



**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Syllabus

Cambridge International

A Level

French Language & Literature 9898

Use this syllabus for exams in 2025, 2026 and 2027.

Exams are available in the June series.

Français

Version 1

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

**Cambridge
Pathway** 

Why choose Cambridge International?

Cambridge International prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, which is a department of the University of Cambridge.

Our Cambridge Pathway gives students a clear path for educational success from age 5 to 19. Schools can shape the curriculum around how they want students to learn – with a wide range of subjects and flexible ways to offer them. It helps students discover new abilities and a wider world, and gives them the skills they need for life, so they can achieve at school, university and work.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

We review all our syllabuses regularly, so they reflect the latest research evidence and professional teaching practice – and take account of the different national contexts in which they are taught.

We consult with teachers to help us design each syllabus around the needs of their learners. Consulting with leading universities has helped us make sure our syllabuses encourage students to master the key concepts in the subject and develop the skills necessary for success in higher education.

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with the Cambridge Pathway.

School feedback: ‘We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.’

Feedback from: Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

Quality management



Cambridge International is committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001

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Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2025, 2026 and 2027, go to page 35.

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2022.



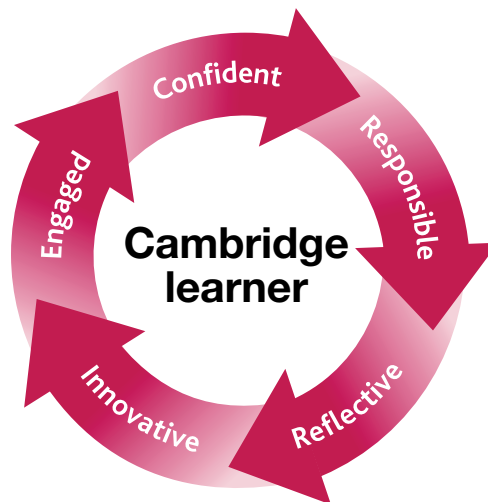
1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they're learning. By offering students a variety of Cambridge International AS & A Levels, you can give them the greatest chance of finding the path of education they most want to follow. With over 50 subjects to choose from, students can select the ones they love and that they're best at, which helps motivate them throughout their studies.

Following a Cambridge International AS & A Level programme helps students develop abilities which universities value highly, including:

- a deep understanding of their subjects
- higher order thinking skills – analysis, critical thinking, problem solving
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.



Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature helps candidates continue to develop a set of transferable skills for understanding and communicating in French. It provides candidates with opportunities to use French with ever increasing levels of sophistication in both everyday situations and contexts requiring the ability to understand topics that are more abstract. Learners build on the essential linguistic skills and cultural insights acquired in previous study in order to prepare for progression to further studies or employment.

Our approach in Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature encourages learners to be:

confident, understanding, critically evaluating and responding to a wide range of complex texts, arguments and ideas

responsible, developing and consolidating the skills required for understanding and communicating effectively for different purposes and in a wide range of cultural contexts

reflective, developing self-awareness and learner independence through critically evaluating their own work, and building abilities to understand and express complex and abstract concepts in different cultural contexts

innovative, developing linguistic flexibility through dealing with a wide range of texts and building on the learning acquired to express ideas clearly and effectively

engaged, being inspired by their studies in the language, to explore in depth and discover the variety of language and ideas around them and enrich their knowledge and understanding of the cultures.

School feedback: 'Cambridge students develop a deep understanding of subjects and independent thinking skills.'

Feedback from: Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help students develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts may open up new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned.

Good teaching and learning will incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help students gain:

- a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

The key concepts identified below, carefully introduced and developed, will help to underpin the course you will teach. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

The key concepts for Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature are:

- **Communication**
Understanding written and spoken language and being able to speak and write in a way that others can understand is central to language learning. Learners consolidate methods of deciphering meaning to access language in a range of formal and informal contexts, including literature. They consolidate strategies for expressing themselves in a variety of contexts and styles.
- **Language use**
Understanding of how a language works improves communication in the language and is intellectually stimulating. Language learners explore and analyse how vocabulary can be used in a range of contexts including literature, and how a command of grammar can enhance communication of meaning.
- **Cultural awareness**
Language learning improves intercultural understanding. Learners gain an insight into the different cultures, customs and practices of everyday life in other countries through the study of authentic materials. In their study of literature, language learners deepen their awareness of how cultural differences shape the language and the way authors convey meaning.

