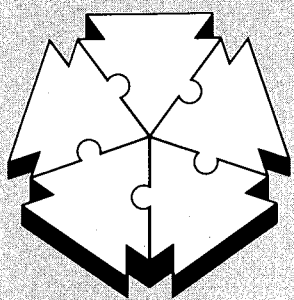




GCSE

French

Session: 1994
Type: Syllabus
Code: 1525

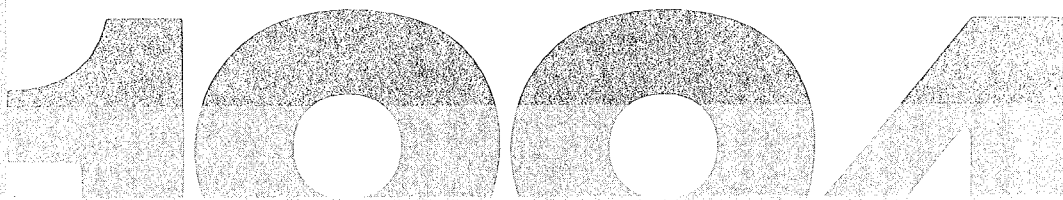


**Midland
Examining
Group**

**GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF
SECONDARY EDUCATION**

FRENCH
Syllabus Code 1525

**Examination
Syllabus**



GENERAL INFORMATION

Availability: This syllabus will be examined by the Midland Examining Group (MEG) in the Summer of the year shown on the cover.

Details of the provision of Autumn examinations are given in Part 2 of the MEG Handbook for Centres.

Certification: This subject will be shown on the GCSE certificate as

FRENCH

Certificates will be issued by the Home Board on behalf of MEG.

Exclusions: In any one examination series, candidates entering for this subject may not in addition enter for any other MEG examination with the same certification title.

Entries: All candidates, including private candidates, must be entered by a Centre registered with MEG.

In order to enter candidates, a Centre must register with one of the MEG Boards (designated its Home Board). The Centre must make its entries for all MEG examinations through that Home Board.

All candidates must meet the full requirements of this syllabus and must therefore have their Course Work/Assessed Practical Work authenticated and assessed by an approved Centre.

Results: Results will be certificated as levels 4 - 10 of the National Curriculum ten level scale.

The relationship between the National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades certificated up to 1993 is shown below:

Grade	Level
A	10
	9
B	8
C	7
D	6
E	5
F	4
G	4

Enquiries: All enquiries about MEG or its examinations should be made to the Centre's Home Board.

Addresses and telephone numbers of the Boards in MEG are given on the back cover of this syllabus.

Marginal downrules indicate alterations to the previous year's syllabus, where appropriate.

FRENCH

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AIMS

- 1 To develop the ability to use French effectively for purposes of practical communication.
- 2 To form a sound base of the skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure.
- 3 To offer insights into the culture and civilisation of French-speaking countries.
- 4 To develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning.
- 5 To provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.
- 6 To encourage positive attitudes to foreign language learning and to speakers of foreign languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations.
- 7 To promote learning skills of a more general application (eg analysis, memorising, drawing of inferences).

It should be noted that not all these aims can be translated readily into assessment objectives.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

For assessment objectives to be appropriate to candidates across the GCSE ability range there will be some differentiation of objectives for each of the four skill areas of listening, reading, speaking and writing. These will be tested in differentiated papers, as described below.

Common Core Assessment Objectives

The following list of Common Core assessment objectives in the three skill areas of listening, reading and speaking are appropriate for all candidates and can be seen as the requirement for the award of Levels 4, 5 and 6.

Basic Listening

Candidates should be able, within a limited range of clearly defined topic areas, to demonstrate understanding of specific details in formal announcements (eg news items, weather forecasts), in informal announcements (eg instructions, requests), and in interviews and dialogues. The material used will be based on French which was designed to be heard (and not involve texts which were intended to be read silently) and will be recorded on tape by native speakers. Candidates will be required to demonstrate only comprehension and no undue burden will be put on memory.

Basic Reading

Candidates should be able, within a limited range of clearly defined topic areas, to demonstrate understanding of public notices and signs (eg menus, timetables, advertisements) and the ability to extract relevant specific information from such texts as simple brochures, guides, letters and forms of imaginative writing considered to be within the experience of, and reflecting the interests of, sixteen-year olds of average ability. Candidates will be required to demonstrate only comprehension, not to produce précis or summaries.

