
BACCALAURÉAT FRANÇAIS INTERNATIONAL (BFI)

**The international version of the French
*Baccalauréat***

Examinations Handbook for the British BFI (*Parcours Bilingue*) 2024 edition

See Appendix 5 for *Parcours Trilingue*

**Administered by Cambridge Assessment International Education
in cooperation with the *Ministère de L'Éducation Nationale***

This Handbook applies to the examinations to be held in Summer 2024

There has been a large number of significant updates to this Handbook.



FOREWORD AND FURTHER INFORMATION

This introduction to the British version of the international version of the French *baccalauréat*, the *Baccalauréat Français International* (BFI), is intended to provide information for teachers, examiners and inspectors, for students and their parents, and for admissions officers in institutions of higher education.

- University admissions officers may wish to read chapter 3 as well as the preceding chapters. The UCAS website and Qualification Information Profile (<https://bit.ly/45NY2bv>) offers a concise description of the BFI. This Handbook provides complementary information.
- More detailed information about the individual subjects that form the BFI can be found in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 for English Literature, Language & Culture (LVA), and in chapters 10 and 11 for History-Geography. See Appendix 4 for *Connaissance du Monde* and Appendix 5 for English Literature, Language and Culture in LVB English (*Parcours Trilingue*).
- General information about administering and marking the examination is to be found in chapters 4 and 5.

The convention of italicising French words has been employed: these are used in the text where translation is inappropriate. The French term *baccalauréat* is used throughout to avoid any confusion with other examinations, such as the International Baccalaureate or the European Baccalaureate which have no connection with the French national examination. Reference is made to French conventions for naming classes: *1ère* is equivalent to British year 12 or lower sixth, *terminale* to British year 13 or upper sixth.

Abbreviations used in this handbook and useful websites

Readers may wish to consult the following websites in connection with the BFI, the French *baccalauréat* and Cambridge Assessment International Education. This list also provides a key for abbreviations used throughout this handbook:

- Cambridge Assessment International Education: www.cambridgeinternational.org
- The site of the French *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale*: www.education.gouv.fr
- Direction des relations européennes et internationales et de la coopération (DREIC) : <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid1181/direction-des-relations-europeennes-et-internationales-et-de-la-cooperation.html>
- Direction générale de l'enseignement scolaire (DGESCO) https://lannuaire.service-public.fr/gouvernement/administration-centrale-ou-ministere_171987
- *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* pages on international sections and the BFI: <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid45720/examens-et-diplomes.html>
http://cache.media.eduscol.education.fr/file/Europe_et_international/82/4/2015_juillet_brochure_e_nsc0_HDEF_504824.pdf
- The site of *France Education International* (formerly the CIEP) www.ciep.fr
- The site of the *Service Interacadémique des Examens et Concours* (SIEC) www.siec.education.fr
- The UCAS website: www.ucas.com
- *The ASIBA site* (Association des Sections Internationales Britanniques et Anglophones): <http://www.asiba.fr>
- The AEFÉ site (Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger): <http://www.aefe.fr/>

This handbook is updated annually. All suggestions for additions and amendments should be made directly to ASIBA (contact@asiba.fr).

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS WISHING TO PREPARE CANDIDATES FOR THE BFI (British version)

Only schools approved by the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* may undertake the *Baccalauréat Français International* (BFI). Schools wishing to prepare candidates for the British BFI must in all cases contact the DREIC (the department responsible for BFI within the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale*) as well as ASIBA to request their approval.

DREIC (Direction des Relations Européennes et Internationales et de la Coopération)

Monsieur Emmanuel de Tournemire

[Chef du département de l'internationalisation et de la valorisation du système scolaire \(DIVSS\)](#)

DREIC

110, rue de Grenelle

75357 PARIS

Tel. + 33 1 55 55 05 88

emmanuel.de-tournemire@education.gouv.fr

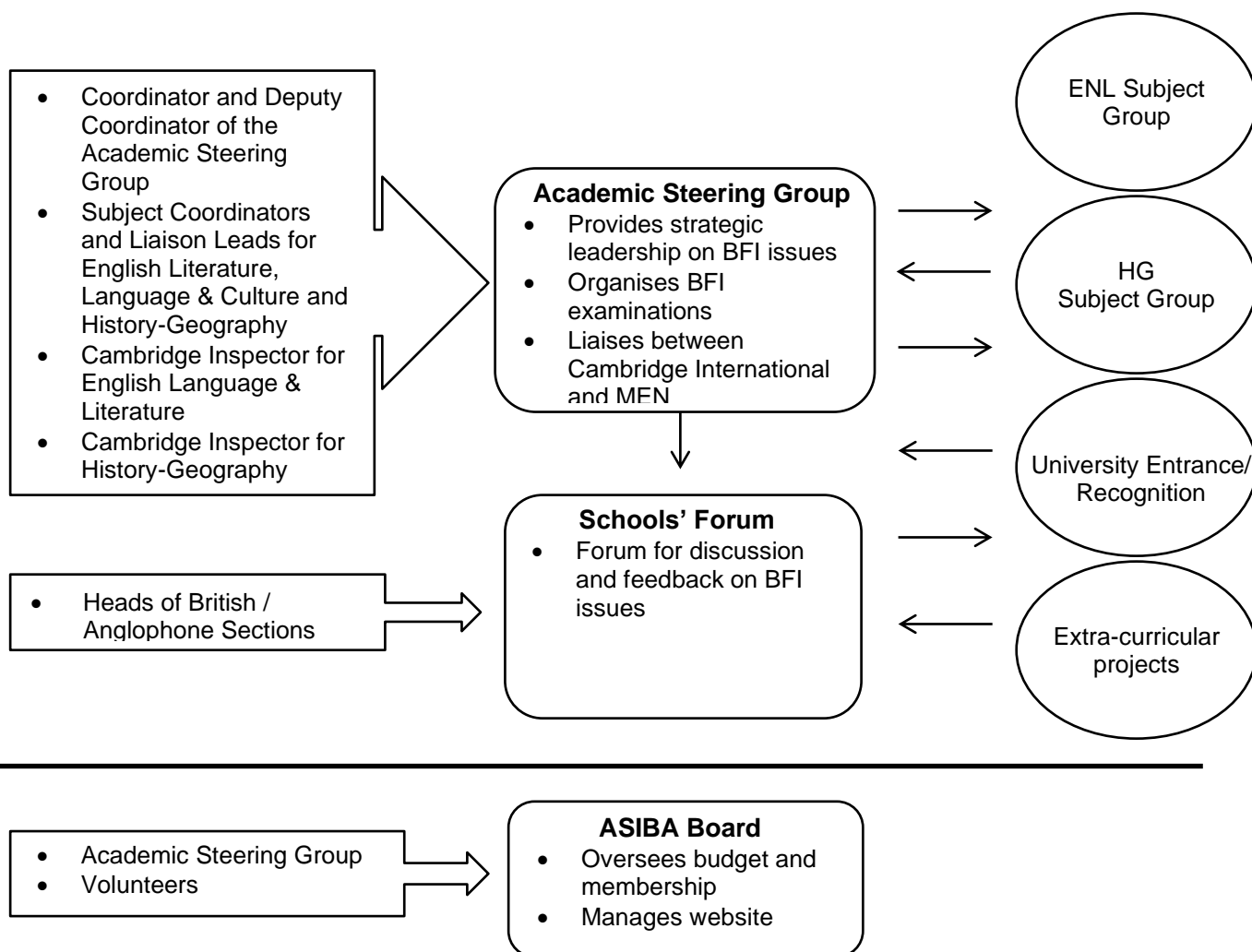
Under the aegis of ASIBA, a number of teachers carry out administrative functions for the British BFI. For descriptions of these roles, please see section 4.2. Currently these are as follows:

James Cathcart (British Section, Lycée International de Saint-Germain-en-Laye) jcathcart@britishsection.fr	President and Coordinator of the Academic Steering Group
Shaun Corrigan (Section Anglophone de Fontainebleau) head@anglosection.com	Deputy Coordinator of the Academic Steering Group
Nicola Hill (Anglophone Section, Cité Scolaire Internationale, Lyon) nhill@csianglo.org and Nicola Nield (Collège-Lycée Sainte Anne, Brest) nield@sainte-anne-brest.net	Subject Leaders, English Literature, Language and Culture
Matthew Tomlinson (British Section, Lycée International de Saint-Germain-en-Laye) mtomlinson@britishsection.fr and Nina Lister (British Section, Lycée Général er Technologique International Victor Hugo) liester_n@english31.org	Subject Leaders, History-Geography
Alan Geary (Anglophone Section, Cité Scolaire Internationale, Lyon) mailto:ageary@csianglo.org	Liaison Lead for Oral Examination Centres outside France
Sandrine Hurst (British Section, Lycée International de Saint-Germain-en-Laye) contact@asiba.fr	ASIBA Administrative Coordinator and Technical Support

ROLES

Cambridge International designates the *Association des Sections Internationales Britanniques et Anglophones* (ASIBA) as the official interlocutor on their behalf for the British version of the *Baccalauréat Français International* (BFI). ASIBA plays an important role in supporting the British BFI and in liaising with the various departments of the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* on behalf of Cambridge Assessment International Education. Matters relating to policy and the administration of the assessments provided by Cambridge International must be approved by Cambridge International.

The organisation of ASIBA:



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PART I: INTRODUCTION

The *Baccalauréat Français International* (BFI) is a recent iteration of the *Option Internationale du Baccalauréat* (OIB) established in 1981 by the French government in response to the growing demand for more widespread bilingual education and in recognition of a need to make additional provision for foreign nationals and bilingual families living in France. Like its predecessor, the BFI is a special version of the French *Baccalauréat Général* taken by students enrolled in an 'international section' in *lycées* in France and abroad (as part of the AEFÉ network). The UCAS Qualification Information Profile for the BFI can be found at: <https://bit.ly/45NY2bv>

Candidates for the British version of the BFI (*Parcours Bilingue*) study three subjects in English in addition to the full curriculum of the Baccalauréat Général: English Literature, Language and Culture, History-Geography and *Connaissance du Monde* (Global Issues). Cambridge Assessment International Education provides quality assurance to align the examinations of English Literature, Language and Culture and History-Geography to the UK A Level.

For information about the BFI *Parcours Trilingue*, please refer to Appendix 5.

2. THE BFI (*Parcours Bilingue*)

2.1 The origins of the BFI

In 1981, the French government, responding to a growing demand among parents for more widespread bilingual education, and recognising a need to make additional provision for foreign nationals studying in France, proposed that specially designed 'international sections' be created to prepare students for an international version of the French *Baccalauréat Général*, to be known as the *Option Internationale du Baccalauréat* or "OIB". A number of foreign governments agreed to take part in the setting up of this structure, among them those of (what was then West) Germany, Italy, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the USA. In most of these countries, the relevant ministry of education took responsibility for creating and administering the OIB, the final examination towards which students in these international sections directed their studies. In the case of the UK, the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) was asked to set up and run the British option. UCLES, which had no financial interest in the examination, was chosen because of its considerable experience in A Level syllabus creation and examination and its long history of international examining. UCLES is now called Cambridge University Press and Assessment and the division which administers the British BFI is Cambridge Assessment International Education. Their role is to provide quality assurance for the BFI.

The British international sections were to be staffed by English-speaking teachers and were to offer tuition in English and in History-Geography for six to eight hours per week. All other subjects were to be taught in French in the normal way. One important purpose of introducing these sections was to ensure that foreign nationals who wished to do so would be in a position to return to their countries of origin for higher education. Another was to offer to French nationals who had a very good practical mastery of a foreign language the right to study using this language as a vehicle for learning, alongside foreign nationals for whom it was a mother tongue. These objectives still hold good.

The French government insisted that the OIB should possess three important characteristics.

1 It would have the same status and validity as all the other parts of the *baccalauréat général*, and thus contribute significantly to the candidate's overall marks.

2 The two principal subjects making up the OIB would obey the *principe de substitution*; that is, they would replace other subjects within the *baccalauréat* teaching and examination structure, rather than being added on to that structure. The OIB English Literature, Language & Culture papers replace the first foreign language and the OIB History-Geography papers replace the normal, purely French, *histoire-géographie* examination;

3 The subjects included in the OIB would be taught and examined by foreign nationals who are native speakers, to a standard comparable to that of the equivalent examination in the 'home' country. With the recent growth of international sections within the French state system, French teachers with a high level of English competence and mastery have joined the pool of teachers who are native speakers.

France was the first country to integrate syllabuses devised with foreign partners into its national system of university entrance level examinations. The result is a well-balanced academic qualification upon which a challenging curriculum for bilingual students is based. The examination structure also fosters international communication and understanding in an area where cooperation does not often – and not easily – exist.

The OIB was replaced by the *Baccalauréat Français International* or "BFI" in 2024. In addition to English Language and Literature (renamed as English Literature, Language and Culture) and History-Geography, a new component, *Connaissance du Monde*, was added to the subjects taught and assessed in English.

As part of the effort to promote plurilingualism in French schools, the French Ministry of Education also made it possible for students in other international sections who are studying English as their second foreign language to take the British English Literature, Language and Culture exams in replacement of their own section's Literature exams. For information about this, the BFI *Parcours Trilingue*, please refer to Appendix 5.

2.2 The three subjects taught and assessed in English

Students preparing the BFI (*Parcours Bilingue*) study three subjects in First Language English: English Literature, Language & Culture, History-Geography and *Connaissance du Monde* (Global Issues). English Literature, Language & Culture and History-Geography have second year A level equivalence within the British A Level system. Detailed information about the two subject syllabuses can be found in chapters 6 and 10 of this Handbook and, for *Connaissance du Monde*, on the ASIBA website (<https://www.asiba.fr/asiba-bfi-connaissance-monde/>) and Eduscol: <https://eduscol.education.fr/3043/baccalaureat-francais-international-bfi>. More information about the assessment of *Connaissance du Monde* can be found in Appendix 4.

2.3 How are BFI subjects examined?

At the end of the course, candidates sit a four-hour written examination as well as an oral exam in English Literature, Language & Culture and History-Geography. In English Literature, Language & Culture, students are tested on work done over a 2-year period; in History-Geography, material studied in the final year (*terminale*) is examined. *Connaissance du Monde* is assessed in a single oral examination (see Appendix 4).

2.4 Grading system

All students achieve an overall score out of 20 for their *Baccalauréat* – this includes fractions.

A Pass (*Passable/Sans mention*) requires an average of 10 points or more.

In addition, honours grades (*mentions*) are awarded on the basis of the average point score achieved:

- *Tres bien* (Distinction) = average of 16 or more points
- *Bien* (Merit) = average of 14 points or more but fewer than 16
- *Assez bien* = average of 12 points or more but fewer than 14

In practice, the top mark-band (16–20) is awarded to a small percentage of candidates. In 2019, for example, 11.7% of all *Baccalauréat Général* candidates in France achieved a *mention très bien* (an overall average mark of 16/20 or better)¹, while 12.3% of A level candidates in England achieved 3 A*/A grades or better.²

Note also that 16/20 in an individual subject within the *Baccalauréat* is given the same UCAS tariff as a grade A* at A Level and that 15/20 is rated as equivalent to a grade A at A Level.

2.5 The jury and *baccalauréat* results

All results are delivered by regional *jurys*. This is a final deliberation and review of marks to ensure consistency and fairness. The *jury* for each group of schools is chaired by a president appointed by the *rectorat* (the regional educational authority) and is made up of the examiners of the candidates being considered.

Very often, candidates' marks fall comfortably within one or other of the categories of *mentions*, and these results are confirmed formally by the *jury*. However, in cases where a candidate's marks are just below a higher *mention*, or just below the minimum pass mark for the *baccalauréat* as a whole, the president of the jury will review the marks given by examiners so as to award the candidate the *baccalauréat* or the *mention* if appropriate. The candidate's *livret scolaire* may be consulted; this contains a record of the student's work, average marks for the year, and teachers' comments for the final years of *lycée* education. A candidate's written paper may also be reconsidered during the course of the *jury*. Examiners present at the *jury* may be asked if they are willing to allow the candidate extra points. They do not have to agree - it may be that they feel the candidate has already been given the benefit of every doubt. Often, however, the *jury*

¹ Note d'information - N°19.28 - juillet 2019: <https://www.education.gouv.fr/cid132806/le-baccalaureat-2018-session-de-juin.html>

²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/840413/2019_provisional_A_level_and_other16-18_results_in_Englandv2.pdf

considers awarding the marks that borderline candidates would need, for their results to go up, unless what is read in the *livret scolaire* about work and commitment leads them to feel that this would be unjustified. Cambridge Assessment International Education accepts the sovereignty of the *jury* regarding BFI marks.

Under the baccalaureate reform, students are no longer able to choose BFI subjects for *rattrapage* orals.

3. COMPARISON WITH 'A' LEVEL FOR UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS

UCAS has published a Qualification Information Profile (QIP) for the BFI which can be found at: <https://bit.ly/45NY2bv>

In particular, please note: for UK HE admissions purposes, the BFI is regarded as comparable in programme size with four A levels hence given a combined multiplier of 16. In addition, linguistic performance in the British version of the BFI is assessed following expectations of first language usage of academic English, with an expected level of at least C1.

3.1 Preliminary considerations

Simple comparison between A Level and the French *baccalauréat* (with or without the BFI) is difficult. The former lays stress on specialisation, while the *baccalauréat* embodies the ideal of a broad curriculum. In addition, BFI candidates are not just highly fluent in at least two languages: every day they face the demanding task of working to native-speaking standard in those languages and balancing, from one hour to the next, the languages and perspectives of two cultures. This bicultural dimension is a key distinctive feature of the BFI and the International Sections that prepare students for it. Candidates have a heavier workload than most *baccalauréat* candidates. They forgo the high mark that they would almost certainly have achieved if they took the ordinary *baccalauréat* foreign language (LVA) English examination. The qualities of flexibility, resilience, tolerance and independence they develop make them more than usually well prepared for the challenges of university study.

3.2 British university offers

Most BFI students have little difficulty entering British universities: Admissions Officers generally recognise the distinctive strengths they bring to an academic community. BFI candidates are well prepared for higher education in the UK: they have experienced a British style of pedagogy with a particular emphasis on dialogue, critical thinking and analysis, and developed a British approach to extended academic writing in English.

Making comparisons with A Level

It is possible for admissions tutors to 'translate' A Level grade combinations into BFI terms. These comparisons are based mainly on equating the achievements of the two national cohorts in their final examinations.

The table below, taken from Manchester University's website, represents typical grade equivalencies between A level grade requirements and French Baccalauréat and BFI overall grade requirements:

UK GCE Advanced A Level Grades	French <i>Baccalauréat Général</i>	<i>Baccalauréat Français International</i> (BFI)
A*AA	16	15
AAA	15	14
AAB	14	13
ABB	13	12

<https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/international/country-specific-information/france/entry-requirements/>

How should BFI entrance requirements be expressed?

- Either an overall mark out of 20 (e.g. 13/20)
- Or, if appropriate, an overall mark out of 20 together with a specified mark level in a relevant subject (e.g. 13/20 with 13/20 in Mathematics for an Engineering applicant).

In setting offers, it should be remembered that high marks in the Baccalauréat are rare. For example, in 2019, 11.7% of all *Baccalauréat Général* candidates in France achieved a *mention très bien* (an overall average mark of 16/20 or better)³, while 12.3% of A level candidates in England achieved 3 A*/A grades

³ Note d'information - N°19.28 - juillet 2019: <https://www.education.gouv.fr/cid132806/le-baccalaureat-2018-session-de-juin.html>

or better⁴.

Note also that 16/20 in an individual subject within the Baccalauréat is given the same UCAS tariff as a grade A* at A Level and that 15/20 is rated as equivalent to a grade A at A Level (see: https://www.asiba.fr/university-admissions_-2/).

University Admissions Officers often consider candidates' results in relevant individual subjects as well as the overall *baccalauréat* result or *mention* as the basis for offers. For example, an offer level of AAA at A level might be expressed in BFI terms as a mark of 14/20 overall with 14/20 in one or two subjects relevant to the candidate's proposed university course. This approach is particularly useful in setting offers for courses requiring the A* grade at A level, and thus seeking excellence in specific subjects in addition to strong overall achievement. In their BFI offers for such courses, universities might demand an overall mark of 15 while requiring marks of 15 or 16 in the specific subject(s) for which the A* grade might be expected.

Predicted grades

Since high marks are rare, predicted grades within the French Baccalauréat tend to be conservative. It should be noted that many schools are reluctant to predict an overall mark in the BFI above 16 – partly because it represents the highest recognised 'grade', the *Mention Très Bien*, and partly because of the difficulty of predicting reliably above this point.

The BFI as proof of English Language competence

The British version of the BFI is widely taken by British universities as proof of English language competence, without the need for further proficiency tests. The linguistic demands of the English and History-Geography examinations focus on the **academic use of English**; this makes them an appropriate preparation for university study in any subject. Expected levels of language use for successful candidates are considered to be at to C1 or C2 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), or 'academically accomplished native speaker/writer'.

3.3 After admission to British university

Because BFI candidates have studied at least five academic subjects to examination level, they may have more difficulty than A Level students in making a choice of UK university courses. It is possible that the relatively unaccustomed academic freedom they will enjoy at a UK university will mean they will need a period of adaptation to a different way of working.

That said, these fully bilingual students are nonetheless likely to prove excellent prospects for British universities. They have something special to offer any department in cultural terms, and they have the advantage of having received a broad education.

In addition, the *baccalauréat* maintains a tradition of displaying knowledge, understanding and higher-order skills such as analysis and interpretation via extended essays. In English Literature, Language & Culture (*Parcours Bilingue*), there are three one-hour and 20-minute essays, and in History-Geography, each structured question includes a requirement for an extended essay of approximately one and a quarter hours.

⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/840413/2019_provisional_A_level_and_other16-18_results_in_Englandv2.pdf

4. ADMINISTERING THE BRITISH VERSION OF THE BFI

4.1 Roles and responsibilities of the Cambridge Inspectors for English Literature, Language & Culture and History-Geography

Two Cambridge Inspectors, one for English Literature, Language & Culture and another for History-Geography, are appointed as consultants by Cambridge Assessment International Education to carry out the tasks as described in this Handbook. Their roles are unusual in combining several functions normally (within UK examinations) carried out by different personnel – those of chief examiner (setting papers and coordinating the work of the written and oral examiners; producing reports), and of principal moderator (sampling scripts and orals to ensure that standards are being maintained and that marking is consistent) and subject officer (ensuring that marks are accurately and appropriately transcribed, entered and communicated to relevant authorities).

An important limitation of their role is that, although they liaise with their counterpart Inspectors in the French *Ministère*, as consultants (not as staff members), they cannot speak for Cambridge Assessment International Education on any questions of BFI policy or administration beyond their immediate brief, unless asked or given permission by Cambridge International to do so.

An increasingly important role of the Inspectors is to liaise with the Subject Leaders over training, both of new teachers and of those with experience. It is essential that teachers in the BFI community are aware of any change in examination culture in the UK and of the need for the BFI to reflect, where appropriate, these changes. This can lead to significant modifications both to syllabus and assessment in both BFI subjects and to important changes in pedagogy within the schools that teach the BFI. Bi-annual BFI training sessions address these issues as well as written and oral examining procedures and assessment standards.

An *inspecteur général* (or an inspector of similar status) is designated each year by the French authorities and the Subject Inspectors work with their French counterparts on aspects of the examination including setting written papers.

4.2 The schools' administrative arrangements

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

All the sections preparing the British BFI cooperate in the running of the examination and all that is needed to underpin this. Meetings held in the autumn are designed to bring teachers together for the purposes of training and for the development of both the syllabuses and the examination.

The Schools' Chair and Deputy Schools' Chair with the two Subject Leaders and Cambridge Inspectors make up the BFI Steering Group. This group meets together via videoconference or face-to-face on a regular basis. It works together to supervise the planning, organisation, review and development of the examination (including the deployment of teacher-examiners across the various centres). The group also organises the annual meetings of BFI teachers and the Schools Forum (to which heads of BFI sections are invited), and engages in strategic forward planning. The Steering Group is an *ex-officio* part of the ASIBA board. It is responsible for liaison with British and French authorities. It also liaises with new schools wishing to prepare and sit this examination.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is responsible for strategic review and development of the examination via the Annual Review Meeting as well as for the editing, updating and publication of this Handbook, working with the Inspectors and the Steering Group, who propose new material and modifications.

Secretaries appointed for each annual meeting of teachers provide minutes for these under the guidance of the member of the Steering Group chairing the meeting. Subject Leaders work closely with the Subject Inspectors appointed by Cambridge International and, of course, with the Steering Group and with BFI teachers in their respective subjects.