International recognition and acceptance

Our expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment is the basis for the recognition of our programmes and qualifications around the world. Every year thousands of students with Cambridge International AS & A Levels gain places at leading universities worldwide. Our programmes and qualifications are valued by top universities around the world including those in the UK, US (including Ivy League universities), Europe, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

UK NARIC*, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge International AS & A Level and found it to be comparable to the standard of AS & A Level in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications are accepted as equivalent, grade for grade, to UK AS & A Levels by leading universities worldwide.

Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature has been designed to help candidates develop language proficiency to level B2 (Independent User) and C1 (Proficient User) of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR).

Assessment objectives, subject content, mark schemes and task types have been designed with reference to the CEFR to ensure that candidates have opportunities to demonstrate proficiency at the intended levels.

Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature provides a foundation for the study of French or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable as part of a course of general education.

We recommend learners check the Cambridge recognition database and university websites to find the most up-to-date entry requirements for courses they wish to study.

* Due to the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, the UK NARIC national recognition agency function was re-titled as UK ENIC on 1 March 2021, operated and managed by Ecctis Limited. From 1 March 2021, international benchmarking findings are published under the Ecctis name.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Supporting teachers

We provide a wide range of resources, detailed guidance, innovative training and professional development so that you can give your students the best possible preparation for Cambridge International AS & A Level. To find out which resources are available for each syllabus go to www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

The School Support Hub is our secure online site for Cambridge teachers where you can find the resources you need to deliver our programmes. You can also keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community through our online discussion forums.

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

Support for Cambridge International AS & A Level			
Planning and preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schemes of work• Specimen papers• Syllabuses• Teacher guides	Teaching and assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Endorsed resources• Online forums• Support for coursework and speaking tests	Learning and revision <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Example candidate responses• Past papers and mark schemes• Specimen paper answers	Results <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candidate Results Service• Principal examiner reports for teachers

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services at www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates

Professional development

We support teachers through:

- Introductory Training – face-to-face or online
- Extension Training – face-to-face or online
- Enrichment Professional Development – face-to-face or online

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/events

- Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/profdev



Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.

Find out more at: www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to:

- develop the language proficiency required to communicate effectively in French at B2 and C1 (Independent/Proficient User) level
- explore, appreciate and engage with the culture, society and literature of countries and communities where French is spoken
- provide enjoyment, intellectual stimulation and curiosity to learn more
- develop intercultural awareness, encouraging a positive, open and empathetic approach to other languages and cultures
- continue developing the skills, language and attitudes required for higher education, work and leisure
- develop an awareness of the student's own personal learning style and the opportunities for learning independently
- further develop transferable skills (e.g. communication and organisational skills, autonomy, resourcefulness, cognitive and cultural flexibility) to complement other areas of the curriculum, prepare for higher level studies and gain valuable life skills.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.



Content overview

The subject content is organised into six topic areas at A Level. These provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. The study of these topic areas enables students to progress from the knowledge and skills developed at IGCSE or at AS Level. The topic areas listed below are described in more detail in section 3.

- Culture
- Health and well-being
- Education and future plans
- Community and society
- Our responsibility for the planet
- Science and technology

A course based on this syllabus should provide students with meaningful opportunities to enhance language skills. Through engagement with a variety of texts and application of a wide range of vocabulary and structures, students will develop the confidence to communicate effectively with other users of French.

It is expected that as a part of any language course, candidates will be given ample opportunity to develop and practise their communication in speech as well as written work.

At A Level, students will be expected to read authentic texts on familiar topics regularly encountered in work, school and leisure as well as some more abstract topics. Students will be required to demonstrate an understanding of ideas, emotions, opinions and attitudes, as well as distinguish between fact and opinion. Students will develop skills in selecting and extracting relevant details and deducing the meaning of unknown words from context.

Students should have opportunities to develop their written skills and demonstrate their ability to use a wide range of structures and vocabulary accurately to communicate effectively. They should write about topics which are both familiar and more abstract, explain viewpoints on topical issues and give reasons and explanations for opinions. Students should be encouraged to develop a style of writing which can be used in creative writing tasks.

The A Level course includes a range of inspiring literature which has been carefully selected to offer a breadth and depth of literary study and to encourage lively and stimulating classroom discussion.