Basic Speaking

Candidates should be able to respond to unprepared questions on a limited range of clearly defined topic areas (Candidate as Interviewee); the questions will be unprepared in the sense that they are not specified in advance, although the close definition of the topic areas to be dealt with will make it possible for candidates to practice the types of question which are likely to be asked. Candidates will also perform role-playing tasks which involve both taking the initiative and responding to questions, with both strangers and friends (Candidate as Transactor). Candidates will be expected to pronounce the sounds of the foreign language well enough for a sympathetic native speaker to understand.

Additional Assessment Objectives

For candidates aiming at the award of Level 7 and above, additional assessment objectives are necessary.

Basic Writing

Candidates should be able, within a limited range of clearly defined topic areas (mirroring those of the Common Core assessment objectives for speaking), to carry out writing tasks which might include, for example, a simple letter in response to a letter in easily comprehensible French or to instructions in English, and short messages (postcards, lists, notes) in response to instructions in English or easily comprehensible French.

Higher Listening

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the skills listed under Basic Listening over a wider range of clearly defined topic areas. They will, in addition, be able to identify the important points or themes of the material, including attitudes, emotions and ideas which are expressed; to draw conclusions from, and identify the relationship between, ideas within the material which they hear, and to understand a variety of registers, such as those used on radio and television, in the home, in more formal situations and by sixteen-year olds in French-speaking countries.

Authentic material for listening comprehension may well contain natural hesitation, spontaneous repetition or rephrasing of sentences and a limited amount of background noise.

Higher Reading

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the skills listed under Basic Reading over a wider range of clearly defined topic areas. To the range of types of text will be added magazines and newspapers likely to be read by a sixteen-year old, and in addition to the types of comprehension expected under Common Core assessment objectives, candidates will be expected to demonstrate the ability to identify the important points or themes within an extended piece of writing and to draw conclusions from, and see relations within, an extended text.

Higher Speaking

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the skills listed under Basic Speaking over a wider range of clearly defined topic areas (Candidate as Transactor). They will be expected to ask, and respond to, questions relating to a wider range of clearly defined situations which are within the experience and scope of a sixteen-year old and to conduct a sustained free conversation (ie a conversation which has not been rehearsed) on one or more subjects, as specified in the syllabus (Candidate as Interviewee). Candidates will also be expected to give an account of an incident or an experience (Candidate as Narrator).

Candidates will be expected to pronounce the normal sounds of the foreign language accurately enough for a native speaker to understand without difficulty, to observe correct sense groupings and speak with a certain degree of correct intonation and stress.

Higher Writing

Candidates should be able to write in continuous French, on a wider range of clearly defined topic areas, in response to a written stimulus in English or in easily comprehensible French, or in response to a visual stimulus.

Relationship between Assessment Objectives and Levels

Compulsory Elements

The Common Core elements, compulsory for all candidates, are:

Basic Listening, Basic Reading, Basic Speaking.

Optional Additional Elements

The candidate may be entered in addition for any of the other elements. Higher Writing may be offered only if the candidate has been entered for the writing component and also offers Basic Writing.

Each Higher element will be in two parts. The candidate must not offer Part 2 without first attempting Part 1. The candidate will be able to decide on the day of the examination whether or not to attempt the Higher papers, although it is assumed that in most cases, candidates and teachers will have decided in the weeks or months prior to the examination. It will not be necessary to indicate on the entry form whether Parts 1 and 2 are both to be attempted.

Minimum Requirements for the Award of Levels

The minimum number of elements which must be offered to qualify for the award of each of Levels 4–10 are summarised below. It must be emphasised that in every case the overall competence required over the elements listed would be very high and that candidates with realistic prospects of gaining the Level would normally offer a greater number of elements than the minimum requirement.

The *minimum* number of elements which must be offered to qualify for the award of each of Levels 4–10 can be summarised as follows:

Levels 4, 5, 6	Basic Listening, Reading, Speaking
Level 7	Basic Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing PLUS Part 1 of any two Higher elements OR Parts 1 and 2 of any one Higher element
Level 8	Basic Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing PLUS Higher Writing (Parts 1 and 2) PLUS One additional Higher element (Parts 1 and 2)
Level 9	Basic Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing PLUS Higher Writing (Parts 1 and 2) PLUS Two additional Higher elements (Parts 1 and 2)
Level 10	Basic Writing, Reading, Speaking, Writing PLUS all Higher elements (Parts 1 and 2)

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

The following table specifies the different elements that make up the examination, together with their timings. (NB Higher Part 1 Speaking incorporates the Basic tests; Higher Part 2 Speaking incorporates the Basic and Higher Part 1 tests.)

