identified one of the elements, and some responses were incomplete.

Exercise 2

This text combined factual information and opinions relating to food education and health. Candidates needed to understand vocabulary linked to food, education and health, as well as infer implied meaning – such as recognising that ‘révolution’ refers to a broader transformation in nutrition and student well-being, not merely a change in recipes.

Items 3 and 4 were handled well. Strong responses provided precise, relevant details. Others struggled with vocabulary related to food and lifestyle or repeated similar ideas as separate answers.

Exercise 3

This exercise evaluated detailed comprehension by asking candidates to match sentence beginnings to appropriate endings. Many struggled because several options appeared plausible or contained unfamiliar vocabulary or subtly different meanings, especially in the environmental and tourism contexts. Some candidates’ selected answers are based on keywords rather than full contextual understanding. **Questions 5 to 9** were answered well by candidates. Performance was weaker for Questions 10 to 12. They required candidates to read the text in detail.

Candidates are reminded to write only the **letter** corresponding to their chosen answer and not the answer itself.

Exercise 4

This exercise required precise reading and the ability to match statements to individual testimonies. Candidates often struggled to distinguish between similar themes (e.g. support, career direction, emotional well-being, flexibility). Successful candidates paid close attention to keywords and specific personal details.

Exercise 5

The text reflects a realistic travel scenario with familiar vocabulary but also incorporates complex grammar: relative pronouns, verb tenses, prepositions, pronoun placement and idiomatic expressions. Strong candidates connected ideas logically, interpreted pronouns accurately and demonstrated careful grammatical control. Common difficulties included:

- confusing **depuis/pendant**
- misidentifying correct relative pronouns
- choosing incorrect verb tenses
- misusing **en** vs **y**
- misunderstanding COD/COI distinctions
- confusing **pas** with **aucune**
- misusing idioms such as ‘*les unes que les autres*’.

Only a small number of candidates demonstrated consistent mastery of these grammatical distinctions.

Question 23

Many confused '**depuis**' (ongoing action) with '**pendant**' (completed duration). Those who understood the nuance chose correctly.

Question 24

Many chose '**à qui**', which refers to people, instead of the correct '**auxquels**', which refers to *renseignements*.

Question 25

Most chose correctly: '**menés**.' The past participle agrees with the direct object placed before the verb (*nous*). Greater attention to agreement rules is required.

Question 26

Many recognised the present participle '**voyant**', indicating simultaneous action and cause.

Question 27

Those who understood that 'imparfait' (*allions*) conveys intention selected correctly.

Question 28

Most chose '**alors que**' (simultaneous actions).

Question 29

Candidates who understood that '**en descendre**' means 'to get down **from**' (a truck) chose correctly. '**y**' cannot replace an object introduced by *de*.

Question 30

Many recognised the idiomatic expression '**les unes que les autres**', used for comparative emphasis.

Question 31

Candidates who distinguished **pas** (verbal negation) from **aucune** (negative determiner) chose correctly.

Question 32

Many candidates who understood the difference between direct and indirect object pronouns provided the correct answer.

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Paper 3014/02
Writing

Key messages

The October/November 2025 series mark the introduction of the new syllabus format. This component consists of two writing tasks: an informal email and an argumentative/discursive essay. The overall performance showed a positive upward trend, with more candidates achieving marks in the upper bands. Many demonstrated good engagement with the tasks and attempted a wide range of vocabulary and structures. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in the understanding of tasks requirements and in the accuracy of vocabulary, spelling and grammar. Some candidates displayed a high level of language proficiency but continue to make lexical and spelling errors. Others relied on memorised expressions, which were not appropriate to the tasks and therefore did not enhance communication. It should also be noted that a small percentage of candidates continue to demonstrate very limited language mastery, making it challenging for them to answer the two exam questions. Despite these challenges, the overall trend is positive, and with continued focus on task comprehension, accuracy and purposeful use of language, candidates can make further progress in future sessions.

Candidates are assessed according to three criteria:

- 1 Content/Completion of Task**
- 2 Quality of Language – Linguistic range**
- 3 Quality of Language – Accuracy**

To perform well in this writing component, candidates should:

A Content and Completion of Task

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the task requirements, including purpose, audience and the specific prompts.
- Use the appropriate register, distinguishing between informal communication (email) and formal argumentative writing.
- Organise ideas logically using well-structured paragraphs.
- Use a range of linking devices to connect ideas coherently.

B Quality of Language – Linguistic Range

- Use a varied vocabulary, appropriate to the task type and topic.
- Show control of both basic and more complex grammatical structures.

C Quality of Language – Accuracy

- Apply correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Avoid agreement errors and incorrect verb conjugations.

General comments

This session showed encouraging progress, and many candidates approached the new syllabus with confidence. The best candidates demonstrated several clear strengths across all three assessment criteria. The most successful answers showed good tone control, clear paragraph organisation, and effective communication. These candidates used a varied and appropriate range of vocabulary, handled basic grammatical structures securely and attempted more complex forms with confidence. Accuracy was generally sound, with correct simple punctuation and good control of common verbs and tenses.

Alongside these strengths, some responses highlighted areas where further progress is needed. A number of candidates misunderstood parts of the task, which led to incomplete or occasionally irrelevant answers. Ideas were sometimes insufficiently developed, particularly in the argumentative/discursive essay where points were not fully explained or supported. Many candidates also relied on repetitive vocabulary, limiting the range and impact of their writing. In terms of accuracy, recurring issues included agreement errors, incorrect verb conjugations and frequent spelling or accent mistakes, all which affected clarity.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 – Email

Candidates were required to write an email to a friend describing the arrival of a new student in class. A clear framework was provided to guide them. Candidates should read carefully the stated topic and provide details on each element of the framework. Failure to do so may result in deviating from the topic, thereby preventing them from achieving the highest score for communication.