The Subject Leaders propose to the Steering Group the schedule of oral and written teacher-examiners from among a list of teachers nominated by schools.

Schools are required to nominate as an examiner any teacher who teaches an BFI group in either subject in *1ère* or *Terminale*. It is important that all such teachers are nominated, so as to ensure that as many examiners as possible are put at the disposal of Subject Leaders.

Schools outside France are required to designate a contact person. It is the responsibility of this contact person to liaise with the Liaison Lead for Oral Examination Centres outside France and inform them of the dates of BFI written and oral examinations. Equally, the contact person should inform the Cambridge inspectors, via the Subject Coordinator, of the examination paper used on the day of the examination by sending a scan of each question paper as soon as possible after the examination has started.

All important candidate data and information is recorded on ASIBA's secure online database by heads of section (see **APPENDIX 1**). All requests for information and other communications are sent via the ASIBA Schoolpost email system: BFI heads of section and other staff must make sure they can receive these emails at the start of the school year, and open and return attachments. **Prompt return of requested data is essential; a deadline is always given and must be respected.**

The details of all ASIBA Teacher-Examiners are also recorded on the ASIBA database. Teacher-Examiners update their details online in September/October each year and they can indicate if they have any preferences or constraints for the following examination session. This information is then transferred to the Subject Coordinators so they can draw up the examiner grids.

Teacher-examiners mark the written papers, which are moderated by the Inspectors. They also conduct, in pairs, the oral examinations. Some teacher-examiners may volunteer or be asked to take both written and oral examining duties. The teacher-examiner schedule also names teachers who are appointed, with the Inspectors' approval, as Assistant Moderators (see section 5.4).

Candidates sit the written BFI examinations at their own schools, except in special circumstances. Oral examining takes place at centres which may group candidates from several schools, which are designated by the MPE DGESCO.

A single nationwide system of deploying examiners is used for written and oral examiners. The planning of all oral exams is carried out by the Schools' Chair and a single plan, approved by Cambridge International, is sent to all concerned including teacher-examiners, *Provisseurs*, Heads of Oral Examination Centres, Cambridge Inspectors, the SIEC and the DGESCO. Teachers conduct oral examinations of candidates from another school either in their own school (if it is an BFI oral examination centre) or in another school. Many candidates and examiners have to travel to and arrange accommodation at examination centres. There may be other French entrance examinations during the same period as the BFI orals. Because of these factors the tightly co-ordinated national schedule must be respected by all involved. This allows all examiners and Assistant Moderators to do their work and to travel, if necessary, to other centres, to complete their mission.

The BFI oral examination centres are each the responsibility of the head of the BFI section and/or *Provisseur* adjoint in that school, known as the Head of BFI Oral Examination Centre. Many duties attached to this role are carried out within the oral examination period in June, but preparatory liaison work with school administrators must take place well before this.

4.3 Responsibilities of Heads of BFI Written and Oral Examination Centres

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

BFI Written and Oral Examination Centres may be run by a Head of Section or a member of the French administration e.g. the *Proviseur adjoint*.

On the days of the written exams, Heads of BFI Written Examination Centres are responsible for:

1. Checking for communications from ASIBA.
2. Checking the question paper for printing errors and anomalies before the start of each exam. If errors or anomalies are found, these should be communicated immediately to the Schools' Chair by telephone. The examination should be conducted as normal unless instructed otherwise by the ASIBA or the Cambridge Inspector(s).

When teacher-examiners receive notice of the centre(s) in which they will be examining, they contact the Head of the BFI Oral Examination giving their contact details (email and mobile phone number).

A key responsibility of Heads of BFI Oral Examination Centres is to work with all involved in the examining process to ensure that all candidates experience the same examination conditions, and are examined according to the same standards, as laid down by Cambridge International in this Handbook. In practice, this means:

1. Contacting teacher-examiners examining in the Centre to provide them with information about the Centre, accommodation etc.
2. Making available an examination room with a computer equipped with multidirectional microphone and preferably camera connected to a reliable internet network to enable remote moderation and/or the possibility of deploying the Contingency Oral Examination Protocol (see appendix B) should one of the examiners be unable to attend (e.g. due to industrial action, pandemic etc.).
3. Ensuring that examiners are equipped with and follow all written guidance on conduct of the exams, including this Handbook, its assessment criteria, and guidance on marking, and any special instructions on assessment and procedures, etc.
4. Taking action to inform BFI Subject Inspectors (liaising with Assistant Moderators if and when they are present), if the BFI Handbook and other guidance is not applied or consulted as necessary.
5. Ensuring that all assessment and reporting documentation is properly filled in, in accordance with this Handbook and other guidance which is sent by Inspectors, Subject Leaders or the Schools' Chair.
6. Taking any other actions necessary to safeguard and guarantee the equality of all candidates before the oral exam and the high quality, based on agreed standards and training, of BFI oral examining; consulting the Subject Inspector as necessary if any doubt subsists about the best course of action.

Other organisational and logistical responsibilities include:

- Establishing and providing to the Schools' Chair as rapidly as possible and in reliable form all key dates applying to the Centre, including deadlines for the submission of marks to the *rectorat* and *jury* dates. (Because of the decentralised system based on *académies*, these may be established locally and vary from region to region);
- Ensuring that all administrators in the BFI oral Centre understand and accept the fact that BFI orals are organised within a single national system, all aspects of which must be respected;
- Opening the school for all days on which BFI orals are scheduled to take place, including Saturdays;
- Devising and publishing timetables for oral examinations both for candidates and for teacher-examiners which respect the national plan communicated by ASIBA (avoiding, for candidates, potential examination clashes with other orals and taking account of teacher-examiners' duties at other Centres, as Assistant Moderators and/or as written markers); issuing accurate and individual *convocations* to BFI candidates following the agreed format;
- arranging adequate rooming of oral examinations and dealing with all practical aspects of the setting up of examinations (according to the instructions in this Handbook and following any recommendations from Inspectors);
- co-ordinating the accommodation arrangements of teacher-examiners and Inspectors (see also below) and ensuring that information on hotels etc. is disseminated to all who will use the Centre, including candidates, in good time;
- arranging supervision of preparation rooms and checking the identity of candidates within those rooms;

- ensuring the provision of the personnel necessary for the welcoming, direction and supervision of candidates;
- dealing with hospitality/'housekeeping' arrangements for all those who will use the school site during the examination period;
- ensuring that oral marks and other data can be processed and sent off quickly, efficiently and securely by electronic means after scanning;
- ensuring that all means of communication are readily and easily available for use;
- dealing with situations that arise if a candidate is late for, or unavoidably absent from, a scheduled oral in accordance with the directions of this Handbook;
- planning and organising oral examination arrangements, as required, for the (few) candidates who could not sit the *baccalauréat* and are permitted by the French authorities to take it in the replacement session in September;
- arranging for the provisional marks established by oral examiners on the *fiches d'évaluation* to be scanned and sent to the Cambridge Inspectors via the Schools' Chair at the end of each day of examining or as requested;
- arranging for the timely submission of final marks approved by the Cambridge Inspectors to the appropriate authorities;
- completing and submitting any other official documentation such as *bordereaux* once the final marks have been confirmed by the Cambridge Inspectors.

Given the importance of long-distance as well as local communications, the provision of secure, confidential, efficient and reliable means for the sending and receipt (where relevant) of marks, marks-sheets, reports, etc. is of prime importance. Where oral examining in the Centre (or in other Centres that must send or receive marks) is to take place at a time when the *lycée* is normally shut – such as at the weekend – the opening of the school and provision of facilities (including electronic facilities for scanning and communication of mark sheets and *fiches*) by the school must be secured well in advance of the examination session.

If the Head of BFI Oral Examination Centre is in charge of a centre that will be visited by a Cambridge Inspector or an Assistant Moderator, he or she must ensure that transport, accommodation and work-space arrangements are available and of a suitable standard.

4.4 Security of provisional oral marks: the responsibility of the Head of the BFI Centre

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

It is very important that the Head of BFI Oral Examination Centre **ensures that all BFI marks which are submitted to and processed by the Centre remain totally confidential**. The sheets (*fiches d'évaluation*) used for recording provisional oral marks and examiners' comments must be stored securely between sessions and across breaks. Once they are completed by examiners, these sheets must be seen only by the Head of Centre and any administrative staff involved in their sending or receipt. These persons must be briefed on and fully accept the confidential nature of all marks. It should be noted that the *fiches d'évaluation* have the status of an exam script, and that the only official version is the one validated by the Cambridge Inspector. More details follow below. Oral as well as written marks for candidates are only finalised and may only be communicated by the *baccalauréat* jury.

Any infringement of the rule of confidentiality within the BFI Oral Examination Centre should be reported to the Schools' Chair. In particular, it is essential that marks awarded for a candidate or group of candidates are not released 'unofficially' – deliberately or by accident – to teachers, who may be present in the BFI Oral Examination Centre at the time of oral examination and/or at the time of the processing of the marks. **The processing, transcription and storage of marks must be conducted with due and careful regard for confidentiality at all times.**

The Head of the BFI Oral Examination Centre may be required to attend the *baccalauréat* jury in order to check that the marks for two BFI subjects have been correctly entered.

It is not possible to ensure that all those who are in charge of the British BFI sections within schools acting as BFI Oral Examinations Centres will not themselves have teacher-examiner duties. Where the person

who would normally act as the Head of the BFI Oral Examination Centre is to be absent for all (or part) of the examining session, he/she must delegate (and give instructions and briefing) to a person who is to discharge these responsibilities during the period of his/her absence. This person should be chosen and his/her name communicated to the Schools' Chair as far as possible in advance of the BFI oral examinations session.

4.5 Coordination among schools

Meetings of teachers in each of the two BFI subjects are held annually in the autumn in Sèvres or, where necessary, online. A number of important discussions and decisions, as well as training, take place at these meetings. Teacher-examiners are sent a formal convocation by France Education International to attend these annual subject meetings.

The Subject Leaders are in charge of arranging the annual subject meetings, negotiating dates and accommodation with France Education International, drawing up the agenda and preparing detailed reports of proceedings, decisions and suggestions. The Cambridge Inspector is present. Among the matters discussed at the meetings are important issues such as syllabus content and changes to this, as well as examining practices and procedures. Assessment standards and assessment standardisation exercises, as well as the induction of new teacher-examiners and the systematic training of all teacher-examiners are treated as priorities. Administrative procedures and logistics are also discussed. The meetings provide a forum for brief focused discussion of the Cambridge Inspector's report on the preceding examination session. Significant amounts of time at these meetings are devoted to in-service training of new and existing teacher-examiners. Relevant French authorities (in particular, *Inspecteurs* in the relevant subjects) are invited. Each meeting nominates a secretary. Minutes are sent to the Schools' Chair and to the Cambridge Inspectors. Any suggestions for substantive changes to format, syllabus, procedures or administration arising from these subject meetings appear on the agenda of the Cambridge International Review Meeting and the Schools' Forum meeting in November or December.

The Annual Review Meeting is organised and hosted by Cambridge International. It is attended by Cambridge personnel, the Cambridge Inspectors, and the BFI Steering Group. The agenda, drawn up by Cambridge Assessment International Education after appropriate consultation, covers a review of the recent BFI session and all matters related to the strategic review and development of the British version of the BFI.

The Heads of Section have responsibility for coordinating all British Section teaching within their *lycée*, or in the case of privately funded Sections, have responsibilities very much like those of a British head teacher for all aspects of the running of their section.

All Heads of Section are invited to the ASIBA Schools Forum which is chaired by the Schools' Chair, who works with the BFI Steering Group and with all those invited to ensure that the agenda addresses a wide range of relevant educational issues as well as matters regarding the review and development of the BFI examination. Guest speakers and those with special expertise to offer on agenda items may be invited to attend. The minutes of this meeting are taken by a secretary appointed by the chair and are forwarded to Cambridge International and the Cambridge Inspectors.

Oral training meetings for teacher-examiners are held in the spring term. For Language-Literature, training takes place at the Lycée International in St. Germain-en-Laye. For History-Geography, there may be more than one venue and the venues can change from year to year. The meetings may be held online. Having enrolled, teacher-examiners are sent a formal convocation along with any relevant preparation information.

Any proposals for change emerging from the above meetings, whether they concern syllabus, examining practice or administration are, once approved by the examining authorities, inserted in this Handbook by the end of January. The Handbook is re-issued in February or March, having been edited by Cambridge International, (with input from the Steering Group and Cambridge Inspectors) for the June examination session. The French version is also updated and published by ASIBA for the March preceding the examination session. Both French and English versions in their most recent form are published on the ASIBA website.

4.6 How the written paper is set

The setting of BFI examination papers is co-ordinated by SIEC.

For English Literature, Language & Culture, SIEC asks all BFI schools to submit proposed examination questions to be used in the BFI written papers, in the second half of the autumn term. Question-setting teachers are asked to send questions directly to SIEC for a deadline in late November. These arrangements are communicated via a circular letter sent by the SIEC to *Proviseurs* of the schools where the British BFI is taught. The circular often arrives in *lycées* in mid-October to early November. **BFI teachers are strongly advised to anticipate the arrival of the detailed instructions by starting work on the creation of questions from the beginning of the autumn term.**

For History/Geography, a committee of teachers submits a range of proposed questions in the second half of the autumn term. The committee is composed of BFI teachers nominated both by SIEC and by the BFI History/Geography coordinator.

Instructions and suggestions on issues connected with the wording and quality of questions to be submitted may be raised by the Cambridge Inspectors in examination reports, or at the autumn subject meetings or via specific instructions sent via the Subject Leaders before question setting. All questions submitted by teachers are scrutinised by the *Ministère*-appointed *Inspecteur* for that subject. Between January and March, meetings are held between the Cambridge Inspectors and the French *Inspecteurs* to compile the requisite number of papers.

From all the questions received, the Inspectors and *Inspecteurs* must select those which are most appropriate for the written paper. This involves several considerations including ensuring equivalence with A Level. Care is taken to try to ensure that the full range of the syllabus is covered and that questions are accessible to candidates from all schools. Questions must be clear and unambiguous and any documentary material needs to be able to be reproduced adequately. Questions may be edited by the Inspectors to remove linguistic ambiguities. The *Mission de Pilotage des Examens* ensures that the final version, signed off by the Subject Inspector, is not modified in any way and is reproduced accurately and without error.

It is worth emphasising that the Cambridge Inspector, working closely with their French counterpart, as stated above, usually sets six papers each year. As well as two main papers and two reserve papers for the June session, main and reserve papers must be set for the replacement session in September, which is held for any candidates who could not sit the original examination because of illness or other emergency.

4.7 Assistance to new schools

The BFI Steering Group and BFI teachers offer help to schools embarking on these courses, and in setting up an BFI teaching structure. Each school or section embarking on the preparation of candidates for the first time should seek to work with another established BFI section or school as a mentoring partner. Such mentors are able to offer advice about many practical matters, including the standards and requirements of the examination and approaches to teaching and assessment. Schools engaged in such a partnership should refer to this Handbook as relevant and useful. The mentoring partnership can last until after the first cohort of candidates in the new school or section has taken the examination, or longer, if useful. Standard materials for new and existing schools and sections are also available in written and/or recorded forms on the ASIBA website. Subject Leaders should be contacted for advice on accessing these. Schools new to the BFI structure may, at their request, be visited by a colleague designated by the BFI Steering Group. New schools are invited to attend the series of meetings outlined above as soon as possible (for example, when their first BFI cohort is in *2nde*), and are advised not to wait until they have candidates for the examination entering their final year. Attendance at these meetings is felt to provide the best induction for schools introducing the BFI.

5. EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS AND MARKING

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

5.1 General principles

When assessing a candidate, whether in the oral or the written part of the exam, BFI examiners:

- (i) mark positively, using a reward rather than a deficit model; that is, they seek to give credit for what a candidate knows, understands and can express well, rather than seeking to detect and penalise areas of ignorance;
- (ii) give credit to judgements and interpretations with which they might disagree, provided these are satisfactorily argued;
- (iii) do not penalise linguistic errors, except to the extent that, in sufficiently large numbers, they impair overall intelligibility (however, it is important to state that candidates achieving high marks are expected to show a high degree of fluency and accuracy);
- (iv) refer to – and employ consistently – the marking criteria set out later in this Handbook: the Key Point system for English Literature, Language & Culture and the generic marking criteria (written) and marking framework (oral) for History-Geography, as well as any specific guidance given by Cambridge Inspectors.

The two Cambridge Inspectors are present in France (and, on occasion, abroad) for a part of the examination session. Each Cambridge Inspector is usually physically present in at least two examination centres at the time of the oral examinations. They prepare reports on the general conduct of the examination in their subject, including its security, standards and fairness. They comment on performance in the written papers, which have been marked by teacher-examiners, and which they have moderated. Pairs of teacher-examiners who conduct the oral examinations prepare brief reports on the groups of candidates they examine, seeking to highlight helpfully strengths and weaknesses in the candidates' performance. Teacher-examiners of the written paper report briefly in writing to the Inspector on each script (in English Literature, Language & Culture) or on the totality of scripts they have marked (in History-Geography).

On occasion, an individual teacher-examiner may give a Cambridge Inspector cause for concern. In general, any comments about a teacher-examiner's performance are made by the Inspector directly to the individual concerned. Only in the most unusual circumstances is the teacher-examiner's school advised of this concern. Teacher-examiners who give cause for concern are expected to undergo training before examining again. Schools nominating teachers to act as examiners for the first time may be expected to provide evidence of their teaching and examining experience.

In History-Geography, teachers who are included for the first time in the grid of written examiners may be asked to undertake a small amount of trial marking in November/December as a familiarisation exercise and to help with standardisation.

Regular training of all examiners is part of the commitment of the British BFI sections to maintaining quality, parity and objectivity.

5.2 The written examination

The two BFI written papers are sat by candidates, generally but not always in their own school, on dates which are defined by the overall *baccalauréat* calendars for France and AEFE for schools outside France. These papers, like all other *baccalauréat* papers, are sat under the authority of the *chef de centre* of the lycée where they are taken, generally the *Proviseur* or the *Proviseur adjoint*.

5.2.1 Communications with *Proviseurs*

Proviseurs are informed of all ASIBA training events, conferences and meetings at the beginning of the academic year.

A letter from Cambridge International outlining the arrangements applying to British BFI examinations is sent by the SIEC and the MPE to all *proviseurs* in April or May.

Heads of BFI sections are asked to ensure via effective liaison before the examination session that the arrangements set out in this letter are understood and followed in their school. This is especially important in schools where the British version of the BFI is new to the *chef de centre* and/or the school administration.

All schools designate a contact person for each of the two days of BFI written examinations, usually the Head of Section. This person checks the quality of the reprographics and print in the question paper just before the examination start time. Occasionally questions arise about format, wording, reproduction, etc. **Schools must not take any unilateral decisions or actions aimed at rectifying these or communicate on these with candidates in that school.** Instead, the designated contact should report the issue as rapidly as possible to the Head of the *baccalauréat* centre (normally the *Proviseur* or an *adjoint*) who will contact the *Mission de Pilotage des Examens* (MPE). The Schools' Chair should also be informed. Decisions on actions to be taken to rectify problems will be transmitted by the MPE to all schools, thus maintaining parity and fairness. The designated contact person should remain available to receive and act upon any subsequent instructions. It may be that the only approach to such an issue is to take no action and thus to ensure that all candidates take the paper in the same conditions. The principle of ensuring all candidates take the examination under the same conditions must remain the priority. Subject Inspectors will issue instructions on how any problems in exam papers are to be taken account of in marking.

All British BFI scripts are now marked online. In order to assist moderation by the Cambridge inspectors, and to preserve the anonymity of candidates, each candidate will be issued a Cambridge Candidate Number via the Head of BFI Section prior to the examination session. Candidates must write this on each page of their script. Schools are also required to submit estimated grades to the Cambridge Inspectors via ASIBA's secure online database prior to the examinations. Scripts are randomly assigned to examiners in both subjects.

5.2.2 Nomination of Examiners

Examiners are nominated by the Cambridge Inspectors on the recommendations of the National Subject Leaders for BFI subjects, and validated by the SIEC and the MPE.

All English Literature, Language & Culture markers must be able to mark all scripts and therefore be prepared for all written set texts. This is because of the random allocation of scripts to markers.

Examiners do not, of course, mark candidates from their own school.

5.2.3 Training on online marking

Online training, using guides, manuals and the marking interface, will be offered to examiners. Other forms of training may also be organised. Given the relatively short duration of the examination session, it is recommended that examiners build up speed and confidence in using *online marking* in the period preceding examining, using the example scripts that will be supplied.

5.2.4 Communications with examiners: the pre-exam cycle

The *Mission de Pilotage des Examens* will issue individual login details to examiners to allow them to access the secure server during the month of May. Instructions about the system, and dates and deadlines for different phases of marking will also be despatched by email during the month preceding the exam.

Other preparatory materials will be sent by the Cambridge Inspectors. These will include instructions on how scripts should be annotated, text to enter for each level of performance as *appréciations*, and where and how to record component and overall marks within the *online marking platform*, as well as any directions regarding the mark-rounding built into the system.

Cambridge Inspectors may, before receipt of scripts by teacher-examiners or during the marking period, alert markers to any problems with sections of the paper or particular questions and give advice about the appropriate marking of these.

Communication from the MPE and Inspectors will also cover protocols for the use of the online marking tool's internal messenger system, troubleshooting, technical support and sources of information, and how to take part in the trial marking exercise.

5.2.5 Processing of scripts after written exams

Following the written examinations, scripts will be scanned, anonymised and uploaded to the online platform. Scanning, which is carried out using dedicated high-speed scanners, may take place in the school or at the *'rectorat'* depending on local circumstances.

Scripts will then be randomly allocated to all markers already nominated for each BFI subject; each marker being allocated the correct number of scripts but receiving no indication about their origins.

5.2.6 The start of examining

Examiners will be able to access scripts on a set date, normally some 7-10 working days after the examination. Prior to marking their allocated scripts, all examiners will be required to study and/or mark three to four scripts chosen by the Cambridge Inspector as part of a *'phase d'entente'* (trial marking). The purpose of this exercise is to help ensure common standards of assessment are applied to all scripts i.e. as part of the moderation process.

Both teacher-examiners and Subject Inspectors will have the necessary access codes, each having rights (respectively) to correct and annotate scripts and award marks or to moderate and then to approve and sign off final marks. Codes will be communicated so that marking and moderation can start as soon as possible after the exam session. Moderated, signed off final marks for scripts will be sent electronically to the *baccalauréat* servers in each *rectorat* and integrated into overall marks of each student for consideration by *juries*. A summative comment will be entered in line with final marks; this will be generic for each band of marks and will be closely based on assessment criteria. The moderated e-script with its finalised marks and summative comment (and with the annotations of the teacher examiner) will be considered as the original of the script and securely archived.

5.2.7 The main examining period

It is strongly recommended that the teacher-examiners of written papers be relieved of some of their other duties during the marking period, in order to undertake this work, and the Cambridge letter on BFI exams forwarded to schools by *SIEC* or the *DGESCO* asks that this should be the case. The teacher-examiner does not, of course, mark candidates from his/her own school, nor is he/she assigned to undertake the oral examinations for candidates whose written scripts he/she marks. Teacher-examiners finish online marking within a period of time which is defined by the Cambridge Inspector. This deadline is generally 20 days or so after the examination is taken by the candidates. The Cambridge Inspectors and their moderating assistants moderate a selection of scripts from all teacher-examiners.

Teacher-examiners must, when they access scripts online, check for missing scripts, batches, pages, Cambridge International numbers, etc.

Teacher-examiners must refer at all stages of their work to the marking instructions which follow in this Handbook. They are expected to use the full range of marks available (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen). Good work is rewarded appropriately – with excellence attracting maximum marks. In many cases, there are no standard answers. Examiners should expect to respond to a range of qualities in an answer so that, inevitably, very different answers will attract the same grade for very different reasons.

Instructions on how to annotate scripts, including justifying the marks awarded, will be supplied by Inspectors and should be closely followed. The Inspectors will also keep in close touch with markers

about mark-scheme and guidance, any problems encountered and how to address them, progress in marking, and best use of the statistical interface available in the online marking platform etc. Examiners should follow the standard advice on health and safety of IT users working on screen.

Teacher-examiners of written scripts communicate their marks via the online marking platform to the Subject Inspector in the UK (or to his/her assistant). They also identify and communicate on problem scripts via the systems built into the online marking platform.

The Cambridge Inspectors conduct sampling of each written marker's scripts. Moderation based on this sampling takes place and intervention on the marks of individual scripts or groups of scripts is undertaken at the Inspector's discretion. The Inspectors provide final marks which they sign off after moderation via the online marking platform.