Component		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
BASIC		approx. 20 mins	25 minutes	approx. 10 mins	25 minutes
HIGHER	Part 1	approx. 20 mins	25 minutes	approx. 12 mins	30 minutes
	Part 2	approx. 20 mins	25 minutes	approx. 15 mins	35 minutes

The four skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing are equally weighted.

All candidates must be entered for the compulsory common-core elements: Basic Listening, Basic Speaking, and Basic Reading. Candidates may, in addition, offer any one or more of the other elements. Higher Writing may be offered only if the candidate has been entered for the Writing Component and also offers Basic Writing.

Differentiation

Differentiation is achieved by offering different tests to assess the different objectives. Each Higher skill is divided into Part 1 and Part 2.

Special External Examination Provision

Candidates eligible for special external examination provision, as described in part 11 of M.E.G.'s Handbook for Centres, will be asked to attend a central point, or points, designated by the Group. An external examiner will conduct the Speaking Test.

Listening (Component 1)

At both Basic and Higher, the test will measure the candidate's understanding of the spoken language. All candidates will be expected to understand specific details in formal announcements (eg news items, weather forecasts), in informal announcements (eg instructions, requests) and in interviews and dialogues. In moving from Basic to Higher longer pieces will be included and the accompanying exercises may demand more general comprehension. The material used will be based on French which is designed to be heard and, particularly in the Higher papers, will include unscripted speech.

All listening material will be pre-recorded and candidates will hear pieces twice. Where the piece naturally includes repetition of the key information, the piece may be heard only once. All announcements will be made, and all interviews will be conducted by native speakers. Candidates will be able to see the questions before hearing the material. They can make notes at any time and should be able to answer the questions as they go along: the test is not intended to be one of memory. The questions will be in English although certain material printed on the question papers (eg menus, timetables) may be in French. A variety of objective questions and short-answer questions will be set. Wherever appropriate, pictorial material will be used.

The Basic paper (40 marks) will consist of three sections, each carrying a roughly equal number of marks, as follows:

- Section 1 A test of comprehension of brief announcements and instructions within a restricted range of topics and settings (F, G, I, J, L). The total number of French words heard will be between 75 and 100; no one stimulus will be longer than 30 words. Ten questions, usually open-ended but with the possibility of multiple-choice or other objective tests.
- Section 2 A test of comprehension of longer monologues or dialogues. Candidates will be required to listen for specific information. Questions will usually be open-ended or in the nature of completing a form. The whole prescribed range of topics and settings for Basic will be used. Each piece will contain a maximum of 100 French words; the total for the Section will not exceed 200 words.

Section 3 A test of comprehension of longer monologues or dialogues in which candidates will be required to listen for specific information. Multiple-choice questions may be used but questions will usually be open-ended or of the box-ticking type. The whole prescribed range of topics and settings for Basic will be used. The total number of words heard will be between 200 and 250. It is intended that recordings of actual French speakers (rather than actors) will be used.

The Higher paper will be in two parts, Part 1 (20 marks) and Part 2 (20 marks). The language used will be more demanding and the question types more varied than at Basic. Candidates taking Higher papers will be expected to make notes from material they have heard, and identify the main points or themes, including the attitudes and emotions which are revealed. In addition, Higher candidates will be required to draw conclusions and present them in a structured format provided on the question paper.

Reading (Component 2)

At both Basic and Higher the tests will measure the candidate's understanding of the common forms of written language. All candidates will be tested on their understanding of French texts and their ability to scan texts for particular information. All questions will be in English and will require short written answers in English or objective-test responses (multiple-choice, box-ticking etc). The texts presented will include public notices, simple brochures, guides, letters and forms of imaginative writing. They will be chosen from materials which are considered to be within the experience of and reflecting the interests of sixteen-year olds. They will be presented as realistically as possible. Newspaper articles and brochures, for example, will be reproduced in the same way as the originals. Wherever appropriate, pictorial material will be included. Some texts (chiefly letters) will be presented in French handwriting.

The Basic paper (40 marks) will consist of three sections, each carrying a roughly equal number of marks as follows:

Section 1 A test of comprehension of public notices and signs (eg menus, timetables, advertisements) within a restricted range of topics and settings (F, G, I, J, L). The total number of French words presented will be between 75 and 100; no one piece will contain more than 30 words. There will be about 10 questions, usually open-ended but with the possibility of multiple-choice or other objective tests.