Throughout the study of literature, learners will be encouraged to develop skills in analysis and interpretation of texts and to give a personal response. Learners will explore the conventions of genres of texts and the contexts in which works have been written, read and received.

School feedback: ‘Cambridge International AS & A Levels prepare students well for university because they’ve learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There’s that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It’s a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university.’

Feedback from: US Higher Education Advisory Council

Assessment overview

Candidates take all components in the same exam series. Candidates are eligible for grades A*–E.

All A Level candidates take:

Paper 1

Reading 1 hour 30 minutes

40 marks

Candidates read a number of texts and answer multiple-choice and matching questions.

Externally assessed

c.33% of the A Level

And:

Paper 2

Writing 2 hours

40 marks

Candidates complete two writing tasks: one argumentative/discursive task and one narrative or descriptive writing task.

Externally assessed

c.33% of the A Level

And:

Paper 3

Literature 2 hours

40 marks

Candidates answer two questions, one question from each section:

Section A passage-based questions

Section B essay questions.

Externally assessed

c.33% of the A Level

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

Candidates **cannot** carry forward results from Cambridge International AS Level French Language (8028). For more information see the **Making entries** section.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Reading

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- R1: understand detailed information from a range of texts when expressed in standard or idiomatic language
- R2: identify emotions, opinions and attitudes which are stated or implied in texts
- R3: understand ideas, arguments and conclusions in discursive texts
- R4: demonstrate a good understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and language structures used in texts on general topics.

AO2 Writing

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- W1: communicate information, opinions, arguments and creative ideas clearly and effectively, with support/justification
- W2: organise ideas into coherent text by using a range of cohesive devices and paragraphing where appropriate
- W3: use text conventions and register appropriate to the given purpose and audience
- W4: use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar effectively
- W5: use vocabulary and grammar accurately.

AO3 Literature

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- L1: present a relevant, structured and supported response
- L2: demonstrate understanding of literary texts in a variety of genres, with an appreciation of relevant contexts and cultures
- L3: analyse ways in which writers create meaning and effects to engage the reader
- L4: produce personal opinions and interpretations of literary texts.

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in A Level %
AO1 Reading	c.33
AO2 Writing	c.33
AO3 Literature	c.33
Total	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %		
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
AO1 Reading	100	0	0
AO2 Writing	0	100	0
AO3 Literature	0	0	100
Total	100	100	100

3 Subject content

This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting topics and subject contexts, resources and examples to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context as well as complying with your school policies and local legal requirements.

This section outlines the skills and topics required at A Level.

Skills

The skills covered in the syllabus are outlined below. Students will be expected to demonstrate ability in these skills, which should be developed using the topic areas outlined in this section.

Reading

A Level French Language & Literature is designed to help candidates develop language proficiency to level B2 and C1 of the CEFR. As such, the length and level of sophistication of the texts used in the Reading paper will reflect the increased level of demand compared to syllabuses at IGCSE or AS Level.

Skills demonstrated at B2 level	Skills demonstrated at C1 level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand factual information and abstract ideas in texts on general topics. Identify and select relevant information and details in one or more longer texts. Identify emotions, opinions and attitudes which are stated or strongly implied in texts. Understand ideas, arguments and conclusions in discursive texts and distinguish between fact and opinion. Understand a variety of texts using formal and informal language. Deduce the meaning of unknown words from the context in texts on a range of topics. Demonstrate a good understanding of a wide range of vocabulary on general topics. Demonstrate a good understanding of a range of language structures, including some complex sentence forms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand in detail lengthy, complex texts and abstract ideas in texts on general and more specific topics. Identify and select relevant information and details in longer texts in a variety of text types. Identify finer points of details including attitudes and stated or implied opinions. Understand ideas, arguments and conclusions in discursive texts and distinguish between fact and opinion. Understand a wide variety of longer texts written in different styles and for a wide range of purposes. Deduce the meaning of unknown words and expressions from the context in texts on a wide range of topics. Demonstrate a strong understanding of a wide range of vocabulary on general and more specific topics. Demonstrate a strong understanding of a wide range of complex language structures.