5.2.8 At the end of the main examining period

Teacher-examiners must complete all allocated online marking within a period of time defined by the *MPE*. This deadline is generally 20 days or so after the examination is taken by the candidates. All arithmetic, annotation and comments should be checked carefully before marks are finalised and submitted.

5.2.9 Moderation

The moderation phase follows. This is a distinct phase, and all marking must be finished before it starts. Moderation and scaling as necessary across markers and scripts takes place under the direction of the Inspectors.

At the end of this phase all marks are certified as final by the Inspectors, and overall comments on scripts are checked and modified if necessary to ensure they describe final marks. The marks are then validated and transferred to the main *baccalauréat* results systems in the various academies.

Care is taken about overseas juries and marks for these. As these sit early, it is important that all marking and moderation for these batches of scripts is finished by an early deadline.

5.2.10 Review phase

Review is conducted rapidly after the examining session and involves the views of examiners, moderators and Inspectors, as well as the Steering Group and French administrators. It is focused on what worked well and how the systems and routines could be improved. Cambridge International directs this review and communicates feedback to the *MPE*.

5.3 Conducting and marking the oral examination (English Literature, Language and Culture and History-Geography. See Appendix 4 below for *Connaissance du Monde*)

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

This is a rigorous and demanding part of the examination. Two examiners are used for the purposes of standardisation and fairness, but this can, of course, add to the anxieties of the candidate. Everything is therefore done to help candidates give of their best in relation to both presentation or commentary and discussion or questions. In constructing the schedule of oral examiners, the Subject Leaders and Inspectors try, as far as is possible, to create male/female examiner pairs and to ensure that less experienced examiners are paired with more experienced colleagues. In the case of History-Geography, they also endeavour to create historian/geographer pairs, but this is not always possible. Neither of the teacher-examiners is from the candidate's own school and neither has marked the candidate's written papers. Samples of oral examinations are observed by the Cambridge Inspectors in the centres they are visiting and may be observed by the Moderators.

The presence of two or three unknown adults in the examination room is potentially a cause of anxiety to the candidate. When a candidate enters the room at the beginning of the oral, one teacher-examiner should introduce himself/herself, the other teacher-examiner, and any others attending, by name. He/she should

make a point of adding, if there is an Inspector present, "Don't worry, Dr. X is here to check on us, not on you" (or words to that effect).

The examinations for English Literature, Language & Culture and History-Geography last for 15 minutes each. Candidates have a preparation time of 20 minutes.

On arrival at the designated examination area, for English Literature, Language & Culture, the candidate selects a card at random which has a number from one to eight. The number corresponds to one of the eight Key Issues for the Synoptic Topic they have studied. The examiner then highlights the selected Key Issue on a handout that the student takes into the preparation room. For History-Geography, the candidate selects at random one of ten numbers corresponding to the ten Key issues prepared by his/her school and one of five letters, A to E, corresponding to the Key terms prepared by all schools. These choices are made 'blind', using plain cards numbered on the underside. If the Key issue the candidate selects is in History, the Key term is taken from the list for Geography – and *vice versa*.

In both subjects, the candidate prepares a presentation or talk. This is of 5 minutes' duration on the Key issue for English Literature, Language & Culture and 5 minutes' duration on the Key issue in History-Geography. The preparation is done in a secure room which is separate from the examining room. Rough paper is available in this room, and the candidate may take notes made during the preparation time into the examination. After the candidate's presentation or talk, the discussion becomes more general or focuses on other aspects of the syllabus or topic. In History-Geography, after five minutes' discussion about the Key issue, the Key term is introduced for discussion during the final 5 minutes.

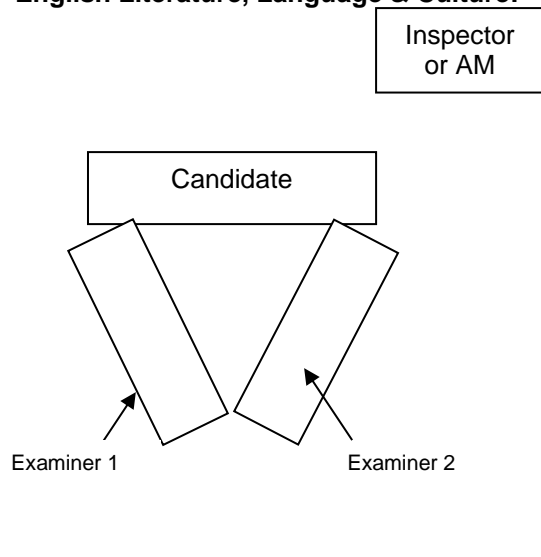
The Head of the Oral Examination Centre must ensure that oral examination invigilators are constantly present in preparation rooms during the oral examinations. They should ensure that each candidate is marked on an attendance register and that his or her identity is checked. It is important that this is done before the candidate goes into the examination room, as such identity checks must not impinge on the time for the oral examination itself. Heads of BFI Orals Examination Centres should also ensure that candidates are issued with blank rough paper and that candidates are not left alone or unsupervised until collected by an oral examiner. Rooms should be scrutinised by invigilators periodically. While not distracting or helping candidates, invigilators should maintain a friendly demeanour, serving candidates water if requested.

Teacher-examiners must be alert to any nervous disposition displayed by the candidate as he/she enters the room and do all they can to settle a candidate into the examination. In this regard:

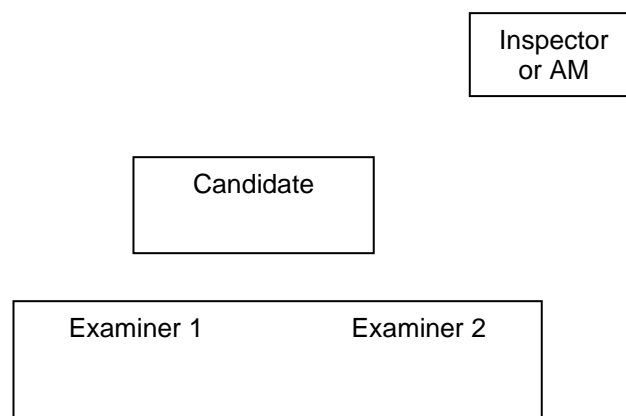
- (i) Preliminary comments should help to put the candidate at ease and, where possible, give a sense of a relaxed atmosphere. The candidate should be addressed by his/her first name throughout.
- (ii) Examiners should not be intrusive, agitated, or dismissive. An even and pleasant tone and approach must be maintained throughout the exam.
- (iii) Examiners must not interrupt candidates, except to help clarify a point, move the discussion on, or 'rescue' a candidate who is in difficulty.
- (iv) Examiners must encourage rather than challenge candidates. This does not, obviously, preclude difficult or probing questions. The idea is to create conditions in which candidates respond to such questions without secondary aspects getting in the way.

The examination room may be arranged as shown in the following diagrams.

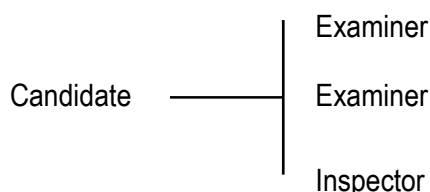
English Literature, Language & Culture:



History-Geography:



The following arrangement of seats **must be avoided**:



If a representative of the French educational *Inspectorat* asks to attend the oral examination, as they have the right to, they should sit out of the candidate's line of sight, in a position similar to that of the Cambridge Inspector in the first diagram. A trainee teacher-examiner may observe an oral, provided that the presiding teacher-examiners give their agreement and provided that the number of non-candidates present does not exceed four. It is understood that the trainee must not have any teaching or other relationship to the candidate and is not allowed to participate in the oral in any way. Such observers should again be placed in a position similar to that of the Cambridge Inspector.

A supply of drinking water must be made available for all involved in the examination. Smoking is, in accordance with French law, strictly prohibited.

The following instructions to teacher-examiners address the issue of treating all candidates in the same way:

- (i) All those involved in the oral examination must ensure that the same procedures and standards are followed for all candidates across groups and regions.
- (ii) It is essential that teacher-examiners do not allow the examination to over-run the time allowed. Each candidate must be given equal time, and the next candidate must not be kept waiting. A clock must be placed in each examination room and must be visible both to examiners and the candidate.
- (iii) Teacher-examiners must give the same instructions and information to each candidate. They must explain to each candidate how the oral will be conducted, with special reference to the amount of time that will be devoted to each part of the oral. Examination timings, which are managed by examiners, must take into account the time needed to give this standardised information, which must be communicated clearly and concisely.

- (iv) In the interests of accuracy and equality of treatment of all candidates, teacher-examiners must check each *fiche d'évaluation* before submitting it. Checking must cover candidate names, candidate signature, content, marks awarded, the arithmetic total, examiner names, signatures and date. It is especially important to check that where a mark below 10/20 has been awarded, the examiners have entered a written comment on the *fiche d'évaluation*, explaining why the mark was awarded, and that the comment is accurate and suitable for publication. The conformity of all annotations with instructions is vital, and great care must be taken about these. The accuracy and clarity of *fiches d'évaluation* must be regularly checked across examining pairs by the Head of BFI Centre so that corrective action can be taken as necessary, and errors avoided.
- (v) Candidates are told to leave behind any rough work or notes that they have used during the oral exam. These will be disposed of at once by the examiners, no reference being made to them during the discussion of the mark to be awarded to the candidate.
- (vi) In the event of a candidate arriving late or at the wrong time for an oral examination, the Head of the BFI Oral Examination Centre must be informed. He/she will then discuss with examiners and if necessary with the Cambridge Inspector or, if one is present at the Centre, the Assistant Moderator the arrangements for rescheduling the oral. The Cambridge Inspector, (or Assistant Moderator) should be consulted when a change of day or of examining pair is rendered necessary. For candidates who are sick for an oral, the examination may be rescheduled only with the agreement of the Head of the BFI Oral Examination Centre.

Any candidate who seeks or demands a variation in the rules of the oral examination should be advised at once of the possible consequences. Obviously, these will vary according to the circumstances. If, for example, a candidate refuses to prepare a commentary on the passage or Key issue chosen, or refuses to speak in English for the oral, the candidate should be advised that a mark of zero will be awarded. Such incidents are, of course, extremely rare.

In general, the Inspectors or Assistant Moderators, if present, observe an oral examination in silence. They may intervene, however, if the session shows signs of over-running the time allotted, or if they feel the candidate is being probed beyond his/her level of knowledge to no purpose. They may also intervene if one of the teacher-examiners is dominating the questioning to the disadvantage of the other or of the candidate, if teacher-examiners are moving in an unstructured way from topic to topic, or if other problems with the conduct of the examination or with questioning are identified.

Teacher-examiners confer at the end of each oral to establish a 'working' mark. For Language-Literature, an initial five-minute period for such discussion is built in to the oral examining schedule, followed by a further ten minutes after each block of orals throughout the day. Detailed instructions for the process by which a mark is agreed between the two English Literature, Language & Culture examiners are given in Part II Section 9 below. After discussion and review, a proposed mark is recorded on the candidate's *fiche d'évaluation*. Where Cambridge Inspectors are present and have observed orals, they may be consulted by teacher-examiners. The Cambridge Inspectors may invite teacher-examiners to review their procedures and provisional marks in order to ensure comparability and consistency of standard and may moderate and modify marks received from teacher-examiners. All examiner pairs provide Cambridge Inspectors with their marks and comments via the *fiche*. However, they also keep their own notes and records of each candidate's performance, for reference by the Inspector, if required. At the end of each day, and as soon as the examining of a particular schools' candidates has ended, the complete *fiches* are transmitted to the BFI administrative officer at St Germain-en-Laye by the Head of the BFI Oral Examination Centre. The final marks submitted to the *jury* are, in all cases, determined by the Cambridge Inspector, who signs off the finalised mark sheets and the individual *fiches d'évaluation*. These are again transmitted back to Heads of Oral Examination Centres before the *jury* takes place. The Schools' Chair provides the Heads of BFI Oral Examination Centres with a list of contact numbers and other details of all schools acting as oral centres.

5.4 The role of Assistant Moderators in oral examining

With the growth of the BFI and the increasing number of BFI oral examination centres, for some years it has not been possible for the Cambridge Inspectors to inspect and moderate the oral examinations adequately on their own. For this reason, Assistant Moderators (AMs) are used. They report directly to the Cambridge Inspector.

AMs are appointed by the Inspectors on behalf of Cambridge Assessment International Education in consultation with the Subject Leaders. The AMs are chosen from senior and respected members of the subject community. They assist the Inspectors in ensuring that the quality assurance processes, which are necessary to protect the interests of students, teacher-examiners and the BFI itself, are robust and effective. When visiting BFI oral examining centres for the purpose of moderating oral examinations, AMs should be afforded the same access to Heads of BFI Sections as is afforded to the Inspectors.

5.5 Terms of reference for Assistant Moderators (oral examinations)

The following points briefly describe the functions and responsibilities of Assistant Moderators.

- 1 Assistant Moderators (AMs) represent the Cambridge Inspectors when moderating on their behalf. Each applies common standards established prior to the oral examining period and is an oral examiner as well as an AM during the examination session.
- 2 The role of AMs is to observe and monitor the conduct of the oral examinations in the Centre(s) where they are present (in person or online), to ensure that the regulations set out in the BFI Handbook are followed and that the interests of the candidates – and the standards of the examination – are safeguarded in all circumstances. This monitoring includes ensuring that the invigilation of the candidates before the oral examination is satisfactory and that all candidates have the proper time allowance for their preparation.
- 3 The AMs have access to the estimated oral grades for the candidates being examined at their Centre. These remain confidential and may not be disclosed to oral examiners. Access to the estimates enables them to investigate further and to alert the Inspector if the marking of any examiner pair, or the marks awarded to any group of students, appear to diverge significantly from the estimated grades.
- 4 The Inspectors may, at their discretion, ask the AMs to observe a particular candidate or candidates, if a special circumstances request makes it appropriate that they should do so, or if another specific need arises.
- 5 The AMs contact the Inspector immediately by telephone or electronic means if a situation arises of which they think the relevant Inspector should be advised.
- 6 The AMs themselves do not change any oral marks awarded or recommend scaling, though they should indicate any concerns about the accuracy or consistency of marking to the Inspector. If they have serious concerns about any marking that they observe, they contact the Inspector to discuss this immediately, without waiting for the end of the examining period at that Centre.
- 7 At the end of each day's oral examining, the AMs collect and check all mark sheets for completeness. They add an indication of which orals they observed and initial the mark sheets before they are sent on to the appropriate Inspector when working in France. They monitor the secure storage of mark sheets between and after oral sessions.
- 8 On completion of the examinations, the AMs write a brief report, confirming what they have observed and the level of their satisfaction with the oral examining processes. In this report they bring to the Inspector's attention any matters that may need including in the Annual Subject Report or may need referring to the Subject meeting or the Schools Forum meeting in the following autumn.

5.6 Estimated grades (English Literature, Language & Culture and History-Geography)

To facilitate standardisation and ensure the anonymity of candidates, schools are required to submit estimated grades for all candidates, for both the written and oral components of each subject, via ASIBA's secure online database. Estimated grades for English Literature, Language & Culture are given in the form of a Key Point (see the section in this Handbook on marking of the English Literature, Language & Culture papers), not a mark.

Estimated grades are recorded by schools directly onto ASIBA's secure online database and made available to the Cambridge inspectors in April/May. They form an integral part of the moderation process undertaken by the Cambridge inspectors to ensure that the final marks awarded are fair and reliable. For example, they may be used:

- to check the accuracy of grading by comparing actual grades with estimated grades
- in instances where a student's script, or part of script, may have been lost
- in cases of special consideration.

Estimated grades must be a realistic prediction of what the student is expected to achieve in the examination based on all the evidence of the candidate's work during the BFI course and the teacher's knowledge of the BFI standards. It is important that each prediction is made as accurately as possible, without under-predicting or over-predicting the grade.

5.7 Special circumstances and arrangements

Schools are also asked to submit to the Cambridge Inspectors, via the ASIBA secure online database, information about any candidate or group of candidates who require access arrangements for special circumstances or need special consideration after the examination. Schools are asked to indicate in January, at the point of first declaration of entries for the British BFI, any candidates who are likely to have such rights or need such arrangements. They then confirm details in March via the secure online database. Schools must hold documentary evidence of need (*mesures d'aménagements d'épreuves du baccalauréat*) e.g. *Tiers temps*. The Schools' Chair and/or Cambridge inspectors may request to see such evidence.

The following categories are covered by these arrangements:

1 *Tiers temps*: *Tiers temps* entitlements are decided by regional commissions. **All candidates should be actively encouraged by schools and sections to request and establish *tiers temps* rights for candidates as early as possible.** *Tiers temps* rights may be forwarded to the Head of BFI oral examination centre as they may involve modifications to oral timing.

2 Special circumstances: any circumstances that may predictably affect the candidate at the time of the exams e.g. medical conditions or specific learning difficulties or other conditions which may affect the candidate at the time of the examinations. A candidate who has missed many lessons because of illness, or a candidate who has suffered a recent bereavement, would fall into this category. This would also apply to a group of candidates whose teacher was absent for a long period, or a group that had perhaps been deprived of a teacher through illness or accident. The Schools' Chair reviews these applications and, in consultation with the Cambridge Inspectors, decides what information will be passed on to the teacher-examiners and/or Heads of BFI oral examination centres. For example, there may be cases in which a candidate's circumstances are such that they need special care during the oral examinations. **Under no circumstances should a teacher or Head of Section contact Heads of BFI oral examination centres or examiners directly discuss candidates with special circumstances.**

Special consideration forms are provided to report problems and incidents that occur on the day of the examination – such as interruption to the examination because of noise, fire alarm or bomb scare, for example. Other matters in this category might include the sudden and temporary illness of a candidate. These forms are returned to the Schools' Chair as soon as possible after the examination which has been affected by the incidents or circumstances.

The Schools' Chair ensures that a log of all applications and information received in these categories is kept and updated regularly. This log is sent to the Inspectors as it is updated.

During the process of moderation, the Cambridge Inspector may, in the light of such information, decide to adjust the mark of a candidate or candidates.

5.8 Enquiries about results

Once they have been validated by the *jury*, all marks are final; it is not possible to request a re-mark.

Candidates who feel that a mark does not reflect their ability may, however, request to see their examination script to check for arithmetical or administrative errors; for example, if the mark on the script does not match that on the *relevé de notes*. More information about this procedure can be found at: <https://siec.education.fr/candidats/examens/BTS/reclamations/reclamations-2>

All marks are held by the *Education nationale* and neither Cambridge Assessment International Education nor ASIBA are responsible for post-results services. Enquiries should **not** be addressed to the Inspector, whose role in the process technically ends with the submission of results for the consideration of the *jury*.

5.9 Examining in schools outside France (*lycées français à l'étranger*)

Arrangements are as follows:

Schools outside France must make contact with ASIBA's Liaison Lead for Oral Examination Centres Outside France at the beginning of the academic year to arrange the administration of their oral examinations and ensure that funding has been arranged.

Details of the oral examination procedures for schools outside France are set out in Appendix 3 Protocol for the Organisation of Oral Examinations outside France at the end of this Handbook.

Other aspects of examining will remain as described elsewhere in this Handbook.

PART II: ENGLISH LITERATURE, LANGUAGE & CULTURE (PARCOURS BILINGUE)

Note: Please refer to Appendix 5 below for PARCOURS TRILINGUE.

6. SUBJECT DETAILS

6.1 Aims

The syllabus aims:

- (i) to encourage and develop the enjoyment and appreciation of literature in English, based on an informed personal response, and
- (ii) to develop the ability to analyse and discuss that response and the texts which produced it, in a cogent, organised manner

6.2 Objectives

The examination assesses the candidates' response to literature by allowing them to display:

knowledge	of the works studied and the historical and personal contexts in which they were written;
understanding	extending from simple factual comprehension to a recognition and conception of the nature and significance of literary texts and the issues and ideas which they raise;
analysis	the ability to develop and explain their response, and to identify and describe literary effects;
judgement	the capacity to make critical assessments and judgements of value based on close reading; the capacity to answer questions on specific aspects and features of a text by selecting relevant material for discussion;
cultural awareness	the ability to appreciate the character and significance of texts produced in a language and culture which may not be their own;
expression	the ability to express, in fluent and effective English, ideas, opinions and responses in organised and cogent essays on literary subjects - using the characteristics of a formal written register; demonstrating the ability to engage in an informed literary discussion.

6.3 Choice of works

Each year, in the meeting of subject teachers mentioned in chapter 3, a list of authors and set works to be available for choice by schools in the examination in two years' time is agreed between teachers and the Cambridge Inspector. The authors chosen will normally be British, American, Commonwealth or any others whose works were written originally in English. An effort is made to represent a variety of historical periods, with approximately half representing twentieth century writing.

The choices of set works fall into four categories:

Drama

Poetry

Prose Fiction

Shakespeare's works

The Cambridge Inspector reserves the right to introduce texts by authors not suggested by schools in the interest of appropriate syllabus balance. A work may stay on the list for up to two years.

For the written paper, three works in each of the first three categories are specified together with two Shakespeare plays; teachers choose two works from different categories and one Shakespeare play for candidates to prepare. In the case of poetry, anthologies may be suggested, increasing the choices available. The Cambridge Inspector chooses a suitable range of poems for study for each poet or category of poetry, and it is with this range in mind that appropriate poetry questions for the written paper should be devised. Schools can complement the Inspector's list with their own choice of poems, but candidates will not be required in their answers to show knowledge of poems outside the original list.

For the oral examination, two Synoptic Topics, with associated recommended texts of which candidates will study two, are specified. These works are not the same as those prescribed for the written examination. Each school selects two works from the list supplied as part of the Synoptic Topic.

Schools are required to declare the works they have chosen to prepare for the examination, including a list of all poems studied, in the autumn preceding the examination. Forms for these declarations are sent by the Schools' Chair.

The format of the oral examination will be as follows: there will be a discussion of a Synoptic Topic – a literary theme or genre (selected by the school from a choice of two) where students will be able to discuss at least two related texts.

6.4 The written examination

4 hours; all answers written in English.

Please note that set texts may NOT be taken into the examination.

Part 1: Shakespeare

One question, 1 hour 20 minutes; one-third of total marks

Two questions for each of the two Shakespeare plays are set. Candidates are required to answer one question (in two parts) on one of the plays. The questions on each play will be in the form of a commentary on an extract and a follow-up question.

Part 2: Individual Works (2 hours 40 minutes)

Two questions, 1 hour 20 minutes each; two-thirds of the total marks.

A total of 18 questions are set, 2 on each prescribed text. Candidates are required to write answers to 2 questions, chosen from two out of the three following sections.

Section A Drama

Section B Prose Fiction

Section C Poetry

6.5 The oral examination

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

15 minutes (after 20 minutes' supervised preparation); in English.

Synoptic Topic (15 minutes)

Candidates are invited to demonstrate an understanding and overview of a given topic area by reference to, and discussion of, a number of previously prepared texts, usually in at least two genres. Teachers choose one of two prescribed topics:

Gothic Writing Post-war Writing of the 1950s and 1960s.

For each topic a selection of five or six primary texts is listed; *teachers are expected to select at least two of these texts and to teach them in ways which will enable candidates to show their understanding of the topic by discussion of the texts.* The primary focus should always be on the topic, not on the texts as individual and free-standing poems, plays or works in prose.

A number of 'Key Issues' within each topic will be defined by the Cambridge Inspector. Candidates will be asked to begin the oral by speaking on one of these Key Issues for 5 minutes. This will be followed by further discussion of the Key Issue and broader discussion of the synoptic topic. At the beginning of the 20 minutes' preparation time, each candidate will select at random a Key Issue card and they will be expected to address that issue in the examination. The oral begins with the candidate's presentation. It should last for 5 minutes, and the student should speak without interruption from the examiners. This is followed by a discussion between the candidate and examiners for 10 minutes.

7. INSTRUCTIONS TO EXAMINERS

7.1 Written examination

- (1) Answers must be assessed on a twenty-point scale. Five Key Points on this scale are defined by detailed marking criteria:

20	Work of Distinction / Very good
17	Very Good / Good
14	Good / Satisfactory
11	Passable / Basic
8	Elementary / Inadequate standard

These criteria are designed to permit accurate and consistent assessment within the range 7 - 20.

Marks in the range 0 - 6 (Key Point 5) should be awarded only for essays which are, to all intents and purposes, of a completely inappropriate standard for the examination. Answers falling within this range should be referred to the Inspector.

(2) The criteria to be used are the following:

- (i) Relevance: adherence to the question and coverage of points raised by it.
- (ii) Content: familiarity with, use of, and development of relevant ideas about the text.
- (iii) Structure: organisation and logic of argument.
- (iv) Expression: quality of language and style.