Section 2 A test of the understanding of important specific information in simple brochures, guides and letters, within a wider range of Basic topics and prescribed settings. The total number of French words presented will be between 150 and 200; no one piece will contain more than 100 words. The questions will test the ability to extract specific information. There will be about 10 questions in a mixture of open-ended and objective types.

Section 3 A test of the comprehension of more connected French prose within the full range of basic prescribed topics and settings. Candidates will be expected to show comprehension of relevant specific details in brochures, guides, letters and imaginative writing. The texts will be of approximately 100-200 words with a total of 400-500 words. There will be about 10 questions in a mixture of open-ended and objective types.

The Higher paper will be in two parts, Part 1 (20 marks) and Part 2 (20 marks). Each part will contain three sections:

Formal writing, such as articles from magazines or newspapers.

Informal writing, such as personal letters.

Information pieces, such as brochures or advertisements.

The texts will be longer and more demanding than at Basic. The questions will be a mixture of open-ended and objective-type questions as appropriate to the task set, and will test a wider range of Reading Comprehension skills.

The questions at Basic and Higher may be purely linguistic, or may require simple interpretation of diagrammatic or pictorial material (eg a map or a timetable). The aim is to test understanding of the language in a realistic context and not to test non-linguistic skills such as arithmetic or map-reading. In some exercises the candidate may also be asked to select relevant information and to present it in a structured format (eg completion of a form or grid).

Speaking (Component 3 – internally assessed; Component 5 – externally assessed)

Notes on Roles

(a) *Candidate as Transactor*

The candidate plays the role of an English person having to cope with an authentic situation when confronted by a French person played by the examiner. Candidates will have to take the initiative in asking for goods or information but will also have to be prepared to give any information the examiner requires. For the Candidate as Transactor topics A – L are for both Basic and Higher. Topics M – P are for Higher only.

(b) *Candidate as Interviewee*

The candidate in conversation with the examiner answers questions about himself or herself put by the examiner. This section is not in any way an interrogation and it is hoped that a fairly natural conversation will take place. For the Candidate as Interviewee topics A – G are for both Basic and Higher. Topic M is for Higher only.

(c) *Candidate as Narrator*

The candidate is made aware of an incident which he has supposedly witnessed. The information is given in the form of pictures, diagrams or notes. The examiner asks a broad question to start the candidate off, eg 'What happened?'. The examiner will interject or prompt as necessary. It is not intended that this exercise should be a monologue.

Basic (approximately 10 minutes)

Candidate as Transactor (two role-plays)	(20 marks)
Candidate as Interviewee (sixteen questions on at least five topic areas)	(20 marks)
	TOTAL 40 MARKS

Higher Part 1 (incorporating Basic) (approximately 12 minutes)

Candidate as Transactor (one Higher role-play involving need for negotiation)	(10 marks)
Candidate as Interviewee (three topics covered in greater depth)	(10 marks)
	TOTAL 60 MARKS

Higher Part 2 (incorporating Basic and Higher Part 1) (approximately 15 minutes)

Candidate as Narrator (one situation)	(20 marks)
	TOTAL 80 MARKS

MEG does not prescribe the order in which the various parts of the test should be conducted. However, a suggested sequence for Higher candidates is as follows:

Part 1 candidates:	Candidate as Transactor (Basic)	(20 marks)
	Candidate as Transactor (Higher)	(10 marks)
	Candidate as Interviewee (Basic and Higher)	(20 + 10 marks)
		TOTAL 60 MARKS

Part 2 candidates:	Candidate as Transactor (Basic)	(20 marks)
	Candidate as Transactor (Higher)	(10 marks)
	Candidate as Narrator	(20 marks)
	Candidate as Interviewee (Basic and Higher)	(20 + 10 marks)
		TOTAL 80 MARKS

Conduct and Timing of the Speaking Test

The Basic test will last for approximately 10 minutes. Candidates also offering Higher Part 1 will be examined for approximately 12 minutes, and Higher Part 2 will be examined for approximately 15 minutes. The timings for the Higher papers are calculated on the assumption that correctly entered Higher candidates will complete the Basic tasks in rather less than 10 minutes. Teacher/examiners will be asked to do the examining in blocks of Basic, Basic and Higher Part 1; and Basic and Higher Parts 1 and 2. Candidates will be given the duration of the previous candidate's test for preparation of role-play, extended role-play and narrator cards. Teacher/examiners will be supplied with a variety of different sets of materials to use with their candidates.