Writing

Skills demonstrated at B2 level	Skills demonstrated at C1 level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate factual information, ideas, opinions and arguments on general topics.• Develop an argument, expanding the main points with relevant supporting detail and examples.• Develop detailed descriptions and narrations of real or imaginary events and experiences.• Select and organise ideas into coherent paragraphs and longer texts, using a range of cohesive devices.• Use appropriate register and style, following conventions of the genre, for the purpose of the text.• Use a wide range of vocabulary related to general topics, with a good level of accuracy.• Use a wide range of grammatical structures, including some more complex structures, with a good level of accuracy.• Produce texts that show good control of spelling and punctuation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate factual information, ideas, opinions and arguments on complex topics.• Develop an argument, emphasising important issues, evaluating, expanding and supporting viewpoints with reasons and relevant examples.• Develop detailed descriptions and narrations of real or imaginary events and experiences in an assured, personal, natural style.• Organise ideas clearly into coherent and linked paragraphs using a wide range of cohesive devices to create a fluent argument, description and narration.• Use appropriate register and style, following conventions of the genre, for the purpose of the text.• Use a wide range of vocabulary, including idiom, related to both general and more specific topics, with a high level of accuracy.• Use a wide range of grammatical structures, including complex structures, with a high level of accuracy.• Produce texts with a high level of accuracy of spelling and punctuation.

Literature

Skills demonstrated at B2 level	Skills demonstrated at C1 level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read a range of literary texts with a large degree of independence.• Write about themes, characters, ideas and details from the texts, recognising the conventions of the genre.• Develop an argument, expanding the main points with relevant supporting detail and examples from the text.• Give a personal response to the text explaining what they appreciate and why.• Select and organise ideas into coherent paragraphs and longer texts.• Show understanding of the choice of language and describe elements of the text which evoke a response from the reader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read a range of literary texts with little difficulty and with appreciation of implicit meanings and ideas.• Critically evaluate themes, characters, ideas and details from the texts, appreciating the conventions of the genre.• Develop an argument, emphasising important ideas/themes, evaluating and supporting viewpoints with justifications and detailed examples from the texts.• Give a clear personal response to the text, providing interpretation of the themes/ characters and explaining their reaction to the text.• Select and organise ideas clearly into coherent paragraphs using appropriate literary terminology.• Analyse the choice of language and evaluate how the language is used to engage the reader.

A Level topics

Candidates will be required to show knowledge and understanding of the broad topic areas listed below. These provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. They also provide contexts for candidates to engage with and produce written texts. Through the study of these broad themes, candidates gain insight into the cultures of the countries and communities around the world where French is spoken.

The topic areas are the same as Cambridge International AS Level French Language (8028) to allow for co-teaching where appropriate. However, it is anticipated that teachers will use materials which are appropriate to the group they are teaching. This syllabus is designed to help candidates develop language proficiency to level B2 and C1 of the CEFR, so the assessment material based on these topics will be more sophisticated than in Cambridge International AS Level French Language (8028).

The sub-topics listed are provided along with examples of what teachers may choose to focus on. The examples are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive and are for illustrative purposes only.

Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
1 Culture	<p>Entertainment</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> types of popular entertainment: cinema, TV/streaming, gaming, internet the role of entertainment in our lives celebrity culture: role models, idols, responsibilities
	<p>Identity and culture</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expressing identity through style and appearance, language, association with particular groups, fashion preserving/respecting cultural heritage, sites/monuments, festivals, traditions
	<p>The arts</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> theatre, music, visual arts, dance, literature, film access to the arts, funding (commercial/governmental), awards/prizes, representation/diversity

Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
2 Health and well-being	Health and fitness For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the role of sport in society, fair play, individual versus team sports, national sports events• physical health, the importance of exercise/diet• mental health and happiness, sleep, mental health awareness, self-esteem• healthcare provision
	Nutrition For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• different types of diet/eating habits• environmental impact of food production, organic foods, food waste and shortage• ethics of food production, fair trade, food labelling, government intervention
	Managing well-being For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• work–life balance• importance of leisure activities• relaxation
3 Education and future plans	Life at school For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• different education systems• student issues: discipline, workload, time management, organisation of the school day/year• school as preparation for future life
	Further/higher education For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• access and barriers to further/higher education• costs versus benefits of further/higher education• alternatives to further/higher education: vocational education, apprenticeships, gap years
	Career/work choices For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• different career options• the world of work, different workplaces and working practices, employment and unemployment• money versus job satisfaction, volunteering, working for charities

Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
4 Community and society	Equality and diversity For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• inclusivity, diversity, gender equality, social mobility• prejudices within society: ageism, racism, classism• immigration, refugees, integration
	Lifestyle For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• friends, family and relationships, generation gap, changing patterns of family life• quality of life: where we live, differences between urban/rural/coastal life, changing patterns in where people live, overcrowding and its consequences, social isolation• lifestyle choices: relationships, diet, fashion, self-expression, values, goals
	Society For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• social organisation, law and order, local and national governance, communities• national and global citizenship• rights and responsibilities of individuals, governments
5 Our responsibility for the planet	The environment For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• global warming, climate change and pollution, possible solutions, governmental intervention, impact on the economy• preserving biodiversity/ecosystems, treatment of animals• impact of growing population
	Sustainable living For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• use of natural resources and recycling, waste disposal, consumerism/overconsumption• sources and use of energy: fossil fuels, renewable energy, energy and geopolitics, impact of energy production on local environment and landscape• reducing environmental impact, individual choices in housing, food, travel
	Protecting our world For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• travel and tourism: sustainable tourism, benefits of travel• global cooperation versus national agendas• the role of individuals versus the role of industry/governments, environmental movements

Topic areas	Sub-topics and examples
6 Science and technology	Scientific and technological innovation For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• medical advances, ethics of research• smart technology, privacy and security• artificial intelligence <hr/>
	Social media For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• digital media, benefits and dangers• communication technology• online communities <hr/>
	Technology For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• access to technology• technology in education• technology in the workplace <hr/>

4 Details of the assessment

Candidates take three compulsory components. All questions requiring written responses are to be answered in French.

Dictionaries are **not** allowed in the examination.

Paper 1 – Reading

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 40 marks

Externally assessed.

This paper consists of 40 multiple-choice and matching questions. Candidates answer all questions by selecting the correct option on a multiple-choice answer sheet.

The questions test comprehension of a range of text types (e.g. articles, blogs, reports).

Description of questions

Questions 1–6

Assessment objectives	R1, R2
Task	Candidates read a text and answer six multiple-choice questions with four options.
Text types	e.g. newspaper/magazine articles, blogs, brochures, reports, stories, correspondence, reviews.
Total marks	6 marks

Questions 7–12

Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3
Task	Candidates read a text with six missing sentences; they choose the correct sentence from a choice of eight options to fill each gap.
Text types	e.g. newspaper/magazine articles, blogs, brochures, reports, stories, correspondence, reviews.
Total marks	6 marks

Questions 13–20

Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3
Task	Candidates read four thematically linked texts and identify which statement relates to which of the four texts.
Text types	e.g. newspaper/magazine articles, blogs, brochures, reports, stories, correspondence, reviews.
Total marks	8 marks

Description of questions (continued)

Questions 21–32

Assessment objectives	R1, R4
Task	Candidates read a text with 12 gaps and choose the correct option to complete each gap. There are four options for each gap.
Text types	e.g. newspaper/magazine articles, blogs, brochures, reports, stories, correspondence, reviews.
Total marks	12 marks

Questions 33–40

Assessment objectives	R1, R2, R3
Task	Candidates read a text and answer eight multiple-choice questions with four options.
Text types	e.g. newspaper/magazine articles, blogs, brochures, reports, stories, correspondence, reviews.
Total marks	8 marks

Paper 2 – Writing

Written paper, 2 hours, 40 marks

Externally assessed.

This paper consists of two writing tasks. Candidates answer Question 1 in Section A and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3 in Section B.

Candidates will be awarded marks in three categories for each response:

- Content (8 marks)
- Linguistic range and organisation (6 marks)
- Language accuracy (6 marks).

Description of questions

Section A: Question 1

Assessment objectives	W1, W2, W3, W4, W5
Task	An argumentative/discursive essay (300–400 words). Question 1 may be phrased as an argumentative or a discursive question. Argumentative: An argumentative piece of writing attempts to clearly present a strong position on a particular topic. Its purpose is to both educate and persuade the reader on a particular point of view. Discursive: A discursive piece of writing presents a balanced examination of a subject. The response should present both sides of the discussion.
Total marks	20 marks

Section B: Question 2 **or** Question 3

Assessment objectives	W1, W2, W3, W4, W5
Task	Either a descriptive or a narrative essay (300–400 words). Candidates write one from a choice of two creative tasks. Question 2 – Descriptive: A descriptive piece of writing describes a person, place or situation, creating an image with words so that the reader can picture it in their mind. Question 3 – Narrative: A narrative piece of writing tells a story containing a sequence of connected events which may be real or imaginary.
Total marks	20 marks

Paper 3 – Literature

Written paper, 2 hours, 40 marks

Externally assessed.