Naturally, it is expected that the content and relevance of what candidates say in the examination will reflect their firm engagement with the substance of the course. As a consequence, within the overall assessment of each piece of the candidates' work, content and relevance are given greater weight (in the approximate ratio of 2:1) than structure and expression.

(3) The assessment profiles found in chapter 8 indicate typical characteristics of answers which it would be appropriate to situate at the six Key Points. All characteristics listed should be taken into account in the process of assessing, but it should be remembered that mixed profiles are likely to be common. The aim in marking is to find what is often known as the 'best fit'; that is to assign an answer to the Key Point with whose overall profile it most closely corresponds.

Examiners are instructed to apply Key Point criteria 'globally', considering relevance, content/demonstration, structure and expression together. They should not expect essays to fulfil all conditions for each Key Point. Such an approach requires them to be as familiar with each Key Point description as possible, and to refer to the descriptors continuously when marking.

(4) Marking in a subject of this kind cannot ultimately be other than by impression. Examiners should therefore begin by expecting every answer to earn a mid-range mark (i.e. 14) and move upward or downward from that level according to the view they form as the answer progresses.

(5) Examiners should be positive in their approach to assessment, looking for points to reward and highlighting such points with ticks. These ticks will help, in looking over an answer, to determine a mark for it.

(6) In addition to ticks, answers should be sparingly annotated using the online marking toolbox.

(7) Each answer should have ascribed to it brief written comments describing its character in terms of the Key Point descriptors. These comments should be recorded on the separate standard form supplied to written examiners by the Schools' Chair. Comments such as 'Good' or 'Poor' should be avoided: they are of little use subsequently and, in any case, are implicit in the mark.

(8) Examiners must make use of the entire mark range, where this is appropriate.

(9) Fragmentary last answers should not be over-rewarded. (Candidates' ability to apportion their time satisfactorily is one of the skills that the examination tests.) The maximum mark for even the best answer entirely in note form should not exceed 11/20. Also see section on Key Point 5.

(10) Generally speaking, the length of answers should not in itself be taken as indicative of their merit. The unduly brief answer will almost inevitably penalise itself by failing to treat the question in adequate depth; the unduly long essay may be poorly structured or lack a sharp enough focus on the question. An appropriate length for an essay is usually 800 – 1000 words.

(11) Care should be taken not to over-value answers in which narrative – even very full, accurate and well-written narrative – predominates over discussion. An answer which is mainly narrative or fails to take account of the question set should not score higher than 11/20. At the same time, it is important to recognise the value of selective narrative touches whose relevance may have been allowed to remain implicit as a matter of technique.

(12) It is possible that, during the marking of the written papers, examiners may find difficulty with a particular question. They should refer answers to this question to the Cambridge Inspector.

(13) Once the teacher-examiner has determined final marks for individual answers, the overall mark for the paper is calculated in the following manner:

- (i) The marks out of 20 for each answer are added, to give a mark out of 60.

- (ii) This total mark is then divided by 3. (Wherever the result so obtained contains a fraction, the online marking platform will round it up to the nearest whole mark.) This produces the final mark to be awarded for the script as a whole.

7.2 Oral Examination

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

The Synoptic Topic

When candidates arrive for the oral examination, they will select at random the Synoptic Topic Key Issue they will be expected to address in the examination. They will then be allowed 20 minutes of supervised preparation time. They are allowed access only to the Key Issue subject and to a supply of rough paper. In the oral itself, they may refer to any notes made during preparation time.

The oral begins with the candidate's presentation on the Key Issue. It should last for 5 minutes and the student should speak without interruption from the examiners. This is followed by a discussion between the candidate and examiners for 10 minutes.

A candidate who shows signs of talking for a disproportionate length of time about works not prescribed for the oral is brought tactfully back to them by means of a fresh and preferably related question.

At the end of the oral (which, in fairness to all concerned, must in each case be no more than the full 15 minutes) the examiners should always thank the candidate for taking part. They must, however, avoid at all costs making any remark which might be construed as implying an evaluative judgement, however vague, of the candidate's performance.

Starter-questions

Teacher-examining pairs should bring with them to the examination centre a range of reasonable starter-questions relating to the Synoptic Topic under discussion. A 'reasonable' question in this connection is one whose meaning is likely to be immediately apparent to an eighteen-year-old student, and which will allow candidates genuine freedom to answer in their own manner. These questions may be discussed with the Subject Leader before the orals begin. A teacher-examiner should always be clear in his/her own mind, before deciding to ask a question, what sort of answer it may justifiably be expected to produce, but he/she must also be aware that it may very well elicit an excellent answer of an entirely unexpected kind. Starter-questions should allow a wide range of answers.

Whilst starter-questions of the kind just described can be decided upon in advance of the oral, it is clear that the course of the discussion which ensues will be largely unforeseeable. The examiner should, however, do his/her best to ensure both that his/her subsequent questions, although impromptu, are 'reasonable' in the sense defined above, and that in general they arise naturally from the candidate's own preceding remarks. It is hoped that, at the highest level of performance by the candidate, starter-questions will not be needed.

Conducting and assessing the oral

It is recommended that the responsibility for notetaking during the examination be assumed exclusively by one of the examiners, with a view to disconcerting the candidate to no greater extent than is absolutely necessary. The Cambridge Inspector, if present, will intervene rarely, if at all.

Teacher-examiners should be careful to ask candidates for evidence from the text(s) for the opinions they offer, rather than allowing candidates to speak in generalities.

Each oral performance must be assessed on a twenty-point scale and on the same basis as the written paper, described earlier in this chapter. The sole criteria to be used are the following:

- (i) Relevance: coverage of points raised in the key issue and in the general discussion
- (ii) Content: familiarity with, use of, and ideas about the texts and Synoptic Topic.
- (iii) Structure: organisation and logic of argument
- (iv) Expression: quality of language and style.

The assessment profiles in chapter 9 indicate typical characteristics of oral performances which it would be appropriate to situate at the five Key Points. All listed characteristics should be taken into account in the process of assessment, but it should be remembered that mixed profiles are likely to be common. The aim in marking should be to assign a performance to the Key Point with whose overall profile it most closely corresponds.

As for the written examination, marking in a subject of this kind cannot ultimately be other than by impression. Examiners should therefore begin by expecting every candidate to earn a mid-range mark (i.e. 14) and move upward or downward from that level according to the view they form as the oral progresses.

As mentioned earlier, examiners should be positive in their approach to assessment, looking for qualities to reward, rather than seeking to detect and penalise areas of ignorance. In particular, full credit must be given even for judgements and interpretations with which an examiner happens personally to disagree, provided that they are satisfactorily argued. Occasional linguistic errors should not be penalised, except in so far as they genuinely impair intelligibility.

The process of the two examiners coming to an agreed mark for a candidate's performance consists of two phases:

- (i) Once the candidate has left the room, the examiners confer, referring closely to the notes made during the oral and to the detailed Key Point descriptors. In the first instance they agree a Key Point mark of 8, 11, 14, 17 or 20. (See section 7.1 for performances falling in the below Key Point 8 range, and therefore not covered by the Key Point system.)
- (ii) Once a Key Point mark is firmly agreed, the examiners may, also by agreement, adjust this upward or downward by one mark out of twenty, but never more. This 'fine-tuning' brings the full mark range into play.

Please note that there is every likelihood that, while the phase (i) mark is still in the process of being negotiated, one or both of the markers may already have in mind an adjusted intermediate mark which he/she would ultimately wish to see awarded to the candidate. It is, however, essential to the method that no such mark be mentioned by either party until firm agreement exists on a Key Point placing.

The Cambridge Inspector may, in the light of all available evidence (including examiner/moderator reports, estimated key points, and a candidate's performance in the written paper), make adjustments to individual marks awarded, or to the marks of a range of candidates, if they appear seriously discrepant.

8. MARKING CRITERIA FOR THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Notes on the implementation of the Key Point descriptors

The marking criteria describe typical features of work at each Key Point. It is not expected that all the listed features of a given Key Point should be present in a piece of work in order for it to qualify for a mark within that Key Point. For example, an answer may exhibit some features that suggest Key Point 20 and others that suggest Key Point 17; its qualities should be balanced and it should be awarded the Key Point that offers the 'best fit'.

The Key Point descriptors beginning on the next page relate to the assessment of complete answers. Incomplete or brief answers should be adjusted accordingly. For example, work displaying qualities that suggest Key Point 17 **potential** may receive Key Point 14 or less if it is insufficiently developed. Key Point 5 descriptors relate only to answers that are very brief, in note form or bullet points, usually a third answer.

KEY POINT 20: WORK OF DISTINCTION / Very good

General

A rich, mature and imaginative response. Complex and subtle yet clear. Knowledge of the set texts and the Shakespeare play is secure enough to allow for well-developed and detailed analysis that is alert to the possibilities of the question. Response to literary qualities of the texts will be sensitive. Skills of writing, demonstration and close reading will be evident to a high degree.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare

Reminder:

The expectation is that the response should take the form of a developed answer in prose form (i.e. not in bullet point form) that does not require a formal introduction. References should be used, where appropriate, in the form of a short quotation or a clear reference to a scene/speech/action/aspect of language (focused allusion). Content of the response is more important than style or expression, although clarity of idea is of course essential.

a) The extract

The commentary on the extract is very rich and always firmly grounded in the text. There is a well-developed and detailed discussion of ways in which language, form and structure in the selected passage shape meanings. Analysis is focused and precise. Critical concepts and terminology are used accurately and effectively with quotations and references seamlessly blended into the response. Thorough understanding and clear and concise summary of the context's overall significance are evident.

b) The follow-up question

Detailed knowledge of the play is evident. Thematic issues, characterisation and features such as language, imagery and irony are described skilfully in response to the question and the overall dramatic intent is clearly understood. There is clear focus on the question throughout and ideas are expressed in a detailed yet concise way and are supported by appropriate textual reference. The candidate's response is informed by a keen sense of the text as drama.

Part 2: Set Texts

Knowledge of the text is detailed and secure; use of it to discuss the issues raised by the question shows understanding and insight, often of a personal kind though supported by a sense of literary conventions and effects. Complex issues and ambiguities are likely to be handled gracefully and without reducing the text, and use of detailed reference is illuminating. Literary qualities and effects within the text will be discussed in relation to meaning. A sense of the contexts in which the works studied were written and understood may be evident.

Demonstration

Structure will be clear, with logical progression and effectively linked and structured paragraphs; yet flexible enough to avoid reductive approach. Argument, discussion and evidence are probably woven naturally and inseparably together. Ability to prioritise central lines of argument, text and evidence, and to handle other areas deftly and appropriately, will be evident.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Complex ideas are articulated with precision and clarity in an appropriate and effective style. Language gives a vivid sense of the candidate's response to the text, rather than simply being a means of transmitting ideas. Critical vocabulary is used appropriately. English should be consistently accurate, fluent and polished, with only very occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. An extensive range of vocabulary is effectively used.

KEY POINT 17: VERY GOOD / Good

General

A response that demonstrates insight, thoroughness and sensitivity. Skills of writing, argument and close reading are secure, if occasionally lacking some finesse; sensitivity to nuances of language and ideas is also apparent. Where appropriate, the answer shows an awareness of some of the ways in which meaning and suggestion can be conveyed by style, structure, tone or literary devices, as well as by literal meaning of words. The question has been understood, considered and discussed in a reasonably balanced fashion.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare

Reminder:

The expectation is that the response should take the form of a developed answer in prose form (i.e. not in bullet point form) that does not require a formal introduction. References should be used, where appropriate, in the form of a short quotation or a clear reference to a scene/speech/action/aspect of language (focused allusion). Content of the response is more important than style or expression, although clarity of idea is of course essential.

a) The extract

The candidate offers a rich commentary which is clearly grounded in the text. There is good, sound familiarity with the text and its dramatic context. The extract is handled with some confidence, combining some close, detailed reading with a broader overview that shows an understanding of the importance of contexts. There is integrated discussion of character and relationships (even if seen as static rather than evolutionary), and acknowledgement of thematic issues (even if the approach is a little formulaic), and of features such as imagery and irony. Individual technical touches are well described although their cumulative effect may not be explicitly dealt with.

b) The follow-up question

The play is well understood, and themes, characters and dramatic techniques are described clearly in response to the question set. Complex ideas may be tackled with some success and there is appropriate reference to the play to illustrate most points. Focus on the question may occasionally drift and, while the response may be ambitious, analysis may at times lack some depth and detail.

Awareness of the characteristics and techniques proper to the genre of drama is evident.

Part 2: Set Texts

Knowledge of the text is secure; use of it to answer the question is focused and selective. Some telling use of detail may be expected. Response to the text is likely to be personal, and the candidate shows clear understanding of central issues as well as some awareness of implicit meanings or suggestion – although more complex ideas may be handled in a slightly reductive fashion, and subtlety and finesse may be lacking. The candidate is likely to discuss literary features of the text in relation to their effects where this is appropriate.

Demonstration

Structure should be clear, with well-constructed paragraphs and effective linkage, even if the more complex or subtle ideas may be less well controlled or sequenced into the argument. Argument should be generally purposeful in establishing a view of the text and the question. Ideas are discussed and supported by evidence; but the candidate's thoroughness may mean that central issues and less important ones are given equal weighting and the 'forward thrust' of the argument is lost at certain points.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Control of language is secure and often ambitious, with sentence structure and vocabulary effectively serving the expression of ideas. The candidate maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy, even if there may be a few errors (e.g. careless or second language slips). Choice of words should be careful enough to give some sense of the candidate's subjective as well as intellectual response. Critical vocabulary is used effectively where appropriate.

KEY POINT 14: GOOD / Satisfactory

General

An answer that displays sound understanding of the question, and which exhibits competence rather than flair. Basic skills of writing, analysis and attentive reading are evident, as well as a secure, if not especially subtle, knowledge and understanding of the set texts and the Shakespeare play, even if this occasionally tends to the narrative rather than the analytical.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare

Reminder:

The expectation is that the response should take the form of a developed answer in prose form (i.e. not in bullet point form) that does not require a formal introduction. References should be used, where appropriate, in the form of a short quotation or a clear reference to a scene/speech/action/aspect of language (focused allusion). Content of the response is more important than style or expression, although clarity of idea is of course essential.

a) The extract

The commentary is sound and competent and generally grounded in the given extract. The organisation of ideas allows the commentary to be easily followed. The context of the extract is generally understood but it may be stated in excessive detail, leading to loss of focus on the extract itself. There is competent (although possibly somewhat simplistic) analysis of character and relationships and an ability to point out major themes though, perhaps, not to discuss them in detail. Close reading is attempted: stylistic features may be noted, though imagery may be treated as self-explanatory. There may be understanding of genre and possibly of dramatic effect, including perhaps irony, but there may not be much specific awareness of this.

b) The follow-up question

Sound knowledge of the whole play is demonstrated and there is evidence that themes, characters and dramatic techniques can be discussed to an adequate level. The analysis may at times lack detail and clarity but will be largely relevant to the question asked. The response may be rather pedestrian and/or narrative in approach.

There is some awareness of the characteristics and techniques proper to the genre of drama.

Part 2: Set texts

Sound knowledge and often thoughtful understanding of the text, even if the candidate tends to see it in terms of theme or character. There may be some appreciation of the literary qualities or strategies of the text, though these are not closely examined. Some sense of significant detail may be apparent, probably only intermittently. Response may be unimaginative but sound.

Demonstration

Argument should at all times be reasonably clear, even if the clarity is reductive. Structure is likely to be coherent, though it may be unbalanced or list-like; and 'signposting' and logical progression are reasonably helpful to the reader. A tendency to narrate or describe, rather than analyse may be apparent, but some effective analysis should be expected. Evidence may be effectively used, though it may not be fully discussed, and possibly awkwardly woven into the candidate's writing.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Control of language should be reasonably secure, if not ambitious: transmission of sense is not impeded and grammar, spelling and punctuation are generally accurate, despite occasional lapses or second language slips. Vocabulary and variety of sentence construction may be limited but are adequate to the expression of the candidate's ideas. Some critical vocabulary may be used where appropriate.

KEY POINT 11: PASSABLE / Basic

General

An answer that shows sufficient understanding at a basic level, but offers limited use of knowledge, or little detail or development. There is some attempt at illustration and discussion, even if this is not sustained, or is in narrative form. There are some sound moments, even if the answer as a whole lacks coherence or only provides it in a simplistic and mechanical response to both text and question. Control of written English may be flawed, but sufficient to ensure basic communication.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare

Reminder:

The expectation is that the response should take the form of a developed answer in prose form (i.e. not in bullet point form) that does not require a formal introduction. References should be used, where appropriate, in the form of a short quotation or a clear reference to a scene/speech/action/aspect of language (focused allusion). Content of the response is more important than style or expression, although clarity of idea is of course essential.

a) The extract

The commentary may be sparse but is broadly based on the given extract. The commentary may take the form of a linear combing of the text so will include a good deal of avoidable repetition, and a lack of discrimination as to the relative importance of the features discussed. There may also be errors on points of detail and sequence. There is little discussion of stylistic features, and themes or images may be mentioned but not commented on. There is little sense of a flexible or personal response to the extract and little sense of it as drama.

b) The follow-up question

Some knowledge of the whole play is demonstrated and there is some evidence that themes, characters and dramatic techniques can be discussed at a superficial level. A personal response to the play may be lacking and discussion may seem stilted, with ideas presented in an unstructured and unsupported way. There may be passages which lack direct relevance to the question. There may be little evidence that the candidate is aware of the play as a piece of theatre.

Part 2: Set Texts

Some knowledge of the texts is demonstrated, though this may be superficial, or not used in an appropriately selective way to answer the question. Some understanding is evident, even if it is crude, or presented in the form of narrative, or limited to the more straightforward features of the text. Promising moments of analysis or of engagement in the language and issues of the text fail to develop or are unsupported. Response to the text is likely to be rigid and awkward rather than flexible or personal. Any discussion of literary features of the text – style, structure, devices, etc. – is likely to be out of context. Candidate writes a good essay but completely fails, even implicitly, to address the question set.

Demonstration

Ideas may be stated clearly, even if not fully developed; logical progression is evident, though it is likely to lapse, and may be simplistic and assertive. The terms of the question may be only partially understood or referred to, and a genuine discussion of question and text should not be expected at this level. More description, paraphrase and unsupported assertion than analysis; some central issues are raised, but not developed. Evidence may be offered, but handled briefly or left undiscussed. The answer shows a certain insight into some aspects of the text, but a lack of coherence and development.

Expression N.B Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Control of language is adequate to a basic communication of thought, even if it is too approximate to convey ideas or response with clarity. Regular errors of grammar, syntax or usage will be evident. Critical vocabulary may be used with a variable degree of success, and is probably not available when needed

KEY POINT 8: ELEMENTARY / Inadequate standard

General

Lack of knowledge and/or understanding prevents the candidate from answering the question with any clarity or coherence. Writing shows a struggle to organise thought, and argument and logical development can probably only be glimpsed. Where there is reference to the text, its purpose may not be clear. There is little sense of literary appreciation or engagement with the text.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare

Reminder:

The expectation is that the response should take the form of a developed answer in prose form (i.e. not in bullet point form) that does not require a formal introduction. References should be used, where appropriate, in the form of a short quotation or a clear reference to a scene/speech/action/aspect of language (focused allusion). Content of the response is more important than style or expression, although clarity of idea is of course essential.

a) The extract

The commentary is very limited, probably linear or piecemeal, or is only very loosely based on the extract (with which there may be some familiarity). There may be an inability to recognise key features of characterisation, style and dramatic technique.

b) The follow-up question

Overall knowledge of the text is very vague, patchy or faulty. Understanding is limited and discussion of character is simplified and/or distorted. There is no appreciation of genre, stagecraft or stylistic features. The response is not relevant to the question set and/or there is no real evidence that the candidate is aware of the play as a piece of theatre.

Part 2: Set Texts

Knowledge of the text is poor enough to prevent the candidate from answering the given question adequately. Significant errors and confusion are likely. Understanding is similarly limited: there is little sense of literary appreciation or engagement with the text.

Demonstration

There may be some signs of an argument, but this lacks coherence; there may be an occasional sense of logical progression. Moments of analysis may be glimpsed, even if they are brief and unconnected. Evidence, if it is offered, is likely to be unexplained, or tangential to the point and question set.

Expression **N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point**

The candidate's struggle to make a clear statement is evident, though control of language is neither sustained nor precise, and the lack of coherent and fluent expression may make reading difficult. Vocabulary may well be inadequate to the expression of anything but basic thought. The candidate is likely to make elementary mistakes frequently.

KEY POINT 5: VERY POOR

General

An answer that is brief (less than one side/one or two paragraphs), in note form (for set texts) or bullet points, usually a third essay where candidate seems to have run out of time. This is an essay paper, and it is expected that candidates will be able to demonstrate their knowledge by writing three formal assessments/essays in the time allocated.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Shakespeare

a) The extract

A brief summary may be offered but understanding, even at a primary level, is negligible.

b) The follow-up question

Knowledge of the whole play is minimal, and ideas expressed are unclear, irrelevant or incoherent.

Part 2: Set texts

Some limited knowledge of the text may be shown but it is fragmentary and often merely a series of unconnected thoughts.

9. MARKING CRITERIA FOR THE ORAL EXAMINATION

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

Notes on the implementation of the Key Point descriptors

As is the case with the written part of the examination, these describe *typical features* of work at each Key Point. It is not expected that *all* the listed features of a given Key Point should be present in an oral in order for it to qualify for a mark within that Key Point. For example, there may be parts of an oral that exhibit some features that suggest Key Point 20 and others that suggest Key Point 17; qualities should be balanced the Key Point awarded that offers the 'best fit'.

Please note, however, the Key Point Descriptors must be used in conjunction with the marking grid on the *fiche d'évaluation*, to be completed for each candidate. This marking grid is shown overleaf, together with a chart indicating how the marks from the *fiche* map onto the Key Points.

After each oral examination the sequence of discussion, decision-making and recording **must** follow this sequence:

1. Examiners briefly review the candidate's performance.
2. They agree a Key Point (and propose a mark – higher/middle/lower – within the key point).
3. They cross-refer to the *fiche* marking grid and the mapping chart, first selecting the appropriate mark for the agreed Key Point from Column C (Spoken English), then the marks for Columns A (response to texts) and B (literary context). 'Response to texts' will focus particularly – though not exclusively – on the discussion of the key issue; 'literary context' will take account of candidates' discussion of the synoptic topic.
4. Adding up the marks awarded for Columns A + B + C will show exactly the level of a candidate's performance within the appropriate Key Point.
5. The marks for each column and the total mark are entered on the candidate's *fiche*, together with a summative comment referring back to the relevant Key Point. Examiners sign and date the *fiche*.

NOTICE THAT THIS PROCESS BEGINS AND ENDS (AS AT PRESENT) WITH A FOCUS ON THE KEY POINTS AND THE DESCRIPTORS.

It is likely that steps 1 and 2 above will take up most of the five minutes between orals. To allow time for steps 3 – 5, an extra ten minutes will be built into the examining schedule after every third oral.

Annexe 1a - Fiche d'évaluation pour l'évaluation orale de langue et littérature de l'BFI (sauf italien)

Langue de la section:

Session:

Nom de l'élève:

Nom de l'établissement:

Académie:

Prénom de l'élève:

Ville:

Pour chacune des trois colonnes, situer la prestation du candidat à l'un des cinq degrés de réussite et attribuer à cette prestation le nombre de points indiqué (sans le fractionner en décimales) de 0 à 6 ou 7.

