Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education
Ordinary Level (2026)

French
(Syllabus 3917)

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This document provides details of the Ordinary Level French syllabus for candidates in **Singapore**. This syllabus is available in October/November only.

Note: Centres and candidates should note that the use of dictionaries is not permitted in this assessment.

AIMS

The aims of the syllabus are the same for all students. The aims are set out below and describe the educational purposes of following a course in a language at Ordinary Level.

* To develop the ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication in countries where the language is spoken.
* To form a sound base of skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure.
* To offer insights into the culture and civilisation of the countries where the language is spoken.
* To develop a fuller awareness of the nature of language and language learning.
* To encourage positive attitudes towards foreign language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations.
* To provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.
* To complement other areas of study by encouraging skills of a more general application (e.g. analysis, memorising, drawing of inferences).

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The examination will assess candidates' linguistic competence and their knowledge of contemporary society by requiring them to:

* understand and respond to the spoken language drawn from a variety of sources and ranging from short to longer extracts
* understand and respond to texts written in the target language, drawn from a variety of sources and ranging from short to longer texts
* communicate in the spoken language
* communicate in writing to narrate events, give factual information and express and justify ideas and points of view.

ASSESSMENT

All candidates take Papers 1, 2, 3 and 4:

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Paper 1		Paper 2		Paper 3		Paper 4	
Duration	Weighting	Duration	Weighting	Duration	Weighting	Duration	Weighting
1 hour 30 minutes	33%	1 hour 15 minutes	33%	approx. 35 minutes	17%	approx. 10 minutes	17%

AVAILABILITY
This syllabus is available in October/November only.

DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

PAPER 1: Writing (1 hour 30 minutes) (60 marks)

All candidates must attempt both questions.

- Question 1 (30 marks): candidates are required to write a composition in French of between 140 and 150 words. The composition must describe the story depicted in a series of 6 pictures given on the question paper.
- Question 2 (30 marks): a directed writing task. Candidates are offered a choice of two tasks (a letter/email and a narrative) and must complete one of these. Between 140 and 150 words are required.

PAPER 2: Reading (1 hour 15 minutes) (45 marks weighted to 60 marks)

The test will be in three sections.

Section 1 (15 marks)
- Short notices, signs, instructions, messages, advertisements, etc. – multiple-choice questions.
- Short statements and complete a matching exercise which tests the main words in these statements.
- A short text in the form of an email, message, postcard, letter, etc. Questions are objective and test the main points and some detail.

Section 2 (20 marks)
- A longer text in the form of a letter, email, etc. Questions test general understanding of the main points, which include recognising simple attitudes and opinions.
- A longer, more complex text. Questions test general and specific comprehension. They will also require candidates to identify attitudes, emotions and ideas. Questions require short answers in the target language.

Section 3 (10 marks)
- A cloze text with 10 gaps, testing knowledge of grammar, e.g. prepositions / particles, verb agreement, tense, conjunctions, vocabulary.

PAPER 3: Listening (approx. 35 minutes) (30 marks)

All questions requiring written answers are to be answered in French. The aim of this paper is to test candidates' listening comprehension skills and therefore they are not penalised for incorrect or inaccurate language unless it makes their answers ambiguous.

Section 1 (15 marks)
Candidates hear short recordings, sometimes involving two speakers, which are tested mainly by visual material. The recordings contain largely factual information about travel, weather, opening times, facilities available, food, etc. and candidates identify main points and some details. Most of the questions are objective, one or two require a very brief written answer.

Section 2 (15 marks)
Candidates hear recordings of two longer and more complex conversations/interviews. They listen for main points and detail. Some of the questions are objective, some require short answers in the target language.

PAPER 4: Oral (approx. 10 minutes) (60 marks weighted to 30 marks)

• **Test 1: Topic Presentation/Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)**

• **Test 2: General Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)**

Mark Schemes

Paper 1: Writing

Generic parts of the mark scheme to be used in Questions 1 and 2

1.1 – award a mark out of 10 for Communication

Generic mark scheme for Communication (Questions 1 and 2):

(i)	There are 5 relevant communication points per question, each worth a maximum of 2 marks
(ii)	For each relevant communication point, use the appropriate numbered tick and place up to 2 of these ticks as close as possible to each relevant communication point

2 ticks	Message clearly communicated. Minor errors (adjective endings, use of prepositions, etc.) are tolerated.
1 tick	Communication of some meaning is achieved but the message may be ambiguous or incomplete.
0 ticks	Nothing of worth communicated.

(iii) Add up the ticks to give a mark out of 10 for Communication

Total marks for Communication: 10

- **Guidance on awarding ticks for Communication**

Example 1: *Comment passez-vous les vacances normalement?*

Candidate's response	Ticks for Communication	Reason for mark
Oui je passé les vacances	0	Nothing of worth communicated.
Je travaillez dans le bureau de mon père	1	Some meaning conveyed – use of 'travaillez' makes message ambiguous.
Je travaille dans le bureau de mon père	2	Message clearly communicated.