The normal pattern will be for teachers to conduct the examination with their own candidates and **either** assess the work themselves at the time (with a recording of a given number of candidates to be sent to the Group for moderation: the Group will specify in advance the method by which candidates in the sample will be selected) **or** tape record all of the candidates and send the recordings to the Group for marking.

When teachers decide to assess the work themselves at the time, moderation will be done first at the centre between the teachers concerned and then tapes will be submitted to a Moderator appointed by MEG.*The tapes will contain examples of the work of each teacher wherever possible.

The Handbook for Teachers of MEG Modern Foreign Languages explaining the roles, examining and assessment techniques at Basic and Higher is available on request.

Writing (Component 4)

Candidates offering Writing will perform a communicative writing task which will involve responding to a stimulus either written or visual. The candidate will write for himself/herself or on behalf of others.

Basic (40 marks)

Two or three questions requiring simple or unconnected writing, eg shopping lists, messages, postcards.

Higher

Part 1 (20 marks)

A letter of approximately 100 words (omitting the date and the address in the word count. A word is counted as a group of letters between two spaces, eg *il y a* = three words, *y a-t-il* = two words).

There will be a choice between **two** letters, one formal and one informal, which may involve responding to a letter in French or following instructions in English.

- (a) Informal: eg personal descriptions; talking about habits; school; hobbies; family.
- (b) Formal: eg to Syndicat d'initiative, campsite, hotel etc asking for information, holiday jobs, booking accommodation.

Part 2 (20 marks)

Candidates will be required to write a composition of approximately 150 words. There will be a choice of two.

The composition will be of the following broad types:

- (a) Narrative, descriptive, personal experience.
- (b) A report of an event or incident (stimulus might be pictures or diagrams) for the police, school newspaper/magazine etc.

SUBJECT CONTENT

The content will be defined as follows:

(a) **Topics, Settings and Tasks**

There will be sixteen topic areas (see below) giving for each topic the tasks to be performed, the settings in which they will take place and the vocabulary to be known. Topics will not necessarily be relevant to all four skills and this will be stated in the tasks to be performed. It will not necessarily be appropriate to examine topics individually.

(b) **Notions**

(c) **Functions**

(d) **Structures and Grammar**

These are included in a separate booklet.

		SETTINGS														
		Town	Home	School	Work	Places of entertainment	Public transport	Private transport	Syndicat d'initiative	Shops, Markets	Café, Restaurant	Hotels, Campsites etc	Dentist, Doctor, Chemist	Garage, Petrol Station	Bank, Bureau de Change	Lost Property, Police Station
TOPICS																
A	Personal identification															
B	House and Home															
C	Geographical surroundings															
D	School															
E	Free time/entertainment															
F	Travel															
G	Holidays															
H	Meeting people															
I	Shopping															
J	Food and Drink															
K	Weather															
L	Accommodation															
M	Work and Future															
N	Emergencies															
O	Services															
P	Lost property															

*Topics A-L are for both Basic and Higher
Topics M-P are for Higher only*

ORGANISATION OF THE EXAMINATION

Entry Policy

Candidates must be entered for papers according to their ability and following the conditions on page 3. Teachers are advised that Higher Part 1 tests are intended for candidates at Levels 6 and 7 and Part 2 for candidates at Levels 8 and above. It is hoped that only those who are serious candidates for Level 8 and above will attempt Part 2. At the time of entry, candidates do not need to specify whether they intend to continue on to Higher papers in any of the skills. However centres must specify which candidates intend to enter for the optional Writing component. Similarly centres must enter for either Component 3 (internally assessed Speaking) or Component 5 (externally assessed Speaking).

Timetable

Each *skill* will be placed in one timetable slot with timings as follows:

	Listening	Reading	Speaking*	Writing
Basic	approx. 20 mins	25 mins	approx. 10 mins	25 mins
H1	approx. 20 mins	25 mins	approx. 12 mins	30 mins
H2	approx. 20 mins	25 mins	approx. 15 mins	35 mins
Total timing if all elements are taken:	approx. 60 mins	75 mins	approx. 15 mins	90 mins

*See page 6 for further clarification of these timings.

Notes

- Candidates for Higher Reading and Writing will have a global time allocation to complete their Basic and Higher Part 1 or Basic and Higher Part 1 and Higher Part 2 tests. Announcements will be made after 25 and 50 minutes in the Reading and 25 and 55 minutes in the Writing tests for candidates who have completed their sections to leave the examination room.
- In the Listening test, there will be a five minute gap between each of the sections for candidates to leave. The Listening tests will be timetabled shortly before the main examination period.
- The Speaking test will take place in the two-three months before the main examination period.