Niveau de lecture du ou des textes		Culture littéraire		Expression orale	
Explication partielle ou confuse de la nature et de l'intérêt du ou des textes.	0 ou 1 pt	Aucune référence à l'environnement littéraire du ou des textes (genre, courant, figures emblématiques, etc.).	0 ou 1 pt	Exposé hésitant, vocabulaire pauvre, syntaxe erronée. Interaction difficile.	0 ou 1 pt
Explication acceptable du sens et de l'intérêt du ou des textes.	2 pts	Références sommaires à l'environnement littéraire du ou des textes.	2 pts	Exposé clair mais vocabulaire simple, syntaxe élémentaire. Comprend les questions simples et peut répondre.	2 pts
Explication nuancée du sens et de l'intérêt du ou des textes, avec recours à des outils méthodologiques pertinents.	4 pts	Tentative de mise en perspective du ou des textes dans son/ leur environnement littéraire.	3 ou 4 pts	Exposé clair, vocabulaire précis, syntaxe courante maîtrisée. Interaction satisfaisante.	3 ou 4 pts
Explication nuancée du sens et de l'intérêt du ou des textes, avec recours à des outils méthodologiques pertinents; perception de l'implicite.	5 pts	Mise en perspective pertinente du ou des textes dans son/leur environnement littéraire.	5 ou 6 pts	Exposé très clair, vocabulaire précis, étendu et varié, syntaxe complexe. Bonne interaction.	5 ou 6 pts
Analyse fine bien conduite. Argumentation convaincante.	6 pts	Mise en perspective originale et personnelle du ou des textes dans son/leur environnement littéraire et dans son/leur contexte culturel.	7 pts	Interaction riche et aisée qui tire le meilleur parti des interventions de l'interlocuteur.	7 pts
Note A sur 6	/6	Note B sur 7	/7	Note C sur 7	/7

Appréciation

Note totale de l'élève (A+ B+ C) = / 20

Date de l'évaluation :	Examineur
	Nom: Prénom:
	Signature:

Equivalences between Key Point descriptors & *fiche d'évaluation*

		A	B	C
Key Point		Niveau de lecture Response to texts	Culture littéraire Literary context	Expression Orale Spoken English
20	20	6	7	7
	19	5 or 6	6 or 7	7
17	18	6	5	7
	17	5	5 or 7	5 or 7
	16	6	5	5
14	15	5	5	5
	14	4 or 5	4 or 5	4 or 5
	13	4 or 5	4 or 5	4 or 5
11	12	4 or 5	2 or 4	4 or 5
	11	4 or 5	2	4 or 5
	10	2 or 4	2 or 4	4
8	9	2 or 4	1 or 2	2 or 4
	8	2 or 4	1 or 2	2 or 4
	7	2	1 or 2	2 or 4
5	6	2	2	2
	5	1 or 2	1 or 2	2
	4	1	1	2

As with the Key Point descriptors themselves, marks for A, B and C should be awarded on the 'best-fit' principle. *However, when deciding on the appropriate total mark (out of 20) teacher-examiners should begin by determining the appropriate 'Spoken English' level.* They must bear in mind that this is a 'mother-tongue' examination and the level of spoken English competence at which students should aim is equivalent to C1 or C2 on the Common European Framework (CEFR).

Where alternative marks are shown in the columns above, the totals for A+B+C should match the exact mark out of 20 to be awarded: e.g. a candidate could achieve a mark of 12 by being awarded **either** 4+4+4 **or** 5+2+5.

CEFR reference levels

(Source: Council of Europe 'Common Reference Levels: global scale' in *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, Ch.3)

C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

Timing and focus of questioning

The oral examination lasts 15 minutes.

Synoptic Topic: 15 minutes, with balanced discussion of both texts

The timing should be carefully adhered to. The presentation on the key issue should be kept to no more than 5 minutes. It is assumed for Key Points 11 and above that the presentation is of the correct length. Examiners should alert candidates who are in danger of overrunning their presentation with an appropriate, gentle warning, such as, 'Was there one final point you would like to make?'

The candidate should be given a fair chance to refer to both prepared texts, but some imbalance of time should be tolerated – indeed, it is probably inevitable. Clearly, an equal division is desirable. A candidate who is in danger of speaking for too long on the first text should be gently interrupted and asked to move on to the second. If the contrary problem occurs (that is, the candidate, despite encouragement, "dries up" so quickly on the first text that five minutes have not elapsed), teacher-examiners may move on to the second and return to the first at the end of the oral. **Teacher-examiners must always bear in mind, however, that candidates should be rewarded not for their knowledge and understanding of the texts *per se*, but for their ability to use the texts to demonstrate an understanding and awareness of the topic under discussion.** Questions therefore need to be framed in such a way as to ensure candidates are not tempted to discuss the individual texts without reference to the other text(s) or to the topic.

Candidates may also gain credit for their grasp of the topic by referring either to the poems set for each synoptic topic or to other set texts in addition to the two they have specifically studied. However, such references should not be extensive and **must not** be regarded as a substitute for appropriate discussion involving their two prepared texts.

KEY POINT 20: WORK OF DISTINCTION / Very good

General

The candidate's response to the topic is assured and sophisticated. Thoughtful understanding of the conventions and characteristics of the topic is demonstrated through detailed familiarity with the three texts. Use of knowledge is telling as well as economical, with a wide range of thoroughly-considered insights and judgements. Analysis of the topic and texts shows an awareness that ideas, characters and features may be ambiguous, complex and evolving rather than fixed. Linguistic and literary features are discussed in relation to meaning in the individual texts and/or the wider topic. The candidate shows an ease with argument and demonstration, and a willingness to consider new perspectives where appropriate.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate offers a rich, highly analytical and personal view of the Key Issue, maintaining an effective balance between the overview, contextual reminders and illuminating detail. The candidate's chosen pathway through the Key Issue is well-defined and informed by substantial knowledge and a thoughtful engagement with the topic. There is clear awareness of the place of the Key Issue in the topic as a whole.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic: Discussion

The candidate shows a wide range of thoroughly-considered insights and judgements. Knowledge and understanding of the three texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic are sophisticated. The candidate draws insightful and stimulating parallels between texts; comments are perceptive and analysis is subtle. A confident response: candidate is fully engaged with both the topic and the texts.

Demonstration

The capacity to sustain a coherent and purposeful line of argument, perhaps even making concessions or sketching out possible alternatives without losing the thread. Real dialogue is possible.

Expression

English is expressive, with a vocabulary which allows variety and precision. Francophone errors are rare. Delivery is clear and controlled.

KEY POINT 17: VERY GOOD / Good

General

The candidate shows a very secure knowledge of the topic through the three texts, with evidence of close reading, insight, and an ability to argue and demonstrate. Reference to the individual texts is well-focused and selective, whether it be in the form of quotation or focused allusion. There is sensitivity to language and ideas and a preparedness to examine features of style and form, and of the topic itself, as well as character and relationships. The adaptation of knowledge to the situation is virtually always sensible and effective. Insights and judgements are usually perceptive and considered.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate offers a rich, coherent view of the Key Issue, almost always maintaining a clear focus and giving well-chosen, effective illustration through quotation or focused allusion. An awareness of the context of the Key Issue within the topic as a whole is evident. The chosen structure allows the candidate to steer a clear overall pathway through the issue while drawing upon thorough, considered knowledge to support their views, even if the thoroughness may occasionally threaten the clarity or momentum of the presentation.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic: Discussion

The candidate's understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic is thorough and thoughtful. Use of knowledge is focused and selective and they are able to identify constructive parallels where appropriate, voicing informed opinions. An active and committed response.

Demonstration

There is the capacity to sustain, with no more than occasional loss of control, a sound and organised line of argument. Knowledge is flexible enough to allow for changes in direction in the discussion.

Expression

The use of language is secure and effective, though there may be occasional errors (e.g. careless or second language slips).

KEY POINT 14: GOOD / Satisfactory

General

The candidate shows a sound knowledge and understanding of the topic and the texts within it, and a willingness to discuss them, with a real sense of engagement from time to time. The use of knowledge is also sound though it may be on a rather literal, narrative, character-and-theme level, with ideas seen as static rather than complex and evolving. There may also be some engagement with the literary features of texts or topic, even if this is not fully developed or contextualised. There may be some unevenness, with some texts within the topic clearly preferred.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate offers an adequately rich, generally focused view of the Key Issue, giving some effective illustration through quotation or focused allusion. There is a general sense of the place of the Key Issue within the topic as a whole. The chosen structure allows the candidate to steer a pathway through the issue, drawing upon sound knowledge to support their views. At times, there may be some over-simplification and loss of focus.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic: Discussion

The candidate shows an informed and considered understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic. There may be some imbalance in their knowledge of the texts, but they may point to parallels and contrasts, and make some thoughtful observations. There is sound evidence of close reading, although this may be slightly simplistic or literal and mainly on the level of character and theme. A careful if unimaginative response to the texts and topic.

Demonstration

There should be an ability to argue at times, even if the tendency is to describe, rather than analyse. The candidate can point to parallels and contrasts. Changes of topic or text might cause hesitation, but the candidate's knowledge is flexible enough to permit discussion.

Expression

The candidate's control of language should be reasonably secure: transmission of sense is not impeded and grammar is fairly accurate, despite occasional lapses. Vocabulary and variety of sentence construction may be limited, but adequate.

KEY POINT 11: PASSABLE / Basic

General

The candidate demonstrates basic understanding of the topic and the texts within it, but there may be considerable gaps and inconsistencies. Although there is general familiarity with the texts and willingness to discuss them, discussion may focus on surface issues of plot and character, and development and detail will be limited. There is little discussion of stylistic features of text or topic, and themes or images may be mentioned rather than commented on. Where there is an interesting insight or judgement, it is undeveloped and/or disconnected.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate offers a generally focused view of the Key Issue, with some use of illustration, even if there may be errors on points of detail. The context of the Key Issue within the topic as a whole may not be clearly explained. The structure may lack clarity and involve some repetition, or a lack of discrimination as to the relative importance of the features discussed. There is little sense of a flexible or personal response to the topic.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

The candidate's knowledge of and response to the topic and texts are ill-digested, unselective or superficial. There is some understanding of the texts individually and collectively as an expression of the synoptic topic, although one text may be clearly preferred. They are unlikely to make unprompted parallels or contrasts but can comment when these are highlighted by the examiner. There are occasional, undeveloped references to literary or stylistic features in relation to the topic but little evidence of close reading, and there may be a tendency to narrate rather than to analyse. Overall, a passive response to the texts and topic.

Demonstration

There is a tendency to state rather than argue. Insightful comments cannot be expanded in dialogue and may seem unrelated to the candidate's own reading of or response to texts. Discussion may take the form of unsupported assertion and knowledge may not be flexible enough to allow for changes of direction or previously unfamiliar thought. The candidate may fail to grasp the main point of questions and may not seek clarification so answers may be rambling and poorly focused.

Expression

The candidate's use of language demonstrates a measure of control even if it is at times too inaccurate or imprecise to convey ideas effectively.

KEY POINT 8: ELEMENTARY / Inadequate standard

General

Opinions are offered, though based on little or seemingly only partially understood evidence. There is some overall understanding of the topic and texts, but considerable simplification, serious misreading and distortion. There is no close reading of texts or meaningful development of ideas. There may be too much attention to trivia, a tendency to narrate, and a great deal of repetition.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate's presentation of the Key Issue is thin, lacking both a clear overview and supporting detail. There is little sense of how the Key Issue relates to the broader topic. Overall knowledge of the Key Issue is very vague, patchy or faulty. There is no sense of a flexible or personal response to the topic or texts.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Knowledge of the topic and texts is poor: the candidate makes unsupported generalisations with no evidence of close reading. There is insufficient sense of how texts individually or collectively function as an expression of the synoptic topic. Attempts to engage in comparisons or to see parallels or contrasts are unlikely, and the candidate may have difficulty in drawing these even when prompted. Little sign of an active response to texts or topic.

If it proves to be impossible to discuss either text at all, the candidate must be placed lower than this point. In this instance, a full report must be provided on the *fiche* to the Inspector.

Demonstration

There may be some moments when analysis is attempted. Evidence may be offered, even if it is unexplained or irrelevant. Textual evidence may take only the form of narrative. As ideas are not argued, opportunities for discussion are rare.

Expression

The candidate's struggle to express himself/herself is evident; vocabulary may seem too limited to allow for sustained commentary or dialogue; the candidate may manifest discomfort with the task.

PART III: HISTORY-GEOGRAPHY

10. SUBJECT DETAILS

10.1 Aims and objectives

The syllabus aims to develop the skills of the historian and geographer, including the following abilities:

- to extract information from a variety of sources
- to interpret, analyse and evaluate material
- to place material in its relevant context
- to develop evidence-based arguments
- to show an awareness of the characteristics of peoples, places and events and the interaction between them
- to use relevant and precise examples and/or case studies to support an answer.

The syllabus seeks to provide an introduction to History and Geography as separate disciplines and to develop an understanding of historical and geographical concepts and skills. Students should be able to use the knowledge gained from one discipline to develop a greater understanding of the other.

10.2 Further aims of the History programme

The syllabus aims to provide an international context in the teaching of History. It also aims to encourage the development of independent thought and judgement and an awareness of different and maybe conflicting interpretations of the past. Specifically, three aims are identified:

- (i) to increase knowledge and understanding of the past;
- (ii) to identify and study some major historical themes and contexts and so help to provide an explanation of the contemporary world;
- (iii) to develop an imaginative and sympathetic approach to people and events in the past. To seek to see History from the points of view of those in the past.

10.3 Further aims of the Geography programme

The overall concerns of the Geography programme are to study the relationships between people and their environments and to explain the spatial organisation of the world. It aims:

- (i) to increase knowledge and understanding of contemporary issues at different scales from local to global;
- (ii) to develop and deploy geographical skills;
- (iii) to develop an understanding of the significance of spatial scale and time scale in geographical systems, distributions and environments;
- (iv) to increase knowledge and understanding of different groups of people, their spatial organisation and their interrelationships.

10.4 The History-Geography syllabus

10.4.1 History

The **syllabus** as defined by the French Ministry of Education for teaching from September 2020 consists of four themes.

The **specification** of that syllabus by Cambridge Assessment International Education is as follows:

Theme 1	The fragilization of democracy, totalitarianism and World War Two (from 1929 to 1945)
Theme 2	The multiplication of actors in a bi-polar world (from 1945 to the beginning of the 1970s)
Theme 3	Economic, political and social challenges from 1970 to 1991
Theme 4	Oral topic: The world and Europe since the 1990s – cooperation and conflict

Note: Theme Four may appear as a key issue in an oral examination but will not be examined in the written paper.

10.4.2 Geography

The **syllabus** as defined by the French Ministry of Education for teaching from September 2020 consists of four themes.

The **specification** of that syllabus by Cambridge Assessment International Education is as follows:

Theme 1	Maritime areas and geopolitics at the heart of a globalised world
Theme 2	Territorial dynamics: unequal integration and unequal development in a globalised world
Theme 3	The complex and ever-changing position of the European Union in a globalised world
Theme 4	Conclusive project

Note: Theme Four is not examined in either the written paper or the oral examination but only as part of continuous assessment

10.5 Assessment

History-Geography is assessed through a written examination, lasting 4 hours, and by an oral examination, lasting 15 minutes. Both examinations contain content from the History specification and from the Geography specification.

Both examinations are marked by teacher-examiners approved by Cambridge Assessment International Education (through the Cambridge Inspector) and by the Ministry of Education and published in a grid. All teacher-examiners are trained for the work they undertake and use common marking guidance (for the written examination) and a common marking framework (for the oral examination) to assess the quality of candidates' performances.

The foundation of good assessment is the testing of what candidates know, what they understand and what they can do. These three elements may be called knowledge, understanding and skills, respectively. Both the written examination and the oral examination test all three of these elements. The knowledge and understanding required are the same for both the written and the oral examinations, being derived from the syllabus content and specifications. However, the skills required in the written examination, for example the interpretation of source materials or the production of a piece of extended writing (an essay), differ from the skills required in an oral examination, for example presenting a short talk or responding verbally to questions.

Three Assessment Objectives (AOs) are defined for the oral examination. An Assessment Objective is defined as “an intended area of competence in the subject” and identifies the focus of the assessment (see the marking framework of performance descriptors for the oral examination, which follows). It is these three assessment objectives which must be used to determine the mark awarded for the oral examination.

The written examination is usually marked by one teacher-examiner from another school who has no personal links to any of the candidates in his/her allocation (for example, from previous employment). This marking is moderated by the Cambridge Inspector with the help of one or more senior and benchmark teacher-examiners working as Team Leaders (written), as part of the quality assurance which Cambridge Assessment International Education delivers for the British Option.

The oral examination is assessed by a teacher-examiner pair, each from another school, who have no personal links to any of the candidates (for example, from previous employment). This marking is moderated by the Cambridge Inspector with the help of senior and benchmark teacher-examiners working as Assistant Oral Moderators, as part of the quality assurance which Cambridge Assessment International Education delivers for the British Option. Care is given to the construction of the examiner grid in the light of a number of constraints. Wherever possible, the examiner pair consists of a man and a woman, an historian and a geographer and an experienced teacher-examiner with someone newer to the role.

10.6 The written examination

4 hours

Candidates choose to answer either Section A or Section B.

Section A: History essay and Geography document-based question

Two questions are set in this section, a History essay and a structured document-based question in Geography. Candidates are required to answer both questions.

Section B: Geography essay and History document-based question

Two questions are set in this section, a Geography essay and a structured, document-based question in History. Candidates are required to answer both questions.

The essay questions each have titles indicating the Theme from which they are taken and their scope. Each question enables a candidate, to a greater or lesser extent, to select his/her own examples and case studies in support of a general argument.

The structured document-based questions each have titles indicating the Theme from which they are taken and their scope. Each document-based question has one or two documents. Questions are in two parts, (a) and (b), the second requiring a candidate to write a **substantial** essay on a topic based upon the document(s) presented combined with his/her own knowledge and understanding.

The first part of all questions, both essay questions and document-based questions, carries 8 marks and the second part 12 marks. The mark allocation does not appear on the question paper.

10.7 The oral examination

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

15 minutes; in English.

The oral examines the subject's Key content. This Key content is a distillation of essential elements of the subject across the whole specification, agreed by the teaching community and approved by the Cambridge Inspector. This Key content is reviewed and revised whenever there is a change to the Ministry's syllabus and at intervals of a few years, as appropriate.

The term Key content comprises two elements: Key issues and Key terms. Each oral comprises examination of one Key issue and one Key term. If the Key issue which the candidate selects is from History, the Key term is from Geography, and vice versa. All orals therefore comprise an element of History and an element of Geography.

Each list will contain five Key Issues for History and five for Geography. In History, each list covers three or four of the syllabus themes. In Geography, each list covers all three of the syllabus themes that can be examined in the oral. The lists are numbered 241 to 244 for convenience (i.e. 2024 list 1 etc). The list number which a school has selected has to be submitted by an agreed date which will be circulated to Centres. Two sets of ten Key terms for oral examination (five for History and five for Geography) are selected by the Cambridge Inspector in collaboration with the Subject Leaders in the spring and kept strictly confidential. One set of Key Terms is for schools in France and one set for schools outside France. The list of approved Key issues for each school and of the ten Key terms agreed for use that examination year is revealed to candidates approximately one month before the written examination (on dates set and communicated to schools each year by the Cambridge Inspector); so that candidates have time for their own detailed preparation. During this period teachers should restrict their role to general encouragement and to covering broad issues of examination technique.

The Key content that candidates will use in the replacement session, if needed, consists of the same list that they would have used in the June session.

Practice orals should not be conducted on any of the school's ten approved Key issues or on the ten approved Key terms, which are for the candidates' own use. Practice orals may be given until the day before the first oral examination in a Centre entering candidates for the British option. (This date is communicated to schools by the Cambridge Inspector at the time the approved Key content for the oral examinations is published).

Just before the oral examination, candidates choose one of the ten Key issues and one of the ten Key terms at random. The Key issue is chosen first. If the Key issue chosen is from History, the Key term is taken from Geography, and vice versa. Candidates then have 20 minutes in a supervised preparation room to prepare themselves. Candidates who wish to use a computer to prepare their notes must have received prior permission from the Head of Centre where the oral examination is to take place and the Cambridge Inspector must also be informed that this has been agreed. Candidates may use maps or other illustrations during their talk on the Key issue but they must be ones they have created themselves during the preparation period. The talk should not last longer than 5 minutes, and the candidate is warned when this time is nearly up. Examiners should then proceed to ask questions for 5 minutes based on or emerging from the talk on the Key issue, before introducing the Key term to discuss for the remaining 5 minutes.

Further information on the conduct of the oral examination is provided in Section 5.3 above – 'Conducting and marking the oral examination'.

11. INSTRUCTIONS TO EXAMINERS

11.1 General guidance on the marking of written paper responses

The work of an examiner is to assess each candidate in the three broad areas of knowledge (K), understanding (U) and skills (S). Specifically, the written paper tests the student's ability to:

- Recall relevant knowledge and use appropriate and precise examples and/or case studies to support an answer.
- Show understanding of the relevant ideas and concepts.
- Select, use and interpret material from a variety of sources.
- Present relevant information and appropriate evidence, placing material in its relevant context, and showing an understanding of the interaction between people, places and events.
- Develop evidence-based arguments, structuring the response clearly, logically and effectively, in order to reach substantiated conclusions.
- Analyse, evaluate and provide evidence-based judgements.

Examiners are asked to bear in mind the following marking principles:

Positive marking

Students' responses must be marked positively, not negatively. Positive marking involves seeking to award credit where it is deserved. In particular, examiners are encouraged not to look for fully comprehensive answers and they should accept teaching approaches to topics which differ from their own - do not start marking a response with a 'model answer' in mind. Do not 'knock marks off' for work containing errors – errors should be ignored unless they directly contradict a correct point that has been made. Cambridge does not penalise work you might consider to be 'messy', for example with crossings out.

Use the full range of marks

Use the full mark range, as long as it is appropriate for the responses being assessed. Full marks should be awarded for an exceptionally good answer. However, it is unusual to grade an answer 'Very Weak'. This is only appropriate where the response is mostly incomplete.

Transfer of Credit

Whilst the student's selection and application of material relevant to each part of a question is an ability that we wish to assess, some transfer of credit between the two parts of a question is admissible, especially where a student has not differentiated clearly between each part of the question.

The Principle of 'Best Fit'

Where a response displays characteristics of two different mark bands e.g. between *Bare pass* and *Satisfactory*, judgement must be used to decide which band best sums up its character. This is the principle of 'best fit'. Please note that a response does not need to meet **all** the criteria of a mark band to be placed within it. Not all statements apply equally to every type of question. When using the generic marking criteria, students do not have to achieve every aspect to be awarded a level – it is a 'best fit'. **Three out of five statements are certainly enough for a level to be awarded.**

Benefit of the Doubt

Credit should be given for any response which includes points, arguments and examples which are correct and relevant, even if they are not included in the 'indicative content' part of the mark scheme. Similarly, when there is difficulty in deciding which level of the generic mark scheme best fits a response, students should be given the 'benefit of the doubt'.

Paper structure and question structure

Each question is structured in two parts. Whilst the subdivision of marks for the questions is not printed on the question paper, the allocation is as follows:

- First element of the essay and part (a) of the DBQ 8 marks
- Second element of the essay and part (b) of the DBQ 12 marks

The first part of an essay question usually asks for an explanation i.e. a lower level of demand than for the second part which is an extended piece of writing involving higher level skills, such as the presentation of an argument with a conclusion, an assessment, or an evaluation. This second part of the essay is much broader in conception and provides a stimulus for the student's own response. Students are expected to select their own examples/case studies, evidence, and material in support of their explanation in the first part and their argument/analysis in the second part.

In part (b) of the DBQ, students should develop an answer drawing on the document(s) to some extent, but also on their wider knowledge and understanding of the topic. Examiners are asked to use their experience of history and/or geography to assess each response using the generic marking criteria.

For an 'unfinished paper, each candidate must be assessed on the basis of the work that he/she has presented, not on the work that might have been presented had the candidate allocated time to each question more appropriately.

11.2 Specific guidance on marking

As soon as candidates have sat the examination, teacher-examiners are sent draft 'indicative content' marking guidance for each of the questions in the examination. This marking guidance is compiled by the Cambridge Inspector with help from Subject Leaders. As soon as the Inspector and Team Leaders have marked some sample scripts, and the Inspector has received comments from written examiners from their initial reading of sample scripts, he considers the appropriateness of the marking guidance and may revise it in the light of the candidates' responses. The revised and finalised marking guidance is sent rapidly to teacher-examiners to enable them to standardise their marking.

11.3 Generic marking criteria for the written paper

/8	/12	Performance descriptors for the six bands/levels
8	11–12	Very good (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 18-20 overall) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive, detailed and well-directed knowledge • Very good understanding with a “big picture” approach • High ability to analyse, evaluate and provide evidence-based judgements • Highly skilled interpretation and use of document(s) • Devises and structures response very effectively
6–7	9–10	Good (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 14-17 overall) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, detailed knowledge, directed effectively • Good level of understanding, developing ideas within firm subject context • Good ability to analyse, evaluate and provide evidence-based judgements • Skilled interpretation and use of document(s) • Devises and structures response well
5	7–8	Satisfactory (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 11-13 overall) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate knowledge • Satisfactory understanding, with some elements of subject context • Some ability to analyse, evaluate and provide judgements • Clear interpretation and use of document(s) • Devises a simple, clear structure for the response
4	6	Bare pass (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 10 overall) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge • Basic understanding and limited awareness of subject context • Analysis, evaluation and use of evidence basic • Basic approach to document(s); limitations in interpretation and/or use • Gives response a basic structure
3	4–5	Weak (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 6-9 overall) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge – restricted in scope, depth or detail • Basic understanding – restricted and/or faulty • Approach largely descriptive or analysis is weak or faulty and evaluation lacks supporting evidence • Weak approach to document(s) interpretation and use • Devises and structures response weakly or offers fragments, notes or an unfinished response
1–2	1–3	Very weak (Refers to questions/scripts awarded 1-5 overall) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very little relevant knowledge – a few basic facts • Very restricted understanding • Little or no analysis or evaluation or judgements offered • Very weak approach to document(s) interpretation and use • Devises and structures response very weakly or offers fragments
0	0	No response

NB: It is unusual to use ‘Very Weak’. Only do this where the response is mostly incomplete.