Content/Completion of the Task

This year, a significant number of candidates performed very well for this essay as they were able to contextualise the situation and relate it to their own experience. The best responses followed the framework closely and provided sufficient details for each part, resulting in clear and effective writing. Most candidates responded well to the task and showed an ability to communicate naturally in an informal register. However, a few recurring issues affected performance:

- **Identification of the new student**
Many candidates gave physical descriptions but did not clearly explain who the student is, which limited the relevance of their response.
- **Reason for changing school**
Development was often minimal. A significant number of candidates simply stated that the student was bullied or « victime de harcèlement » without adding information or detail to support idea.
- **Help provided on the first day**
For some candidates, the help provided was not initiated by them. It was instead upon the request of someone else.
- **Evolution of the relationship**
Many candidates simply stated that they had become « best friends » without elaboration.

Question 2 – Argumentative/Discursive Essay

With the new syllabus, the argumentative essay is compulsory for all candidates. The topic was: « *Conduire une voiture à 16 ans, est-ce une bonne idée ? Exprimez vos opinions sur ce sujet.* » This question proved to be challenging for many candidates. Many candidates struggled to contextualise the question and relied heavily on hypothetical scenarios.

Content/Completion of the Task

Candidates who performed well presented relevant, well-chosen arguments and developed each point clearly, supporting their opinions with appropriate explanations and examples. Some responses offered a list of ideas without development. Although the ideas were relevant, the lack of details meant the work was assessed as adequate rather than strong, as the arguments were not sufficiently justified. However, a large proportion of candidates focused mainly on the illegality of driving at 16 rather than discussing the advantages or disadvantages of the idea itself. Others interpreted the question as learning to drive at 16 in order to obtain the licence at 18. These misunderstandings led to responses that did not fully address the task.

Paragraphing and Use of linking devices

The presentation of essays has improved significantly. Very few candidates write in a single block. Most candidates used simple linking devices such as *et, ou, donc, mais, car* which limited the cohesion and fluency of their writing. The best candidates attempted a wider range of linking devices (*d'abord, ensuite, en outre, en revanche, finalement, pour conclure*).

Quality of Language – Linguistic range

This year, the quality of language has remained similar to that of previous years. Some candidates have made an effort to use a reasonably varied range of vocabulary and sentence structures. These candidates attempted forms such as gerund (« *en lui parlant* »), relative clauses (« *L'élève que j'ai rencontré* »), the subjunctive (« *pour qu'il se sente à l'aise* ») and the conditional tense (« *le jeune pourrait emmener le malade* »), which added depth and fluency to their writing. Their vocabulary choices were generally appropriate to the tasks and some even used expressions such as « *briser la glace* », « *au fil des heures* », that enhanced the overall quality of their work. For many candidates, however, the linguistic range remained limited and relied on simple or compound sentences. There are also candidates whose tone of voice is quite difficult to discern because they write phonetically, with a noticeable influence of Creole in their work (e.g. *son batement était old fashion, il roule brit*). The influence of English is also evident in their written productions (e.g. *bullying, crush*).

To help candidates extend their linguistic range, it would be useful for them to:

- List the vocabulary which they need to complete each task at the planning stage
- Develop confidence in moving beyond simple sentence patterns
- Incorporate more complex linking devices, including conjunctions (*puisque*) and relative pronouns (*qui, que, dont*) to produce sentences of varying length and enhance their chances of achieving marks in the top bands.

Quality of Language – Accuracy

The best candidates showed good grammatical control with generally accurate use of common structures. Their writing demonstrated careful attention to spelling, gender and number agreements, basic verb forms and punctuation, which contributed to clear and effective communication.

For many candidates, however, accuracy remained a significant area for improvement. The most common errors included:

- Incorrect verb conjugation (e.g. *ils conduissent vite*)
- Wrong tense (e.g. *la semaine dernière un nouvel élève était venu dans ma classe*)
- Gender and number agreement errors, especially with adjectives (e.g. *un nouveau élève, nous sommes inséparable, ton amie préféré*)
- Incorrect or missing prepositions after certain verbs or expressions (e.g. *elle est impatiente pour te rencontrer*)
- Omission of *ne* in negative constructions (e.g. *il faut pas oublier*)
- Incorrect use of pronouns (e.g. *je l'ai parlé*)
- Misplaced adverbs and other structural inaccuracies (e.g. *j'ai aussi lui montré ta photo, causer leurs résultats de baisser, je te manque*)
- Accent errors and general spelling mistakes (e.g. *amitier, independence*)
- Writing that reflected phonetical rendering rather than grammatical accuracy (e.g. *ont la aider*)

Conclusion

This session showed that many candidates were able to address the tasks with clear ideas, basic grammatical control and generally accurate language use. Weaker responses often showed misunderstanding of the task, limited development of ideas, repetitive vocabulary and frequent grammatical errors.

For future sessions, candidates are encouraged to:

- Read task instructions carefully to ensure full completion.
- Develop ideas with explanations and examples.
- Broaden their vocabulary and use more varied structures.
- Strengthen grammatical accuracy especially verb forms and agreements.
- Proofread their work to correct spelling and accents.

Improving these areas will help candidates produce clearer, more accurate and more effective written responses in future examinations.