Candidates answer two questions, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.

Candidates are allowed to take set texts into the examination room but they must **not** contain any notes, highlighting or underlining. Candidates must **not** refer to editors' notes/explanatory notes; they must use an elastic band or clip to separate these sections from the main text where possible.

Description of questions

Section A

Assessment objectives	L1, L2, L3, L4
Task	For each text in this section there will be an extended passage taken from the text followed by a single question. This will not be a context passage (the location of the passage is given) but a stimulus to allow candidates to bring a focus to their answer. Candidates are asked to comment on particular aspects of the passage and/or to indicate how the passage reflects the book as a whole. The recommended response length is approximately 400–500 words.
Total marks	20 marks

Section B

Assessment objectives	L1, L2, L3, L4
Task	For each text there is a choice of two questions focusing on issues central to the text. Candidates are expected to display detailed knowledge of the text and to show awareness of how the author conveys the message of the work. The recommended response length is approximately 400–500 words.
Total marks	20 marks

Set texts

Set texts regularly rotate on the syllabus and may change from one year of examination to the next. Before you begin teaching, check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their exam.

Students may use any edition of the set texts provided it is not an abridged or simplified version.

Set texts for examination in 2025

Section A

Jean Racine	<i>Britannicus</i>
George Sand	<i>Indiana</i>
Molière	<i>Le Misanthrope</i>

Section B

Gaël Faye	<i>Petit Pays</i>
Fatou Diome	<i>Le Ventre de l'Atlantique</i>
Romain Gary	<i>La Promesse de l'aube</i>

Set texts for examination in 2026

Section A

Jean Racine	<i>Britannicus</i>
George Sand	<i>Indiana</i>
Molière	<i>Le Misanthrope</i>

Section B

Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt	<i>Oscar et la dame rose</i>
Fatou Diome	<i>Le Ventre de l'Atlantique</i>
Romain Gary	<i>La Promesse de l'aube</i>

Set texts for examination in 2027

Section A

Albert Camus	<i>La Chute</i>
George Sand	<i>Indiana</i>
Molière	<i>Le Misanthrope</i>

Section B

Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt	<i>Oscar et la dame rose</i>
Maylis de Kerangal	<i>Réparer les vivants</i>
Romain Gary	<i>La Promesse de l'aube</i>

Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exam. The table below includes command words which may be used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

This is a generic list for Cambridge International A Level Languages. Due to differences in formation, structure and usage between languages, some of these command words might not appear in the assessment for this particular language.

Command word	What it means
Analyse Analysez	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them
Comment Commentez	give an informed opinion
Compare Comparez	identify/comment on similarities and/or differences
Consider Considérez	review and respond to given information
Describe Décrivez	state the points of a topic/give characteristics and main features
Discuss Discutez de	write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way
Evaluate Évaluez	judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something
Examine Examinez	investigate closely, in detail
Explain Expliquez	set out purposes or reasons/make the relationships between things clear/say why and/or how and support with relevant evidence
Give Donnez	produce an answer from a given source or recall/memory
Identify Identifiez	name/select/recognise
Justify Justifiez	support a case with evidence/argument
State Indiquez	express in clear terms
Suggest Sugérez	apply knowledge and understanding to situations where there are a range of valid responses in order to make proposals/put forward considerations

In addition, phrases such as *Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous d'accord ?* or *Qu'est-ce que vous pensez ?* may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus.

List of grammar and structures

The list below is not exhaustive. Examples are given to indicate what could be covered.