11.4 Grading *hors sujet* questions

It sometimes happens that candidates answer questions on the written paper which have not been set. The degree of error and its cause will vary. A candidate may deliberately misread the question in order to ignore what he/she does not know and to write about what he/she does know. On the other hand, the misreading could be accidental. The candidate might interpret the question in a possible, but unlikely, way and thus give an answer that is incorrect. Or the candidate might interpret the question unconventionally, but plausibly.

In principle, examiners marking the written paper should start with the presumption that an *hors sujet* answer will earn no marks, but should look carefully for any possible credit that might be awarded. If the misreading appears to have been deliberate, awarding marks could encourage the practice. If the misreading appears to be accidental but plausible, the answer deserves the possibility of some credit.

During the marking period, examiners should refer any such response to the Cambridge Inspector or the Team Leader moderating their marking for a second opinion.

11.5 Recording written examination marks for the *jury*

Once the final marks for all candidates have been determined, they are officially recorded for the information of the *jury*. Where the total marks for all subjects of a given candidate place him/her within reach of the *mention* above, French teacher-examiners present at the *jury* may agree to an additional mark in their subject. This adjustment can also be made to the mark approved by the Cambridge inspector.

11.6 Grading the oral examination

NB: Every effort will be made to maintain oral examinations according to the guidelines below. However, exceptional circumstances can arise. Consequently, ALL schools MUST ensure they have the equipment outlined in Appendix 2 below in case we have to revert to contingency plans.

In order to be fair to candidates, the procedures for oral examinations must be the same for each of them. These guidelines and the training provided annually are intended to contribute to the **comparability** of procedures and standards of orals conducted by different examiners in different centres in any one year, and to the **consistency** of procedures and standards from year to year.

1. On arrival at the examination room, each candidate is invited to make two choices at random using two sets of cards. First the candidate chooses one card from a set of ten. Each of these cards has on its underside a number from 1 to 10, corresponding to the list of Key issues for his/her school. Next the candidate chooses at random one card from a set of five to determine the Key term. Each of these cards has on its underside a letter from A to E, corresponding to the list of Key terms for all schools. This second set of cards is smaller than the set of ten cards, and is made of card of a different colour, to avoid confusion.

If the Key issue chosen is in History, the Key term to be examined is in Geography, and vice versa.

One teacher-examiner uses a highlighter pen to highlight, on a copy of a page of the candidate's school's Key content, the Key issue and the Key term corresponding to the cards chosen. The candidate takes this sheet of paper away with him/her to the preparation room. The other teacher-examiner notes the Key issue and the Key term on the mark recording sheet.

2. Each candidate has a preparation time of 20 minutes during which he/she must prepare himself/herself to talk about the Key issue and to answer questions on it, as well as to discuss the Key term, each for 5 minutes. The oral lasts for a total of 15 minutes.
3. Examiners must be alert to a candidate's anxiety and try to put him/her at ease. When a candidate enters the examination room, one examiner should introduce himself/herself and the second examiner by name. If the Cambridge Inspector or an Assistant Moderator (AM) is present, he/she should also be introduced to the candidate by name, but the point should be made that the Inspector or AM is there to check on the examiners and not on the candidate.
4. Seating in the examination room should be arranged so that the candidate has a clear view of the two examiners, while a Cambridge Inspector or Assistant Moderator (if present) should be seated to one

side and behind, away from the examiners and the candidate. The candidate's line of sight should be on the examiners and not on the Inspector, who observes, but only very rarely participates in, the oral examination (see point 13).

5. If a representative of the French educational *Inspection* asks to attend an oral examination (as he/she has the right to do), then he/she should be seated out of the candidate's line of sight. A trainee-examiner may also observe an oral if the examiners and the candidate give their agreement and provided that the number of non-candidates present does not exceed four. Any such trainee must not have any personal or professional relationship to the candidate and is not permitted to participate in the oral in any way. He too should be seated out of the candidate's line of sight.
6. A supply of drinking water should be available for all involved in the examination. In accordance with French law, there should be no smoking at any time in the rooms used for oral examinations.
7. Each candidate must be given the same amount of time for the oral examination. This is the case both where an oral could easily over-run and where a candidate has given a talk of less, or much less, than 5 minutes' duration. When a talk ends before 5 minutes, the candidate should be given the benefit of the rest of the 10 minute period he/she is allocated for the Key issue by expanding the question-and-answer period. The transition to the Key term should always be made after the passage of 10 minutes, and not before. The agreed timetable must be adhered to throughout the examining day.
8. The Key issues are expressed in specific terms inviting assessment, evaluation, argument and the expression of opinions supported by evidence and/or examples. Each candidate determines the structure of his/her own talk, which is one of the skills being examined by the oral. A candidate may use maps or other illustrations during his/her talk, but only ones created during the preparation period. Each talk should not be permitted to last longer than 5 minutes and a candidate approaching the end of that time period should be warned (after 4 minutes) that the time is nearly up.
9. Oral examinations must be conducted fairly and sympathetically, with examiners encouraging rather than challenging candidates, except where this may extend an able candidate and has the potential to enhance his/her performance. Taking an oral examination is very demanding, and every effort should be made to ensure that candidates are provided with equitable opportunities to provide evidence of their knowledge and understanding of the selected topics. Examiners should not be intrusive, agitated or dismissive and they should not interrupt or correct candidates. Any lapse from this high standard might unsettle a candidate. Every effort must be made to allow candidates to respond to questions in the manner and to the extent that they are able to do so. Examiners should ask mainly 'open' rather than 'closed' questions: that is, they should pose questions which require candidates to develop an argued response rather than questions which permit a candidate to respond with little more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer. An oral examination should be seen by examiners and candidates alike as a discussion, as an exploration of a candidate's knowledge and understanding, and not as an interrogation.
10. Examiners must use the marking framework which follows to assess a candidate's performance in the oral examination. This framework identifies three Assessment Objectives (AOs) and six levels of achievement for each. Although the oral examination comprises two elements of Key content, i.e. the Key issue and the Key term, the approach to assessment should be a holistic one. It is important that examiners avoid separating these elements mentally. Marks are awarded for each AO using the principle of 'best fit', before being totalled. Half marks may not be used. This agreed and recorded mark should represent the assessment of a candidate's overall performance, recognising that two candidates can take different routes to achieve the same mark within the marking framework employed. Once the total mark has been agreed, using the Cambridge marking framework, the official French *fiche d'évaluation* should be completed to show the same mark.
11. If there are any special circumstances for a particular oral (such as a candidate showing obvious signs of abnormal stress or of illness), then examiners should award their mark for the oral on the basis of the candidate's performance, but they should also include, on the mark recording sheet sent to the Cambridge Inspector, a note briefly describing those special circumstances.
12. If an overall mark of less than 10/20 is awarded, a comment **must** be written in the space towards the bottom of the *fiche d'évaluation*, explaining why this mark was awarded. This comment should be accurate and well-focused and suitable for the public domain. This extra information will help the moderation process.

13. Generally, the Cambridge Inspector, if present, observes an oral examination in silence. He may intervene, however, if a session shows signs of over-running the time allotted or if he/she considers a candidate is being probed unproductively beyond his/her level of knowledge or understanding. The Inspector may also intervene if one of the examiners is dominating the discussion to the disadvantage of the candidate or of the other examiner, or if an examiner is moving in an unstructured way away from the general field of the selected Key content.
14. Examiners are advised to take notes during an oral examination, both about the arguments made by a candidate and about their own assessment of the quality of a candidate's performance. Only brief notes need be taken: a candidate might be unsettled by an examiner who appears to be making a transcript of the oral. These rough notes should be retained for reference and may be needed to give further evidence to the Cambridge Inspector during the preparation of final marks or in the rare instance of a later enquiry about a mark.
15. Examiners should confer at the end of each oral to establish a "provisional mark" with the possibility of revising it at the end of the block of orals or the end of the day. Each oral should be given a mark out of 20 for its overall quality, judged in terms of the published Assessment Objectives (AOs), using the marking framework below, for the Key content selected.
16. At the completion of a pair of examiners' orals, marks should be agreed by the examiners. For each candidate, an equivalent mark should be recorded on the standard mark recording sheet provided, the *fiche d'évaluation*, together with notes justifying the marks awarded. These are then given or sent to the Cambridge Inspector, who works for some days towards the end of the oral examination period to prepare the final marks. Where the Cambridge Inspector is present and has observed some orals, he/she may adjust marks in order to ensure comparability of standards. This adjustment may also be made on the basis of evidence and recommendations from Assistant Moderators who assist the Cambridge Inspector with the work of moderating the oral examination.

Oral marking framework – BFI History-Geography oral performance descriptors

AO1 Knowledge and understanding [8 marks]	AO2a Skills: analysis and evaluation [6 marks]	AO2b Skills: organisation and communication [6 marks]
8 Very good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive, detailed and well-directed knowledge Very good level of understanding Demonstrates a “big picture” approach 	6 Very good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently analytical and evaluative in both talk and responses Consistently provides valid and substantiated judgements Well aware of patterns and perspectives 	6 Very good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures talk effectively Very good responses to questions Precise use of subject terms; very good expression and delivery
6-7 Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good knowledge directed effectively Good level of understanding Development of ideas within a firm subject context 	5 Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good ability to analyse and evaluate in both talk and responses Provides valid and substantiated judgements Good awareness of patterns and perspectives 	5 Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk is well structured Responds well to most questions Use of terms is accurate; good expression and delivery
5 Satisfactory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate knowledge Satisfactory understanding Ability to use subject context 	4 Satisfactory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis and/or evaluations are made Judgements made and supported Satisfactory awareness of patterns and perspectives 	4 Satisfactory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk has a simple but clear structure Responds appropriately to questions Most terms are accurately used; satisfactory expression and delivery
4 Bare Pass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic knowledge Basic understanding Some elements of subject context 	3 Bare Pass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic analysis/evaluation Some judgements made Some awareness of patterns and perspectives 	3 Bare Pass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk has some structure Some ability to frame responses to questions Some terms are accurately used; passable expression and delivery
2-3 Weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak knowledge Limited understanding Limited awareness of subject context even when prompted 	2 Weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach is descriptive Makes assertions rather than judgements Limited awareness of patterns and perspectives even when prompted 	2 Weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some difficulty in structuring talk Limited response to most questions Considerable inaccuracy and irrelevance in use of terms; weak expression and delivery
0–1 Very weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very little relevant knowledge Little or no understanding Simple statement of a few basic facts in isolation 	0-1 Very weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No analysis or evaluation No judgement, even when prompted No awareness of patterns and perspectives 	0-1 Very weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk lacks structure Has difficulty understanding and responding to questions Expression and delivery break down

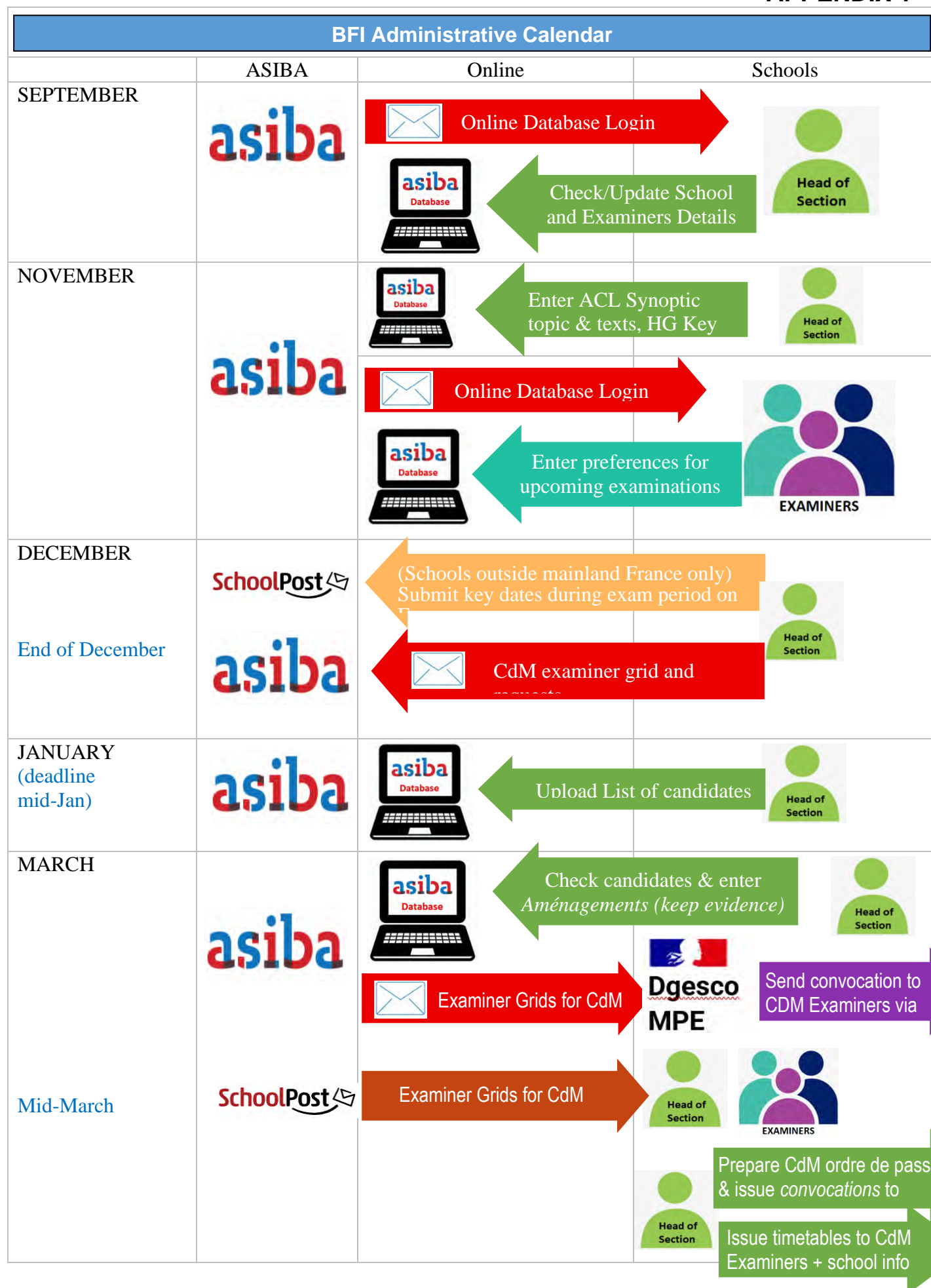
If an overall mark less than 10 is awarded, a comment **must** be written on the fiche, explaining why this mark was awarded.

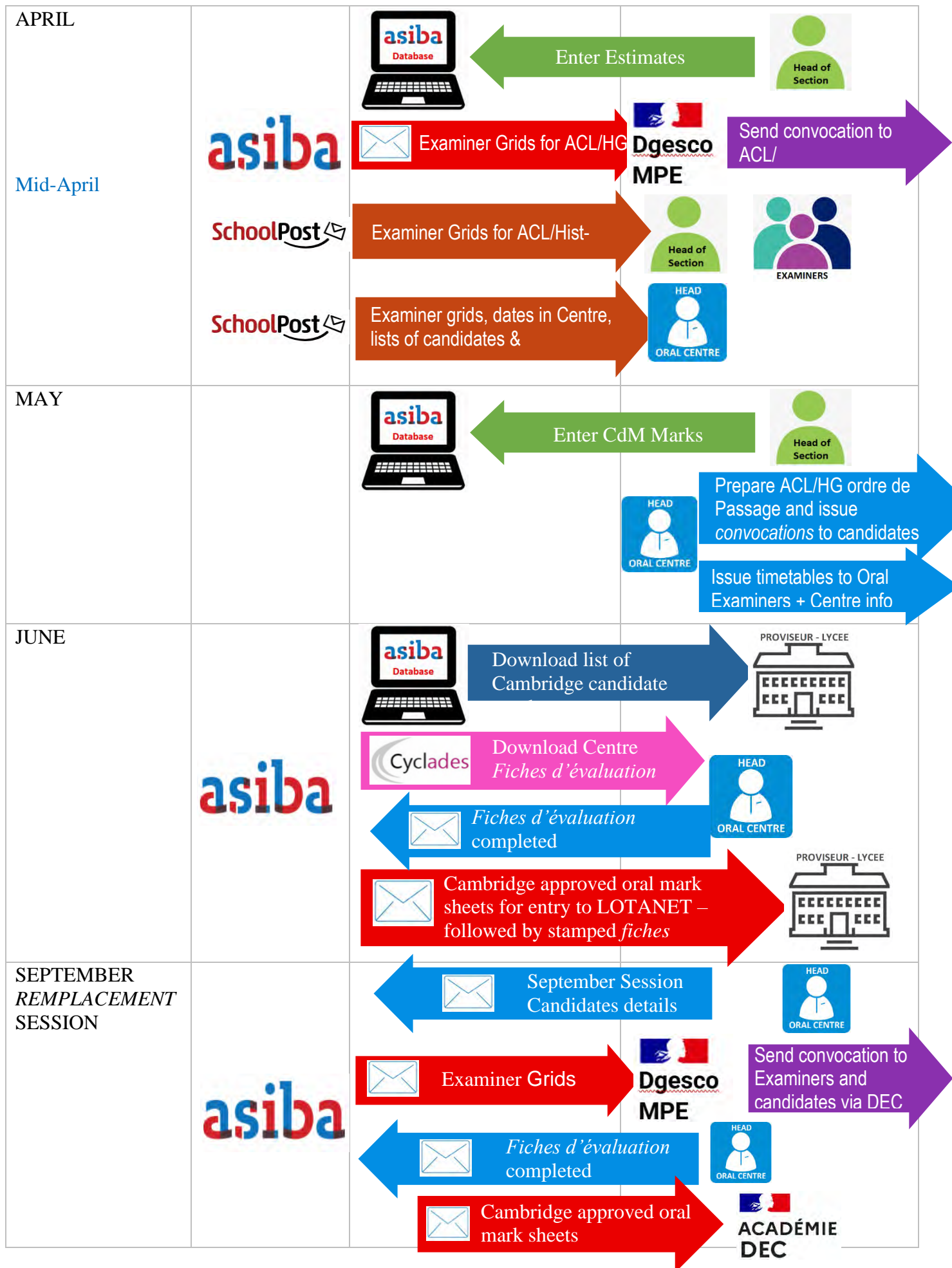
A ‘Very Weak’ mark (0-5) should only be awarded in exceptional circumstances e.g. when the candidate fails to attempt one or more parts of the oral examination.




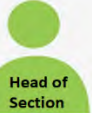

























The marking should recognise the principle of ‘best fit’, e.g. two ‘good’ marks and a ‘satisfactory’ mark would be designated ‘good’ overall.

11.7 Recording oral examination marks for the *jury*

Once the final marks for all candidates have been determined, they are officially recorded for the information of the *baccalauréat jury*. Where the total marks for all subjects of a given candidate place him/her within reach of the *mention* above, French teacher-examiners present at the *jury* may agree to an additional mark in their subject. This adjustment can also be made to the mark approved by the Cambridge inspector.





ASIBA Membership / Training			
	ASIBA/OTHER	Online	Schools
JULY		<div>Training dates & link to pre-registration </div> <div> Complete pre-registration form online</div>	<div>   </div> <div>  </div>
AUGUST		Dates des formations/formalités 	<div>PROVISEUR - LYCEE</div> 
SEPT		 Convocations 	
OCT	<div>ASIBA Séminaires BFI </div>		
NOV		 ASIBA Invoice + AGM Convocation 	<div> <div>LYCEE</div>  </div> <div>  </div>
	<div>ASIBA ACL Oral training Session for NEW examiners </div>		
JANUARY	<div>ASIBA AGM + School Forum </div> <div>ASIBA Connaissance du Monde Oral Training Session</div>		<div> <div>LYCEE</div>  </div> <div>  </div>
			
MARCH	<div>ASIBA Oral Training Sessions ACL/Hist-Geo </div> <div>ASIBA Schools outside mainland France Oral Training Sessions </div>		

Contingency Oral Examination Protocol (France)

The current protocol may be used in mainland France where an examiner is unable to travel and only one examiner is physically present at the examination centre.

Terminology / glossary of terms

- The term 'physical examiner' refers to the examiner who has travelled to the Centre and is physically present in the room with the candidate.
- The term 'remote examiner' refers to the examiner who attends the examination via remote video link (videoconferencing) using the internet. The remote examiner should be situated in a quiet room, away from distractions. No other person may be present in the remote examiner's room at any time during the oral.

The examination room

The examination room is run under the authority of the Head of Centre, who is also responsible for ensuring the equipment defined in this document is available and in working order.

The following equipment must be set up in the examination room:

- a computer connected to the internet via a network cable. (This is to ensure an adequate speed of connection - a wireless connection should not be used).
- a webcam, preferably external to the computer
- a multidirectional microphone, external to the computer (and connected via USB or mini-jack) that is capable of providing high quality rendition of the voices of those present. (Sound quality is of the utmost importance - this must be tested in the examination room prior to the oral examination.)
- the same equipment as required in oral examination centres (as outlined in the Cambridge International/BFI Handbook, available online at www.asiba.fr). The examination room should be arranged in the same way as shown in the Handbook.
- a back-up means of communication in case of connection failure:
 - an alternative internet connection e.g. a 4G key allowing connection by the mobile phone network
 - a telephone with loudspeaker and the direct-dial number of the telephone in the remote examiner's room.

The examination centre must set up and test the equipment well in advance of the examination session in order to resolve any potential problems.

The following documents should also be available in the examination room:

- the current BFI Handbook
- the **Contingency Oral Examination Protocol (France)**
- Exam Day - Special Consideration Forms

The remote examiner

The remote examiner must arrange to attend the oral examinations via remote video link in a quiet room, away from distractions. No other person may be present in the remote examiner's room at any time during the oral. All measures must be taken to ensure that the remote examiner is not disturbed during the designated examination period.

The following equipment must be set up in the remote examiner's room:

- a computer connected to the internet via a network cable. (This is to ensure an adequate speed of connection - a wireless connection should not be used)
- a speaker headset with microphone (preferable to relying on the computer's internal microphone and speakers)
- a webcam
- a back-up means of communication in case of connection failure:
 - An alternative internet connection e.g. a 4G key allowing connection by the mobile phone network

- A telephone, preferably with loudspeaker.

Remote examiners must set up and test the equipment in advance of the examination session.

The following documents should also be available to the remote examiner:

- the current BFI Handbook
- **the Contingency Oral Examination Protocol (France)**
- Exam Day - Special Consideration Forms

A standby remote examiner will be designated by the Subject Leader in case of emergency.

IT support

An IT technician or teacher with appropriate IT/Internet skills must be available at both ends of the link during the examination period in case of technical difficulties. S/He must be able to intervene rapidly if required.

Videoconferencing services

In order to facilitate the coordination of oral examinations across different examination centres, ASIBA recommends that schools use Zoom. It is the responsibility of the examination centre to set up the videoconference and to liaise with the remote examiner and Cambridge Inspector (or anyone designated by them) to ensure they are able to attend the oral examinations via the videoconferencing system in good time before the beginning of the examination session.

In order to ensure the smooth running of the oral examinations, it is essential that:

- 1) the examination centre is informed of the email addresses being used by the remote examiner, emergency remote examiner and, if necessary, the Cambridge Inspector as soon as possible before the start of the oral examinations.
- 2) the examination centre and the remote examiner arrange to test the internet connection and videoconferencing software, as well as the back-up means of communication, before the start of the actual exams.

Timetabling oral examinations

- The Head of Centre is responsible for timetabling the oral examinations in their centre once they have received confirmation of the examiners and agreed dates of the oral examinations from the British BFI Schools Administrative Co-ordinator.
- The following considerations should also be borne in mind when timetabling the oral examinations:
 - examiners should not examine more than three candidates consecutively unless approval to do so has been given by the BFI Subject Leader
 - neither candidates nor examiners should work before 8.00 or beyond 19.00 local time
- The examiners will be informed of the examination timetable by the examination centre and should abide by it. No unscheduled breaks can be taken.