Example 2: *Où et avec qui avez-vous fait du shopping?*

Candidate's response	Ticks for Communication	Reason for mark
Avec qui j'avez-vous fait shopping	0	Nothing of worth communicated.
J'ai fait du shopping en ville	1	Some meaning is conveyed but the message is incomplete.
J'ai fait du shopping en ville avec mon ami	2	Message clearly communicated.

1.2 – award a mark out of 8 for Accurate use of verbs

Generic mark scheme for Accurate use of verbs (Questions 1 and 2):

(i) Place a tick above the **first** occurrence of each correct verb up to a maximum of 18 ticks (details of how to award ticks are provided below)

(ii) Convert the total number of ticks to a mark out of 8 using the Conversion table below

Conversion table for Accurate use of verbs (Questions 1 and 2)

Number of ticks	Mark
18+	8
16, 17	7
14, 15	6
12, 13	5
10, 11	4
8, 9	3
6, 7	2
4, 5	1
0, 1, 2, 3	0

Total marks for Accurate use of verbs: 8

- **How to award ticks for Accurate use of verbs (Questions 1 and 2)**

  (a) Subject (noun or pronoun) + any finite verb

    – both subject and verb must be correct for the verb to score a tick
    – verb must be in the appropriate tense to score a tick
    – inaccuracies in the use of accents are ignored except for in the case of *–er* verbs and *être* where there must be an accent on the past participle in a compound tense, and the absence of such an accent in the present tense
    – do not tick verbs contained in the 'letter etiquette': appropriate beginnings and endings to letters are considered for reward under Other linguistic features.

Tick	No tick	Note
Je suis (✓)		
J'aime (✓)	Je aime (*no tick*)	
Il est allé (✓)	Il est allée (*no tick*)	insist on correct agreement
	Le chat (*no tick*) sont gentils	incorrect subject

With direct and indirect object pronouns

Tick	No tick	Note
Je l'aime (✓)		
Je le joue (✓)	Je se joue (*no tick*)	«jouer» is not a reflexive verb
Je lave (✓) les voitures	Je me lave (*no tick*) les voitures	«laver» should not be used reflexively in this statement
Je t'ai dit (✓)		
J'ai te dit (✓)		basic verb formation is correct

With «y» and «en»

Tick	No tick	Note
J'y vais (✓) / Elle en achète (✓)		
Je vais y (✓)		correct «je vais» scores despite incorrect position of «y»
Elle achète (✓) en		correct «elle achète» scores despite incorrect position of «en»

Reflexive/passive

Tick	No tick	Note
Elle s'est levée (✓)	Elle est se levée (*no tick*)	
Elle a été attrapée (✓)		
Je me lave (✓) les mains		

Impersonal

Tick	No tick	Note
C'est comique (✓)		
Il y a (✓)		but not for expressions meaning 'ago'
Est-ce que (✓)		

With negative

Tick	No tick	Note
Ils ne jouent pas (✓)		tick is awarded for the correct verb; the negative is considered for reward in 'Other linguistic features'
Ils ne pas jouent (✓)		

Sequence of tenses

Tick	No tick	Note
Si j'avais (✓) le choix je voudrais (✓)		
Si j'ai eu (*no tick*) le choix je voudrais (✓)		sequence must be correct for both verbs to be rewarded

Single auxiliary with multiple past participles

Tick	No tick	Note
Nous avons chanté et dansé (✓) (✓)		Nous avons chanté = tick 1; Nous avons dansé = tick 2

Correct verb within meaningless statement

Tick	No tick	Note
La journée est longue (✓)	La journée est (*no tick*) intelligente	do not reward correct verb in a meaningless statement

(b) Imperative

Tick	No tick	Note
Viens (✓)		
Ne touche pas (✓)		

(c) Interrogative

Tick	No tick	Note
Tu viens? (✓)		question mark not required for mark to be awarded
Est-ce que (✓) tu viens(?) (✓)		
Comment ça va(?) (✓)		

(d) Infinitive

Tick	No tick	Note
Je veux (✓) sortir (✓)		
Je veut (*no tick*) sortir (✓)		
Je veux (✓) sortier (*no tick*)		
Il a décidé (✓) de sortir (✓)		
Il a décidé (✓) à sortir (*no tick*)		
Sans hésiter (✓)	Sans hésité (*no tick*)	

(e) Inversion

Tick	No tick	Note
…a-t-il dit (✓)	… a-t-il dis (*no tick*)	
…il a dit (✓)		
Viens-tu / Viens tu (✓)		

(f) Participle (past or present)

Tick	No tick	Note
En arrivant (✓)		
Ayant fini (✓)		
Une fois arrivé (✓)		

(g) Reward only the first occurrence of each correct verb, e.g.