Articles	definite	<i>le, la, l', les</i> with parts of body, e.g. <i>j'ai levé la main</i> with titles, ranks, etc. e.g. <i>le roi Henri</i> with <i>de</i> to become <i>du</i> ; with <i>à</i> to become <i>au</i> with geographical locations, e.g. <i>J'adore la France !</i>
	indefinite	omission with jobs, etc. e.g. <i>ma mère est médecin</i>
	partitive	<i>du, de la, de l', des</i> <i>de</i> after expressions of quantity; <i>la plupart/encore des</i> <i>de</i> after negative verb forms <i>de</i> before plural adjective preceding noun
Nouns	gender singular and plural forms formation (nominalisation)	e.g. <i>lancer/lancement ; grand/grandeur</i>
Adjectives	agreement and position possessive demonstrative interrogative exclamatory indefinite comparative regular forms comparative irregular forms superlative regular forms superlative irregular forms use of adjectives as nouns used followed by a preposition	<i>mon, ma, mes, etc.</i> <i>ce, cet, cette, ces</i> <i>quel, quelle, quels, quelles ?</i> e.g. <i>quel beau temps !/que j'étais heureux !</i> e.g. <i>autre, chaque, n'importe quel, plusieurs, quelques</i> e.g. <i>aussi, moins, plus, pas si ... que</i> e.g. <i>meilleur, pire</i> e.g. <i>le/la plus ..., le/la moins ...</i> e.g. <i>le/la meilleur(e), le/la pire, le/la moindre</i> e.g. <i>les jeunes, les Français, les malades</i> e.g. <i>prêt à, heureux de</i>
Adverbs	formation regular formation irregular time and place interrogative common adverbial phrases comparative regular forms comparative irregular forms superlative regular forms superlative irregular quantifiers and intensifiers inversion after some adverbs	ending in <i>-ment, -mment, ément</i> e.g. <i>bien, mal, gentiment</i> e.g. <i>aujourd'hui, demain, ici, là-bas</i> e.g. <i>combien, comment, où, quand, depuis quand ?</i> e.g. <i>de temps en temps</i> e.g. <i>aussi, moins, plus, pas si ... que</i> e.g. <i>mieux</i> e.g. <i>le/la plus ..., le/la moins ...</i> e.g. <i>le mieux</i> e.g. <i>assez, beaucoup plus/moins, bien, fort, (un) peu</i> e.g. <i>peut-être</i>

Pronouns	subject personal	e.g. <i>je, tu</i> , including <i>on</i>	
	object direct and indirect	position and order use of <i>y</i> and <i>en</i>	
	reflexive	<i>me, te, se</i> , etc.	
	demonstrative	e.g. <i>ça, cela, celui, -ci, -là, de, qui/que/dont</i>	
	interrogative	e.g. <i>qui ? que ? qu'est-ce que/qui ? lequel ? qui est-ce qui/que ? de/à qui parles-tu ? de quoi parles-tu ?</i>	
	relative	e.g. <i>qui, que, dont, où, ce qui/que, lequel, auquel</i>	
	emphasis	e.g. <i>ce qui est important, c'est que</i>	
	disjunctive	e.g. <i>moi, toi, lui, elle, soi</i> , etc./ <i>moi/moi-même</i> , etc. after prepositions, e.g. <i>chez nous</i> emphasis, e.g. <i>moi, je n'aime pas</i> with positive imperatives, e.g. <i>donnez-moi</i>	
	possessive	e.g. <i>le mien, la mienne</i> , etc.	
	indefinite	e.g. <i>quelque chose, quelqu'un, chacun(e), certain(e)(s)</i>	
	<i>Il est</i> and <i>c'est</i>	e.g. <i>il est possible de/que ... oui c'est possible/C'est un chien ; il est beau</i>	
	Verbs	regular and irregular forms	
		agreement with subject	
modes of address		<i>tu, vous</i>	
forms and use of reflexives			
negative forms and use		e.g. <i>ne ... pas, ne ... personne, ne ... jamais, ne ... que</i>	
interrogative forms – inversion		e.g. <i>veux-tu ?</i>	
imperatives		formation pronouns with imperatives, e.g. <i>lève-toi/ne te lève pas</i> use of infinitive in official notices, etc.	
impersonal verbs		e.g. <i>il faut, il reste, il semble que, il s'agit de</i>	
indicative tenses: formation and use		present, immediate future, future, conditional, imperfect, perfect, pluperfect, future perfect, conditional perfect, past historic	
compound tenses with <i>être</i>			
agreement of past participle		including preceding direct objects	
present participle		including use after <i>en/tout en</i>	
past participle use		e.g. <i>une fois arrivés, ils .../après avoir fini, ils ...</i>	
verbs governing the infinitive, including <i>à</i> and <i>de</i> + infinitive		e.g. <i>aimer faire</i> <i>aider/encourager quelqu'un à faire</i> <i>décider/essayer de faire</i> <i>empêcher quelqu'un de faire</i> <i>permettre/interdire à quelqu'un de faire</i> <i>apprendre à quelqu'un à faire</i>	
modal verbs		e.g. <i>vouloir, devoir, pouvoir, savoir</i>	
verbs taking indirect object	e.g. <i>nuire à, obéir à, ressembler à</i>		
verbs taking <i>de</i> before object	e.g. <i>changer de, manquer de, se souvenir de</i>		