Preparing for the examinations

- Examiners (including standby examiners) should make themselves aware of the examination protocol before the exams.
- The examiners will be informed of the oral examination topics before the exams.
- *Connaissance du Monde*: it is the Head of Centre's responsibility to ensure that any paper resources that the candidate wishes to use in the examination are scanned and emailed to the remote examiner at least 24 hours before the examination is scheduled.
- The Head of Centre must arrange to test the internet connection and videoconferencing system, as well as back-up means of communication, with the remote examiner before the oral examinations are due to start. Any technical problems must be addressed quickly and well before the first day of oral examining.

Examination Procedure

- The two examiners should connect with each other via the videoconferencing system at least one hour before the start of the examinations to establish contact, check the quality of the connection and to identify and solve any potential technical difficulties
- All applications other than those required for the videoconferencing should be closed down on the computers being used by both examiners
- The physical examiner should follow the procedure outlined in the BFI Handbook for greeting candidates and issuing/selecting examination topics etc. In addition, s/he should introduce the

remote examiner using the webcam and explain their role in the examination. A suitable phrasing would be: "I should like to introduce you to Mr / Ms x, the remote examiner. Mr / Ms X will listen to the oral and we will agree the mark together. S/he will not participate in the oral examination; s/he will not ask any questions or intervene in any way. Do you have any questions?" The remote examiner should greet the candidate clearly and audibly at this point.

- The webcam should be placed in such a position as to capture the physical examiner and not the candidate (so as not to disturb the candidate during the examination)
- The computer screen should face the physical examiner during the oral so as not to disturb or unsettle the candidate
- The examination will be conducted by the physical examiner only. The remote examiner should not intervene in any way and should not make any noise that could distract the candidate during the examination. The remote examiner should maintain full concentration during the examination and should take detailed notes on the presentation and responses provided by the candidate so they can serve as evidence for establishing the mark
- At the end of the oral, when the candidate has left the room, the two examiners should then discuss and agree a provisional mark. Both examiners should record the agreed provisional mark (both the overall mark and any component marks)
- If appropriate, the examiners may also discuss the questions that were put to the candidate in order to help the physical examiner to develop his/her questioning
- The physical examiner should complete the 'fiches d'évaluation' at the designated times during the day and/or at the end of each day of examining as appropriate, and they should double-check the marks and comments with the remote examiner against both examiners' records before submitting them to the Cambridge Inspector.

Inspector / Assistant Moderators

- Examining pairs may be inspected / observed by a Cambridge Inspector and / or Assistant Moderator
- The Inspector / Assistant Moderator will contact the Head of Centre and examining pair to inform them which orals they wish to attend and when, and to receive login details for the videoconference
- The physical examiner should introduce the Inspector / Assistant Moderator to the candidate at the same time and in the same way as they introduce the remote examiner
- The Inspector / Assistant Moderator will listen to the oral examination in the same way as the remote examiner. S/he may intervene in the examiners' deliberations.

Unexpected circumstances

- Should the connection fail during an oral, the physical examiner should complete the oral in progress taking care to ensure that the candidate is not aware of the loss of connection (this is to avoid disturbing the candidate). The remote examiner should note the time at which connection was lost. If the videoconferencing software allows the remote examiner to re-join the meeting without disturbing the oral in progress, they should attempt to do so; otherwise, they must not intervene and they should wait for the physical examiner to re-establish the connection after the candidate has left the room.
 - If, following the oral, the connection cannot be re-established, the examiners should try the back-up means of connecting
 - If necessary, and as a last resort, the physical examiner should use the telephone provided to call the remote examiner and the orals should continue using the telephone (audio-only) connection until such time as the technical problem can be resolved by the IT technician on hand.
 - Any problems with connection resulting in the remote examiner being unable to attend for the full duration of an oral must be communicated to the Cambridge Inspector (by the physical examiner) using the Exam Day - Special Consideration Form.
 - Examiners need to be aware of the impact of delay on the oral schedule and particularly when making decisions about remedying problems with equipment before moving to the back-up means of communication.

Addendum – Fiches d'évaluations

The fiches d'évaluation for each subject can be downloaded from Cyclades.

At the end of each day, the Head of the Oral Examination Centre should send scans of the completed ACL and History-Geography *Fiches d'évaluation* to fiches@britishsection.fr. Always include the word "FICHES" followed by the CANDIDATES' SCHOOL'S NAME, BFI SUBJECT & EXAMINERS' INITIALS in the subject line of the email

APPENDIX 3

Protocol for the Organisation of Orals Outside mainland France

From 2023, BFI oral examinations will be organised remotely, by video conference, for schools outside mainland France within the framework of the [arrêté du 10 mars 2014](#) fixant les conditions et modalités de recours à des moyens de communication audiovisuelle pour la tenue à distance d'épreuves et de réunions de jurys du baccalauréat.

The Subject Coordinator, in liaison with the Cambridge Inspector, will designate Remote Examiner(s) who will conduct the oral examinations by remote video link (videoconferencing).

Schools will need to designate and equip the appropriate number of examination rooms as well as a supervised preparation room. An appropriate number of Exam Room Supervisors will also be required to escort candidates between the preparation room and examination room(s) at the appropriate times and to supervise candidates during the oral.

Terminology / glossary of terms:

- The term '**Remote Examiner**' refers to the examiner(s) who attends the examination via remote video link (video conferencing). The Remote Examiner(s) should be situated in a quiet room, away from distractions, in school or at home (if the examiner(s) can be assured of a reliable internet connection). To ensure confidentiality no other person may be present in the Remote Examiners' room at any time during the oral.
- **Head of Centre** - the person designated in each school to take overall responsibility for the organisation of BFI orals in the centre. This person will usually be the Head of Section
- **Exam Room Supervisors** escort candidates between the preparation room and examination room(s) at the appropriate times, supervise candidates during the oral and respond to any incidents (e.g. technical) that arise during the exam. One supervisor will be required for each exam room. In accordance with the [arrêté du 10 mars 2014](#), the Exam Room Supervisor remains in the room out of the line of sight of both the candidate and the Remote Examiner(s) throughout the oral. Exam Room Supervisors should be English speakers where possible and should **not** have taught the candidate in Terminale.

The examination room in the examination centre:

The examination room in the examination centre is run under the authority of the Head of Centre (or someone designated by the BFI school), who is also responsible for ensuring the equipment defined in this document is available and in working order. ALL measures must be taken by the examination centre to ensure that candidates are not disturbed during the examinations.

The following equipment must be set up in the examination room:

- a computer (equipped with a webcam and microphone) connected to the internet.
- in accordance with the [arrêté du 10 mars 2014](#), which specifies the need to monitor the quality of transmission, **headphones may not be used**. Headband microphones are allowed.
- the same examination materials (texts, cards, clock, water, etc.) as required in oral examination centres should be available in the examination room (see the Cambridge International BFI Handbook, available online at <https://bit.ly/33uK93M>)
- a back-up means of communication in case of connection failure:
 - an alternative internet connection e.g. a 4G key allowing connection by the mobile phone network
 - a telephone with loudspeaker and the direct-dial number of the telephone in the Remote Examiner's room
- A clock visible to the candidate

The examination centre must set up, test the equipment and train Exam Room Supervisors well in advance of the examination session in order to resolve any potential problems.

The following documents should also be available in the examination room:

- the oral examination timetable
- the current BFI Handbook (<https://bit.ly/33uK93M>)

- **Protocol for the Organisation of Orals Outside Mainland France**
- Exam Day - Special Consideration Forms (<https://www.asiba.fr/private/>)

The Remote Examiner:

The Remote Examiner must arrange to attend the oral examinations via remote video link in a quiet room, away from distractions, in school or at home (if the examiner can be assured of a reliable internet connection). No other person may be present in the Remote Examiner's room at any time during the oral. ALL measures must be taken to ensure that the Remote Examiner is not disturbed during the designated examination period.

The following equipment must be set up in the Remote Examiner's room:

- a computer (equipped with webcam and microphone) connected to the internet.
- a back-up means of communication in case of connection failure i.e. a telephone

Remote Examiners must set up and test the equipment well in advance of the examination session.

The following documents should also be available to the Remote Examiner(s):

- the current BFI Handbook (<https://bit.ly/33uK93M>)
- **Protocol for the Organisation of Orals Outside Mainland France**
- Exam Day - Special Consideration Forms (<https://www.asiba.fr/private/>)

IT support:

An IT technician or teacher with appropriate IT/Internet skills must be available during the examination period in case of technical difficulties. He or she must be able to intervene rapidly if required.

Video Conferencing services:

It is the responsibility of the examination centre to set up the video conference system and to liaise with the Remote Examiner(s) to ensure they are able to attend the oral examinations via the videoconferencing system in good time (at least two working days) before the beginning of the examination session.

Videoconference links should **not** be published openly (e.g. on social media) and the security functions (e.g. waiting room) should be activated to prevent third parties joining the oral.

Timetabling oral examinations:

The Head of Centre is responsible for timetabling the oral examinations in their centre once they have received confirmation of the examiners (including email addresses) and dates of the oral examinations from ASIBA.

The following considerations should also be borne in mind when timetabling the oral examinations:

- Schools should use the template timetables provided by ASIBA
- The **maximum** number of orals that can be conducted in a day is 11 (12 exceptionally)
- Examiners should not examine more than four candidates consecutively unless approval to do so has been given by ASIBA
- The examiners will be informed of the examination timetable by the centre and should abide by it. No unscheduled breaks can be taken.
- Neither candidates nor examiners should work before 8.00 or beyond 19.00 local time

Convocations:

Schools provide candidates with a convocation in line with normal practice.

AEFE schools provide convocations for the remote examiners. In the case of DOM-TOM schools, the examiners' convocation will be provided by the academies of the school being examined.

Preparing for the examinations:

- Examiners should read the current examination protocol

- The Head of Centre must arrange to test the internet connection and video conferencing software, as well as back-up means of communication, with the Remote Examiner(s) at least two working days prior to the start of the oral examination period.
- For examination centres in different time zones from the Remote Examiner(s), the orals need to be scheduled carefully to respect the time difference between the Remote Examiner(s) and the examination centre.
- The Head of Centre is responsible for implementing the Inspector's instructions about the preparation of the ACL and HG oral content. They are also responsible for the selection and training of the Exam Room Supervisors, the preparation of the examination rooms (ACL Key Issue cards, History-Geography Key Content/Issues cards, water, clock, ventilation etc) and the implementation of the appropriate Protocol Sanitaire throughout the examination period.

Examination content:

1. ACL – Key Issue for Synoptic Topic:

The Head of Centre must confirm to the Remote Examiner(s) the schools' list of key issues at least three weeks before the examination period.

2. History-Geography:

The Head of Centre must confirm to the Remote Examiner(s) the school's key content (key issues and key terms) at least three weeks before the examination period.

Examination Procedure to be followed on examination days:

- The Remote Examiner(s) and the examination centre should connect with each other via the videoconferencing system at least 30 minutes before the start of the examinations to establish contact, check the quality of the connection and to identify and solve any potential technical difficulties
- All applications other than those required for the videoconferencing software should be closed down on the computers being used
- On arrival at the designated preparation area, the candidate presents themselves to the preparation room supervisor at their Allocated time. At the appropriate time, the Exam Room Supervisor checks the candidate's identity, escorts them to the examination room and introduces them to the Remote Examiner(s).
- The Exam Room Supervisor facilitates the selection of the oral topic:
 - **English Literature, Language and Culture – Key Issue for synoptic topic:** in view of the Remote Examiner(s), the candidate selects at random one of the key issue cards. The Exam Room Supervisor highlights the selected key issue on the Key Issue list bearing the candidate's name and hands it to the candidate.
 - **History-Geography:** in view of the Remote Examiner(s), the candidate selects at random one of the key issue cards. Then the candidate selects one of the key term cards. The Exam Room Supervisor highlights the key issue and the key term on Key Content sheet bearing the candidate's name and hands it to the candidate. These are also noted on the *fiche d'évaluation* by the examiner.
- Once the oral topics have been issued/selected the candidate is escorted to the exam preparation room by the Exam Room Supervisor.
- The Preparation Room Invigilator notes the time the candidate starts to prepare. At the end of the 20 minutes preparation time, the Preparation Room Invigilator should inform the candidate that their preparation time is finished and they should stop writing.
- At the appropriate time, the Exam Room Supervisor collects and escorts the candidate to the examination room and helps install the candidate in front of the computer, camera and microphone/speakers. The Exam Room Supervisor informs the candidate that they will help the candidate if there is a technical problem.
- In accordance with the [arrêté du 10 mars 2014](#), the Exam Room Supervisor remains in the room out of the line of sight of both the candidate and the Remote Examiner(s) throughout the oral.
- **If the Cambridge Inspector and/or Assistant Moderator are observing the oral, the Remote Examiner(s) should introduce them to the candidate and explain that the purpose of their presence is to observe what the examiner is doing and that they will not take part in the oral examination**
- At the end of the oral, the Exam Room Supervisor collects all rough paper (eg. ACL Key Issues List, History-Geography Key Content sheet, candidate's notes, etc), turns off the sound and escorts the candidate out of the room. If possible, the camera should be placed in such a way that the exit is visible to the examiners.

- When the candidate has left the room with the Exam Room Supervisor, the Remote Examiner(s) should decide and record a provisional mark (both the overall mark and any component marks)
- The Remote Examiner(s) should complete the '*fiche d'évaluation*' and double check the marks and comments at the designated times during the day and/or at the end of each day of examination as appropriate.
- **The relevant Protocole Sanitaire should be respected at all times.**

Fiches d'évaluation

Refer to the Addendum below for the further information about the organisation of *fiches d'évaluation*.

Moderation:

Moderation of distance oral exams by the Cambridge inspector or BFI Assistant Moderator may occur. In this case the following procedure needs to be followed:

- The Head of Centre and examiner(s) will be informed by ASIBA of the visit
 - The Head of Centre will provide the designated moderator with the oral timetable
 - The inspector/moderator will plan their observation visit and share details with the Head of Centre and the examiner(s).
- a. Role of Head of Centre:
- Provide video conference access to inspector/moderator
 - Inform the Exam Room Supervisor of the observations
 - Be accessible to answer any of the inspector's/moderator's questions on the running of the exam and examination centre
- b. Role of the Remote Examiner(s):
- Introduce the inspector/moderator to the candidates (see BFI Handbook)
 - Allow time to discuss the marks and procedure with the inspector/moderator
- c. Role of Exam Room Supervisor:
- Facilitate and oversee the inspector/moderator's access to the oral
 - Solve any technical problems
 - Record any technical incidents on the Exam Day - Special Consideration Form
- d. Role of inspector/moderator:
- Contact the Head of the Oral Examination Centre and Remote Examiner(s) to inform them when and which orals they will observe
 - Respect the oral timetable
 - Plan time to discuss the oral procedure and conditions with the examiner
 - Discuss, if necessary, the running of the orals with the Head of Centre
 - (Assistant Moderator only: to contact the Cambridge Inspector, whenever appropriate, to provide feedback)

Unexpected circumstances:

- Should the connection fail during an oral, the Remote Examiner(s) should note the time at which connection was lost and consider moving to the back-up means of communication.
- In the event of technical faults affecting the quality of communication during the oral, the examiner(s) may extend the oral provided that it does not exceed one quarter of the time allowed (max 4 minutes). If technical problems do not allow this, the oral should be rescheduled.
- Any problems with connection resulting in the Remote Examiner(s) being unable to attend for the full duration of an oral examination must be communicated to the Head of Centre and the Cambridge Inspector via exams@asiba.fr using the Exam Day – Special Consideration Form.
- Candidates who experience significant disruption during the oral must be indicated to the Cambridge Inspector in the same way. The Head of Centre should try to reschedule the examination within the designated examination period in liaison with the Subject Leader.
- Examiners need to be aware of the impact of delay on the oral schedule and particularly when making decisions about remedying problems with equipment before moving to the back-up means of communication.

- It is the Remote Examiners' responsibility to inform the Head of Centre and the Subject Leader immediately if for any reason they are unable to conduct the orals.

Addendum – Fiches d'évaluations

The fiches d'évaluation for each subject can be downloaded from Cyclades. The Head of Centre forwards them to the remote examiner(s) for each subject.

At the end of each day, the examiner(s) should send scans of the completed *Fiches d'évaluation* to the Head of the Oral Examination Centre who submits it to fiches@britishsection.fr. Always include the word "FICHES" followed by the CANDIDATES' SCHOOL'S NAME, BFI SUBJECT & EXAMINERS' INITIALS in the subject line of the email.

In case of contingency:

The Subject Leader will designate a replacement examiner and arrange for the *Fiches d'évaluation* to be forwarded for printing and completing. At the end of each day, the replacement examiner will scan and email the completed *Fiches* to fiches@britishsection.fr.

Connaissance du Monde (CdM) Document d'accompagnement – Guidance for Assessment

- a. Type: oral assessment in English (presentation followed by discussion)
- b. Duration: 20 minutes, no preparation time
- c. Dates/assessment window: organised in candidates' own schools towards the end of Terminale (13th – 17th May 2024 mainland France; AEFE schools to advise ASIBA)
- d. Deadline for marks: 31st May
- e. Format: the assessment consists of a 10-minute presentation by the candidate of their individual project followed by a 10-minute discussion with the examiners. Both parts of the examination will take place in English.
- f. The examination will be conducted by two BFI section teachers: one must be a teacher of ACL in the section language concerned; the other may be from another subject department (e.g. history-geography) taught in the section language. Both examiners **must** be able to assess the students in English (C1/C2). **Where possible, teachers should not examine their own students; teachers must not examine any students they have taught CdM in Terminale. ASIBA will assign examiners to schools who are unable to field sufficient examiners; in such cases, one of the examiners may attend online.** For schools outside mainland France, the two examiners may work remotely if the school cannot provide any eligible examiners. **Please see the appendices in the current handbook for the relevant examination protocols.**
- g. The candidate's presentation will explain the research processes the student has been through. This will include:
 - i. Explaining the choice of research question, and how it links to the CdM syllabus
 - ii. Explaining the approach and methodology
 - iii. Evaluating and analysing sources of information and perspectives, including engagement with the international partner
 - iv. Explaining the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired during the project and how it has impacted their learning, including intercultural awareness and values
- h. The presentation will be supported by either paper or digital resources prepared by the candidate in advance. Provision will be made for students to project digital resources during the presentation if required. If resources are prepared on paper, then copies will be provided by the candidate for themselves and each examiner. These support materials are not assessed in themselves; candidates are assessed on how they use them to enhance their presentation. The support materials may be material prepared by the candidate and/or research materials and could include:
 - i. Short texts or extracts from documents
 - ii. Images or photographs
 - iii. Graphs or charts
 - iv. Maps
- i. After a maximum of 10 minutes' presentation, the examiners will lead a discussion with the candidate for the remaining time. The purpose of the discussion is to provide the candidate with opportunities to deepen or clarify certain points raised during the presentation and provide further evidence of what they have learned during the research process. Examiners should focus on the process the candidate has been through, the commitment it has involved, and the contribution made by their engagement with their international partner.
- j. A final summative assessment will take place using the *fiche d'évaluation* and Key Point descriptors below. The final mark will be agreed upon through discussion by the examiners at the end of the oral examination.
- k. Marks will be recorded on the *fiche d'évaluation*. One phrase from each of the three columns of the *fiche d'évaluation* can be added to the *appréciation générale* section to justify the mark awarded.
- l. Marks should be uploaded to the ASIBA online database by 31st May to enable oversight by the British inspectors.
- m. Assistant Moderators and/or inspectors may attend CdM orals in the same way as they do the other BFI orals and schools will be notified as appropriate.

Appendix 4a: Fiche d'évaluation pour l'oral de connaissance du monde

Langue de la section :

Session :

Nom de l'élève :

Nom de l'établissement :

Académie:

Prénom de l'élève :

Ville :

Pour chacune des trois colonnes, placer la prestation du candidat à l'un des degrés de réussite (degrés 1, 2, 3 et 4) et attribuer à cette prestation le nombre de points indiqué sans le fractionner en

	Rendre compte de son projet		Rendre compte de son engagement		Communiquer à l'oral	
Degré 4	Rend compte de son projet de façon efficace et convaincante. Problématique pertinente en lien explicite avec au moins un des portails thématiques. Connaissances maîtrisées et utilisées à bon escient de manière autonome. Analyse fine qui intègre la dimension interculturelle.	6 pts	Rend compte avec conviction d'un engagement personnel. Donne du sens à la démarche suivie et aux choix opérés, qui attestent d'un esprit critique entraîné et développé. Analyse finement la plus-value de ce projet partenarial dans son parcours de formation, notamment en matière de développement de valeurs humanistes et citoyennes.	6 pts	S'exprime avec aisance et spontanéité. Vocabulaire et syntaxe adaptés à l'expression d'une pensée nuancée. Bonne maîtrise phonologique. Interaction riche. Peut intervenir dans la construction de l'échange de façon naturelle. L'utilisation du support apporte une plus-value à la prestation.	8 pts
Degré 3	Rend compte de son projet de façon structurée et claire. Projet en lien avec au moins un des portails thématiques. La problématique est cohérente. Connaissances précises parfois mobilisées par les relances du jury. Analyse correcte qui s'appuie sur des références et des aspects interculturels.	4 à 5 pts	Témoigne d'un engagement réel. Sait expliquer de façon structurée et lisible la démarche suivie et les choix opérés, qui témoignent de la capacité à exercer son esprit critique. Sait identifier ce qu'il retire du projet partenarial dans son parcours de formation, notamment en matière de développement de valeurs humanistes et citoyennes, avec éventuellement quelques relances du jury.	4 à 5 pts	S'exprime de façon fluide. Peut utiliser une langue correcte, même dans des énoncés assez longs. Le vocabulaire est précis. Bonne maîtrise phonologique. Répond et réagit clairement, en reformulant si besoin, même dans des situations non anticipées. L'utilisation du support apporte un éclairage intéressant.	5 à 7 pts
Degré 2	Rend compte de son projet de façon relativement claire. Problématique correctement définie. Tentative de mise en perspective avec au moins un des portails thématiques. Connaissances réelles mais l'aide du jury est nécessaire pour les mobiliser. Analyse globalement correcte. Quelques références interculturelles.	3 pts	Rend compte d'une implication suivie. Présente simplement la démarche adoptée et les choix opérés, sans faire toujours preuve d'esprit critique. Est capable d'identifier des bénéfices que ce projet partenarial lui a apportés, avec l'aide du jury, mais le lien avec le développement de valeurs humanistes et citoyennes n'est pas toujours clairement établi.	3 pts	S'exprime de façon claire et détaillée, même si le discours est parfois simple. Utilise un vocabulaire exact dans des situations prévisibles malgré quelques hésitations. Maîtrise phonologique globalement correcte, malgré quelques erreurs. Répond et réagit de façon simple. Le support est utilisé de façon redondante avec le propos.	3 à 4 pts
Degré 1	Rend compte de son projet de façon parfois confuse. La structure peut être lacunaire. Faible mise en perspective avec le portail thématique choisi. Connaissances imprécises. Difficulté à les mobiliser malgré les relances. Analyse simple qui ne prend pas suffisamment en compte la dimension interculturelle.	2 pts	La présentation de la démarche suivie est imprécise et les choix opérés ne sont pas toujours justifiés. Ils relèvent parfois davantage de l'opinion commune que de l'appropriation personnelle. Difficulté à identifier la plus-value de ce projet partenarial dans son parcours de formation, notamment en matière de développement de valeurs humanistes et citoyennes, malgré les relances du jury.	2pts	Discours intelligible mais ponctué de pauses plus ou moins longues. Vocabulaire limité qui peut conduire à des répétitions et prononciation souvent incorrecte. Interaction limitée. Les échanges sont courts. Le candidat ne parvient pas à se détacher du support pour entrer dans la communication.	2 pts
	Note A	/ 6	Note B	/ 6	Note C	/ 8

Appréciation générale :

Note :

/ 20

Date de l'évaluation :

Nom, prénom et signature des examinateurs :

Appendix 4b: Key Point Descriptors (Connaissance du Monde (CdM))

Dear Examiners,

This guide (*document d'accompagnement*), has been produced to assist you in evaluating students' performance in the *Connaissance du Monde* module and should be used alongside the *fiche d'évaluation*. By elucidating the French criteria in English, we aim to ensure fair and consistent assessment across all schools, year-on-year.