- J'aime (✓) la natation. J'aime (*no tick*) aussi le tennis
- J'aime (✓) la natation. Je n'aime (*no tick*) pas le tennis
- Dans ma région il y a (✓) des montagnes et des rivières. Il y a (*no tick*) aussi des…

However,

- Je préfère (✓) la natation et mon frère préfère (✓) le tennis – 2 different persons of the verb
- Mon frère préfère (✓) la natation et ma sœur préfère (*no tick*) le tennis – both third person usage
- Elle est (✓) fâché, ce n'est (*no tick*) pas amusant – both third person usage

1.3 – award a mark out of 12 for Other linguistic features

Generic mark scheme for Other linguistic features (Questions 1 and 2):

(i) Award a mark out of 12 for Other linguistic features according to the Grade descriptions in the table below (please see *Note on using mark schemes with Grade descriptors* (last page of mark scheme)):

Grade descriptors for Other linguistic features (Questions 1 and 2)

11–12	• Uses a wide range of structures effectively; produces longer, fluent sentences with ease. • Highly accurate at this level, though not necessarily faultless. • Makes effective use of a wide range of vocabulary fully appropriate to the task.
9–10	• Attempts a range of structures with a good degree of success. • More complex language usually error-free. • Uses a variety of relevant vocabulary at this level.
7–8	• In control of simple structures. Varied success with more complex structures. • Accuracy is fairly consistent throughout. Errors may occur when more ambitious language is attempted. • Has sufficient vocabulary to add some interest to the writing.
5–6	• Attempts more than basic structures. • On balance, the work is more accurate than inaccurate. • Straightforward vocabulary relevant to the task.
3–4	• Reliant on basic structures. • Some examples of correct language. Meaning usually conveyed. • Basic vocabulary.
1–2	• A few phrases or short sentences are accurate enough to be comprehensible. Very simple sentence structure.
0	• One or two disjointed words or short phrases may be recognisable.

(ii) Consider the extent to which the following are used correctly and appropriately when assessing the candidate's control of structures:

- Adjectives, including possessives and demonstratives. Also comparatives and superlatives
- Object pronouns (*il m'a dit*) and 'strong' pronouns (*chez nous*, etc.)
- Negatives
- A variety of prepositions and adverbs
- Expressions of quantity
- Use of *du, de la, des*
- Use of *pendant, pour, du, au, depuis*, etc.
- Linking words (e.g. *cependant, malheureusement, toutefois*) and conjunctions other than *et*
- Subordinate clauses, including *car / parce que, qui* and *que* (relative pronouns), *ce qui* and *ce que*. Indirect or reported speech (*il a dit que, je pense que*). Time clauses with *quand*, *pendant que* etc. and *si* (= if)
- Appropriate use of *politesses* in the letter.

Total marks for Other linguistic features: 12

Total for Questions 1 and 2: 30 marks

Mark Schemes

Paper 4: Oral

Table A – Mark Scheme for Communication

This assesses the candidate's response in terms of comprehension of the Examiner, immediacy of reaction/response, and successful transmission of messages (including presentation of material in the topic).

Outstanding	• A spontaneous interchange between candidate and Examiner. • Candidate responds fully and confidently to all question types. • Most points justified and explained. • Very consistent performance. Not necessarily of native speaker standard.	14–15
Very good	• Generally understands questions first time, but may require occasional rephrasing. Can respond satisfactorily to both straightforward and unexpected questions. • Often develops own ideas and opinions and provides justifications.	12–13
Good	• Responds well to straightforward questions; sometimes responds well to unexpected questions. • Communicates essential elements and can expand occasionally. • Expresses opinions with some simple justifications.	10–11
Satisfactory	• Usually responds well to straightforward questions; has difficulty with unexpected questions and needs some rephrasing. • Communicates most of the essential elements. • Can convey simple, straightforward opinions.	7–9
Weak	• Has difficulty with many straightforward questions, but still attempts an answer. • Communicates simple pieces of information.	4–6
Poor	• Frequently has difficulty understanding the questions and has great difficulty in replying. • Communicates a few facts.	1–3
	Communicates no relevant information.	0

Table B – Mark Scheme for Language

This assesses the linguistic content of the candidate's answers in terms of complexity, accuracy and range of structures, vocabulary and idiom.

Outstanding	• Very accurate use of a wide range of structures, vocabulary and idiom with occasional errors in more complex language. • Not necessarily of native speaker standard.	14–15
Very good	• Wide range of mostly accurate structures and vocabulary.	12–13
Good	• Good range of generally accurate structures, varied vocabulary.	10–11
Satisfactory*	• Adequate range of structures and vocabulary. **Can use past and future tenses accurately.** Some ambiguity.	7–9
Weak	• Some manipulation of structures and awareness of verbs, though often faulty and/or incomplete. Shows elementary, limited vocabulary.	4–6
Poor	• Shows very limited range of structures and vocabulary.	1–3
	Nothing coherent or accurate enough to be comprehensible.	0

***** Candidates who do not show that they are able to use past and future tenses accurately cannot be awarded a mark in the Satisfactory band or above for Language.