Note: The Key Point descriptors below describe typical features of work at each Key Point. It is not expected that all the listed features of a given Key Point should be present in order for it to qualify for a mark within that Key Point. For example, an answer may exhibit some features that suggest Key Point **17** and others that suggest Key Point **14**; its qualities should be balanced and it should be awarded the Key Point that offers the 'best fit'.

Very Good: 17-20 or Key Point 17

Candidates present a clearly-defined and focused research question that specifically addresses one or more key themes of *Connaissance du Monde*. There is evidence of extensive and detailed research, covering a wide range of relevant resources. Candidates offer a well-considered evaluation of the strengths and limitations of their engagement with an international partner along with a sophisticated evaluation of the impact of the project in developing their own learning, personal perspectives, and values. They exhibit highly effective research skills, displaying very good use of research methods, including a well-considered critical evaluation of source material. Candidates also offer a sophisticated critical evaluation of perspectives and the evidence on which they are based, demonstrating strong intercultural awareness and understanding. English is used expressively, subtly, and precisely, allowing natural and flexible interaction with examiners. Candidates produce very well-devised and structured presentations with highly effective delivery and well-directed supporting material. They provide detailed and well-developed responses to questions and offer convincing and well-substantiated judgments.

Good: 14-16 or Key Point 14

Candidates present a well-defined research question that addresses one or more key themes of *Connaissance du Monde*. There is evidence of good research, covering a range of relevant resources. Candidates engage in thoughtful reflection on the strengths and limitations of their engagement with an international partner, offering thoughtful analysis of the impact of the project in developing their own learning, personal perspectives, and values. They demonstrate effective research skills with a good use of research methods, including thoughtful analysis and evaluation of source material. They also engage in thoughtful analysis of perspectives and the evidence on which they are based, demonstrating clear intercultural awareness and understanding. English is used securely and effectively, allowing for flexible and precise communication. Candidates deliver well-devised and structured presentations with effective delivery and use of relevant supporting material. They provide thoughtful and developed responses to questions and offer considered and well-substantiated judgments.

Satisfactory: 10-13 or Key Point 11

Candidates present a reasonably well-defined research question that relates to one or more key themes of *Connaissance du Monde*. There is evidence of some research, covering a satisfactory range of resources. Candidates engage in some informed reflection on the strengths and limitations of their engagement with an international partner along with some analysis of the impact of the project in developing their own learning, personal perspectives, and values. They demonstrate some evidence of appropriate research skills, with satisfactory use of research methods, including some sound analysis of source material. They also engage in some analysis of perspectives and the evidence on which they are based, demonstrating some intercultural awareness and understanding. English is generally clear, enabling candidates to convey basic ideas and permitting some purposeful interaction. Candidates maintain a simple but clear presentational structure and delivery, with some appropriate use of supporting material. They demonstrate some ability to frame responses to questions and offer some judgments.

Weak: 0-9 or Key Point 8

Candidates present a vague research question that only partially relates to one or more key themes of *Connaissance du Monde*. Candidates present limited evidence of research. They offer limited reflection on the strengths and limitations of their engagement with an international partner. They provide limited analysis of the impact of the project in developing their own learning, personal perspectives, and values. They demonstrate basic research skills, with basic use of research methods, including limited analysis of source material. They provide limited analysis of perspectives and the evidence on which they are based, with limited intercultural awareness and understanding. Candidates use English that may impede communication and limit interaction, with control of language inhibiting clear communication of ideas. They produce poorly devised and structured presentations with poor delivery and limited use of supporting material. They provide limited responses to most questions and offer very limited judgments, often consisting of assertions.

ENGLISH LITERATURE, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE (PARCOURS TRILINGUE)

1. Aims & Objectives and Syllabus

Students preparing English Literature, Language & Culture in LVB English as part of the BFI *Parcours Trilingue* follow the same syllabus as students taking English Literature, Language & Culture in LVA English as part of the BFI *Parcours Bilingue* (see Part II, section 6 above).

However, modifications have been made to both the examination format (both written and oral) and the marking criteria to reflect the lower language level required (B2):

2. Written Examination

Students taking English Literature, Language & Culture in LVB English as part of the *Parcours Trilingue* will sit the same written exam paper as the students taking the *Parcours Bilingue* (see Part II, section 6.4 above); however, they will only have to answer two questions in the four hours (instead of three for the *Parcours Bilingue*). In practice, this means that EITHER they choose to do one question from Part One (Shakespeare) and one question from Part Two (Set Texts) OR two questions from Part Two (Set Texts) but from two different sections (Drama, Prose, Poetry).

3. Oral Examination

Again, the format of the oral examination is essentially the same as the *Parcours Bilingue* (see Part II, section 6.5 above) with the exception that students taking English Literature, Language & Culture in LVB English as part of the *Parcours Trilingue* will only have to refer to two texts (instead of three).

4. Assessment criteria - Key Point descriptors for English Literature, Language & Culture in LVB English

See below

5. Allocation of examiners and organisation of the exams

Teachers of English Literature, Language & Culture in LVB English will constitute a separate pool of examiners and will be allocated in the same way as examiners for the *Parcours Bilingue*; that's to say, by the ASIBA Schools Chair in consultation with the National Subject Coordinator(s) and the Cambridge Inspector. See Part I, sections 4 and 5 above for more information about the organisation of BFI written and oral examinations.

BFI British Option
Version trilingue/quadrilingue
ACL Assessment Criteria
Written Examination

Note on the implementation of the Key Point descriptors

The marking criteria describe typical features of work at each Key Point. It is not expected that all the listed features of a given Key Point should be present in a piece of work in order for it to qualify for a mark within that Key Point. For example, an answer may exhibit some features that suggest Key Point 18 and others that suggest Key Point 15; its qualities should be balanced and it should be awarded the Key Point that offers the 'best fit'.

KEY POINT 20: 60 and above: B2/C1

General

A response that demonstrates insight, personal engagement, thoroughness and sensitivity. Skills of writing, argument and close reading are secure; sensitivity to nuances of language and ideas is also apparent. Analysis is thoughtful and often detailed. Where appropriate, the answer shows an awareness of some of the ways in which meaning and suggestion can be conveyed by style, structure, tone or literary devices, as well as by literal meaning of words. The question has been understood, considered and discussed in a balanced fashion. Any errors in expression are minor and do not impede understanding.

Reading and Response to Set Texts

A thoughtful, detailed and convincing response. Knowledge of the text is secure; use of it to answer the question is focused and selective. Understanding of central issues, as well as some awareness of implicit meanings or suggestion, is clear. Some telling use of detail may be expected. The candidate's own interpretation will be well argued and supported from the text. There is an awareness of the genre of the work, and of the ways in which the text engages the reader or audience. The candidate is likely to discuss literary features of the text in relation to their effects where this is appropriate.

Demonstration

Complex argument handled clearly with appropriate structure; paragraphs are well constructed and effectively linked. Argument should be generally purposeful in establishing a view of the text and the question. Ideas are discussed and supported by evidence.

Expression *N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point*

Fluent and convincing. A high degree of grammatical accuracy, including use of complex structures where appropriate. Minor errors do not impede understanding or undermine the subtlety of response. Broad vocabulary used effectively and in a nuanced fashion.

KEY POINT 18: 40-59: B2/B2+

General

An answer that displays well-developed knowledge and textual understanding, as well as personal engagement. The question is understood and considered, and discussion of it in relation to the text is mostly analytical, purposeful and clear, with some effective use of detail. Use of relatively formal English is secure, even if there are some errors which do not compromise understanding.

Reading and Response to Set Texts

Secure knowledge and often thoughtful understanding of the text are evident, even if the candidate tends to see it primarily in terms of theme or character. There is a personal response, and ideas are supported by textual reference. Some sense of significant detail may be apparent. The candidate may address the ways in which the text has evoked the response, perhaps in terms of encouraging sympathy with particular characters or points of view. Personal interpretation, with some explanation, may be evident, and there is some awareness of thematic, structural and formal features.

Demonstration

Argument and structure are likely to be clear and coherent, even if sometimes reductive. Ideas are clearly explained in response to the question. Evidence should be used effectively, though it may not always be fully discussed, and may not always be seamlessly woven into the candidate's writing. Personal interpretations are generally reasoned rather than merely asserted.

Expression **N.B.** *Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point*

Clear, generally effective use of language. Straightforward structures are handled with confidence and a high level of accuracy; any errors in more complex structures do not impede understanding. Range of vocabulary and linguistic structures is secure enough to allow precise articulation of essential ideas. Even if vocabulary and variety of sentence construction may occasionally be limited, they are adequate to the expression of the candidate's ideas. Some critical vocabulary may be used.

KEY POINT 15: 25-39: B1+

General

An answer that displays sound understanding of the question, and which exhibits competence in discussing it in relation to the text. Basic skills of writing and analysis are evident, even if formal expression may sometimes lapse into everyday, high-frequency English. Knowledge and understanding of the set texts are secure, if sometimes simplistic or lacking subtlety. Some use of textual reference should be expected, even if this occasionally tends to the narrative rather than the analytical.

Reading and Response to Set texts

There is a well-informed focus on the text and the question. Knowledge and understanding are secure enough for the candidate to explain characters, relationships and ideas in general terms, pointing to episodes or moments in the text for illustration. Some use of detail should be expected. A personal response is likely to be evident, even though this may not be fully developed. Some ability to explore the ideas or emotions evoked by the text, and how the text conveyed the ideas or evoked their response, may be apparent.

Demonstration

Clear points are made, and there is a personal point of view on the text and the question. Argument is supported by some use of evidence. A tendency to narrate or describe, rather than analyse may be apparent, but some effective analysis should be expected.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Expression of ideas is reasonably secure and not limited to high-frequency, everyday language: some instances of more analytical and formal language will be evident, even if much of the language will be more straightforward. Straightforward constructions are generally well-handled and accurate; any errors do not unduly hamper understanding. Some use of periphrasis to overcome gaps in vocabulary may be evident. Vocabulary and variety of sentence construction may be limited, but are generally adequate to the expression of the candidate's ideas. Some critical vocabulary may be used where appropriate.

KEY POINT 12: 20-24: B1

General

An answer that shows sufficient understanding at a basic level, but offers limited use of knowledge, or little detail or development. There is a genuine attempt to answer the question and to use illustration, even if this is not sustained, or is in narrative form. There are some sound moments, even if the answer as a whole lacks coherence or only provides it in a simplistic and mechanical response to both text and question. Use of written English is likely to be mainly in everyday, high-frequency language; accuracy is flawed, but is sufficient to ensure communication of basic ideas.

Reading and Response to Set texts

Reasonable knowledge of the texts is demonstrated, though there may be gaps and inconsistencies. Knowledge may often be expressed in general terms, or not used in an appropriately selective way. Some understanding is evident, even if it is crude, or presented in the form of narrative, or limited to the more straightforward features of the text. There will be some evidence of a personal response. Some use of textual reference should be expected, even if it is likely to be limited. There may be promising moments of analysis or of engagement in the language and issues of the text, or its literary features, even if these remain undeveloped. Candidate writes a good essay but completely fails, even implicitly, to address the question set.

Demonstration

A focus on the question will be evident, even if the argument may be simplistic, assertive and lack clarity. Ideas may be stated clearly, even if not fully developed. The terms of the question may be understood or referred to, and there will be some attempt at a genuine discussion of question and text. The argument may be simplistic, assertive and, at times, lack precision but evidence may be offered, even if only briefly discussed.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

Control of language is adequate to a basic communication of thought, even if it is too approximate to convey ideas or response with precision. The response is articulated in straightforward, high-frequency language which is generally well-handled and accurate; any errors do not unduly hamper understanding. Some use of periphrasis to overcome gaps in vocabulary may be evident and some errors of grammar, syntax or usage will be evident.

KEY POINT 9: 15-19: A2/B1

General

Some knowledge and understanding, and perhaps glimpses of personal engagement, are evident; but they are too reductive and simplistic to enable the candidate to develop ideas into a real discussion. There is an attempt to answer the question, but the writing shows a struggle to organise thought, and argument and logical development are compromised or unclear. Where there is reference to the text, its purpose may not be made explicit.

Reading and Response to Set Texts

General, if limited knowledge and understanding are evident, even if they are simplistic and superficial. Any supporting textual reference is unlikely to be discussed. Knowledge of the text may be poor enough to prevent the candidate from answering the given question fully, though an attempt will be made. Some errors and confusion may be evident. There may be glimpses of literary appreciation and engagement with the text.

Demonstration

There is an attempt to answer the question, even if the response is undeveloped and short. There may be some signs of an argument, but this lacks coherence, even if there is an occasional sense of logical progression. Evidence, if it is offered, is likely to be unexplained, or not clearly relevant to the point and question.

The terms of the question may be only partially understood or referred to, and a genuine discussion of question and text should not be expected at this level. There will be more description, paraphrase and unsupported assertion than analysis; some central issues are raised, but not developed.

Expression N.B Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point

The response is articulated in straightforward, high-frequency language, and ideas are likely to be expressed in basic and reductive terms. The writing is comprehensible, despite frequent errors of grammar or syntax. Despite a limited vocabulary, there is some attempt to communicate ideas.

KEY POINT 6: 5-14: A2

General

Lack of knowledge and/or understanding prevents the candidate from answering the question with any clarity or coherence. Writing shows a struggle to organise thought, and argument and logical development can probably only be glimpsed. If there is reference to the text, its purpose may not be clear. There is little sense of literary appreciation or engagement with the text.

Reading and Response to Set Texts

Knowledge and understanding of the basic elements of the text – characters, plot, ideas – may be identified and described in very simple terms; however, they are poor enough to prevent the candidate from answering the given question adequately. Significant errors and confusion are likely. Understanding is similarly limited: there is little sense of literary appreciation or engagement with the text, and no analysis should be expected at this level.

Demonstration

There will be little understanding of the terms of the question or the ways in which it may engage with the text. Any points made are likely to be very basic and undeveloped.

Expression N.B. Any candidate whose written expression falls beneath the level described below should not be placed at this key point.

Language is likely to be basic and formulaic, using high-frequency everyday language. The response may be difficult to comprehend, with frequent errors of grammar or syntax. A limited vocabulary is likely to impede any attempt to communicate ideas.

KEY POINT 3: 1-4: A1

General

An answer that is too basic to show any real engagement with either the text or the question. Familiarity with the text is difficult to discern. Use of English is not sufficiently controlled to enable the reader to understand easily any ideas expressed.

Reading and Response to Set Texts

Knowledge or personal response may be glimpsed at a very elementary level. Some limited knowledge of the text may be shown, but it is fragmentary and often merely a series of unconnected thoughts.

Demonstration

The response may have some connection with the question. At this level, it should not be expected to engage with it in any meaningful fashion.

Expression

The answer may be just comprehensible, but reading is difficult. Vocabulary will be extremely limited.

BFI British Option
Version trilingue/quadrilingue
ACL Assessment Criteria
Oral examination

Note on the implementation of the Key Point descriptors

The marking criteria describe typical features of work at each Key Point. It is not expected that all the listed features of a given Key Point should be present in a piece of work in order for it to qualify for a mark within that Key Point. For example, an answer may exhibit some features that suggest Key Point 18 and others that suggest Key Point 15; its qualities should be balanced and it should be awarded the Key Point that offers the 'best fit'.

KEY POINT 20: 60 and above: B2/C1

General

A response that demonstrates insight, personal engagement, thoroughness and sensitivity in handling the topic and the texts within it. There is evidence of close reading, insight, and an ability to argue and demonstrate. Reference to the individual texts is well-focused and selective, whether it be in the form of quotation or focused allusion. A personal view and interpretation of the topic through the texts is evident. There is some sensitivity to language and ideas and a preparedness to discuss features of style and form, and of the topic itself, as well as characters and relationships. The adaptation of knowledge to the situation is virtually always sensible and effective. Insights and judgements are usually perceptive and considered. Any errors in expression are minor and do not impede understanding.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate offers a rich, coherent view of the Key Issue, almost always maintaining a clear focus and giving well-chosen, effective illustration. An awareness of the context of the Key Issue within the topic as a whole is evident. The candidate steers a clear overall pathway through the issue, showing personal engagement and reflection and thorough use of knowledge to support their views, even if the thoroughness may occasionally threaten the clarity or momentum of the presentation.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic: Discussion

The candidate's understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic is thorough and thoughtful, with informed personal viewpoints being articulated. Use of knowledge is focused and selective and constructive parallels within or between texts may be offered where appropriate. An active, personally engaged and committed response.

Demonstration

There is the capacity to sustain, with no more than occasional loss of control, a sound and organised line of argument. Knowledge is flexible enough to allow for changes in direction in the discussion.

Expression

The use of language is secure and effective, though there may be occasional errors (e.g. careless or second language slips).

KEY POINT 18: 40-59: B2/B2+

General

The candidate shows a secure knowledge and understanding of the topic and the texts within it, and a willingness to discuss them, with a real sense of engagement. The use of knowledge is thoughtful and analytical, with effective illustration and reference. There will also be some engagement with the literary features of texts or topic. Use of English to discuss the topic and texts is mainly effective and secure, and any errors do not impede understanding.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate offers an adequately rich, generally focused view of the Key Issue, giving some effective illustration through quotation or focused allusion. There is a general sense of the place of the Key Issue within the topic as a whole. The chosen structure allows the candidate to steer a pathway through the issue, drawing upon secure knowledge to support their views.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic: Discussion

The candidate shows an informed and considered understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic. The candidate may address the ways in which the text has evoked the response, perhaps in terms of encouraging sympathy with particular characters or points of view. They may point to parallels and contrasts, and will certainly make thoughtful observations. There is evidence of close reading, although this may sometimes be on the level of character and theme. A careful and thoughtful personal response to the texts and topic.

Demonstration

The candidate can analyse, argue and develop ideas, even if the discussion may sometimes move more into description than analysis. The candidate can point to parallels and contrasts. The candidate's knowledge is flexible enough to permit real discussion.

Expression

The candidate's use of language to discuss the topic and the texts is secure enough to allow precise articulation of essential ideas; any lapses do not impede understanding.

KEY POINT 15: 25-39: B1+

General

The candidate shows sound understanding of the topic and the texts within it, and a willingness to discuss them, with a real sense of engagement from time to time. The use of knowledge is also sound though it may be on a rather literal, narrative, character-and-theme level, with ideas seen as static rather than complex and evolving. Some use of textual reference should be expected, even if this can tend to the narrative rather than the analytical. Ideas are expressed reasonably clearly, even if the language can lapse into everyday, high-frequency English. Knowledge and understanding of the set texts are sound, if sometimes simplistic or lacking subtlety.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate offers a generally sound, well-informed view of the Key Issue, giving some effective illustration through quotation or focused allusion. There is some sense of the place of the Key Issue within the topic as a whole. The candidate attempts to steer a pathway through the issue, drawing upon sound knowledge to support their views. At times, there may be some oversimplification and loss of focus.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic: Discussion

The candidate shows a generally well-informed and sometimes thoughtful understanding of the texts (both individually and collectively) as an expression of the synoptic topic. Knowledge and understanding are secure enough for the candidate to explain characters, relationships and ideas in general terms, pointing to episodes or moments in the text for illustration. There may be some imbalance in their knowledge of the texts, but the candidate may attempt to point to parallels and contrasts, and make some thoughtful observations. Some ability to explore the ideas or emotions evoked by the text, and how the text conveyed the ideas or evoked their response, may be apparent. A careful if unimaginative response to the texts and topic.

Demonstration

Some clear points are made, and there is a personal point of view on the topic and the texts. A tendency to narrate or describe, rather than analyse may be apparent, but some effective analysis should be expected. Changes of subject or text might cause hesitation, but the candidate's knowledge is flexible enough to permit discussion.

Expression

Expression of ideas is reasonably clear and not limited to high-frequency, everyday language: some instances of more analytical language will be evident, even if much of the language will be more straightforward. Use of English to discuss the topic and texts is sound enough for a meaningful discussion to take place.

KEY POINT 12: 20-24: B1

General

The candidate shows sound understanding at a basic level of the topic and the texts within it, but offers limited use of knowledge, or little detail or development. There is a genuine attempt to engage in discussion, even if this is not sustained, or is in narrative form. There are some sound moments, even if the response to the topic as a whole may lack coherence. The candidate may offer a sound general response to both topic and texts but there is likely to be a lack of supporting detail, or an emotional response that is not supported by evidence. Use of English is likely to be mainly in everyday, high-frequency language; accuracy is flawed, but is sufficient to ensure communication of basic ideas and an exchange based on mutual understanding.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate's presentation of the Key Issue will show reasonable knowledge, though there are gaps and inconsistencies. There may be little sense of how the Key Issue relates to the broader topic. Overall knowledge of the Key Issue is likely to be general rather than detailed.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Knowledge of the topic and the texts within it may often be expressed in general terms, or not used in an appropriately selective way. Some understanding is evident, even if it is crude, or presented in the form of narrative. There will be some evidence of a personal response. Some use of textual reference should be expected, even if it is likely to be limited.

Demonstration

A focus on the topic and texts will be evident, even if the discussion may be simplistic and sometimes lack clarity. Ideas will be stated, even if not fully developed, and there will be some attempt at a genuine discussion. Discussion may take the form of unsupported assertion and knowledge may not be flexible enough to allow for changes of direction or previously unfamiliar thought.

The candidate may fail to grasp the main point of questions and may not seek clarification so answers may be rambling and poorly focused.

Expression

Control of language is adequate to a basic communication of thought, even if it is too approximate to convey ideas or response with precision. The response is articulated in straightforward, high-frequency language; any errors do not unduly hamper understanding. Some use of periphrasis to overcome gaps in vocabulary may be evident.

KEY POINT 9: 15-19: A2/B1

General

Some knowledge and understanding, and perhaps glimpses of personal engagement, are evident; but they are too reductive and simplistic to enable the candidate to develop ideas into a real discussion. Opinions are offered, though based on little or seemingly only partially understood evidence. There is likely to be considerable simplification, serious misreading and distortion. There is no close reading of texts or meaningful development of ideas. There may be too much attention to trivia, a tendency to narrate, and a great deal of repetition.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

The candidate's presentation of the Key Issue is thin, lacking both a clear overview and supporting detail. There is little sense of how the Key Issue relates to the broader topic. Overall knowledge of the Key Issue is very vague, patchy or faulty. There is no sense of a flexible or personal response to the topic or texts.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Knowledge of the topic and texts is poor: the candidate makes unsupported generalisations with no evidence of close reading. There is little sense of how texts individually or collectively function as an expression of the synoptic topic. Attempts to engage in comparisons or to see parallels or contrasts are unlikely, and the candidate may have difficulty in drawing these even when prompted. There is no sense of an active response to texts or topic.

Demonstration

There may be some moments when analysis is attempted. Evidence may be briefly offered, even if it is unexplained or irrelevant. Textual evidence may take only the form of narrative. As ideas are not argued, opportunities for discussion are rare. Meaningful dialogue is difficult to establish.

Expression

There is an attempt to communicate ideas, but the candidate's struggle to express themselves is evident; vocabulary may seem too limited to allow for sustained commentary or meaningful dialogue; the candidate may manifest discomfort with the task.

KEY POINT 6: 5-14: A2

General

Lack of knowledge and/or understanding prevents the candidate from engaging with the tasks with any clarity or coherence. Understanding and knowledge of the topic and texts are difficult to establish. The candidate struggles to make themselves understood, and any dialogue is difficult and unsustained.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

There is little evidence of understanding of the Key Issue. The presentation will be fragmentary with only very basic knowledge shown.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Knowledge and understanding of the basic elements of the topic and the texts – characters, plot, ideas – may be identified and described in very simple terms; however, they are poor enough to prevent the candidate from making clear points or entering into meaningful dialogue. Significant errors and confusion are likely. No analysis should be expected at this level.

Demonstration

Any points made are likely to be very basic and undeveloped.

Expression Language is likely to be basic and formulaic, using high-frequency everyday language. Expression may be difficult to comprehend, with frequent errors of grammar or syntax. A limited vocabulary is likely to impede any attempt to communicate ideas.

KEY POINT 3: 1-4: A1

General

The candidate is unable to show any real engagement with the topic, the texts or the tasks. Familiarity with the topic and texts is difficult to discern. Use of English is not sufficiently controlled to enable understanding of any ideas expressed.

Reading and Response

Part 1: Synoptic Topic: Key Issue

There is little evidence of any understanding of the Key Issue. Any knowledge or understanding is fragmentary and is likely to be a series of unconnected thoughts.

Part 2: Synoptic Topic

Understanding of the topic and texts is very difficult to discern.

Demonstration

The response is likely to have only a slight connection with the tasks. At this level, it should not be expected to engage with them in any meaningful fashion.

Expression

The candidate's utterances may be just comprehensible, but understanding is difficult. Vocabulary will be extremely limited.