continued

Verbs (continued)	use of <i>depuis</i>	also: <i>il y a/voilà ... que</i>
	use of <i>venir de</i>	
	will/shall/would/should	you will win (future tense) will you help me?/she would not reply (<i>vouloir</i>) I should leave now (<i>devoir</i>) in August, we would (used to) go abroad (imperfect)
	passive voice formation (all tenses)	also: avoidance by use of <i>on</i> or a noun or a reflexive
	subjunctive mood present and perfect tense	after verbs of wishing, fearing, emotion, judgement, possibility, obligation, doubt, etc. after various conjunctions, e.g. <i>bien que/pour que/sans que</i>
	dependent infinitives	e.g. <i>faire construire, laisser passer</i> after verbs of seeing, hearing and feeling
	use of infinitive	e.g. after <i>sans, pour/afin de, au lieu de, avant de vouloir, c'est pouvoir</i>
	inversion after speech	e.g. « ... », <i>a-t-il dit</i>
	indirect/reported speech	tenses used
	comparative constructions	e.g. <i>il vaut mieux rester que de partir</i>
Conjunctions	co-ordinating	e.g. <i>car, donc, ensuite, et, mais, ou, ou bien, puis</i>
	subordinating conjunctions	e.g. <i>quand, où, parce que, si, puisque, comme, lorsque</i> tenses used with <i>quand, dès que</i> , etc. ('logical future') tenses used with <i>si</i>
Prepositions	place	e.g. <i>chez, entre, devant, à côté de, près de, en face de</i>
	time	e.g. <i>avant, après, pendant, pour dans/en six mois</i>
	movement	e.g. <i>jusqu'à, vers</i>
	other	e.g. <i>contre, malgré, sans, sauf, selon</i>
	with various verbs	e.g. <i>penser à/de, croire à/en, jouer à/de</i>
<i>de</i> following indefinites	e.g. <i>rien de plus simple, quelque chose de nouveau</i>	
Number	all cardinals and ordinals	e.g. <i>un, deux ; premier, deuxième</i>
Quantity	expressions	e.g. <i>assez, trop, demi, moitié, peu, un peu, tant, autant</i>
Time	dates, years, time	including 24-hour clock
Other	<i>tout</i>	used as an adjective, noun and adverb
	<i>toujours</i>	used to mean always, continuation, still, at any rate
	dimensions	also distance, price, rate

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have completed a course in French equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE or Cambridge O Level French. We anticipate that candidates starting this course are working at a level equivalent to at least B1 level of the CEFR.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International A Level syllabuses to require about 360 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International A Level. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to an administrative zone. Each zone has a specific timetable.

You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

You can enter candidates in the June exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge AICE

Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level. It allows schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge AICE at www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has a copy of this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make your entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Retakes and carrying forward marks

Candidates can retake Cambridge International A Level as many times as they want to. Information on retake entries is at www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes

Please note: the new Cambridge International AS Level French Language 8028 and Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature 9898 are separate qualifications. Candidates cannot carry forward their Cambridge International AS Level French Language 8028 results to the new Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature 9898.

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series.

Language

This syllabus is available in English only. The assessment materials are in French.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

Cambridge International works to avoid direct or indirect discrimination. We develop and design syllabuses and assessment materials to maximise inclusivity for candidates of all national, cultural or social backgrounds and candidates with protected characteristics; these protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability, religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity. In addition, the language and layout used are designed to make our materials as accessible as possible. This gives all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding and helps to minimise the requirement to make reasonable adjustments during the assessment process.

Access arrangements

Access arrangements (including modified papers) are the principal way in which Cambridge International complies with our duty, as guided by the UK Equality Act (2010), to make 'reasonable adjustments' for candidates with special educational needs (SEN), disability, illness or injury. Where a candidate would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a candidate with no SEN, disability, illness or injury, we may be able to agree pre-examination access arrangements. These arrangements help a candidate by minimising accessibility barriers and maximising their opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding in an assessment.

Important:

- Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working at school; this is in line with the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- For Cambridge International to approve an access arrangement, we will need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment, involves reasonable cost and timeframe and does not affect the security and integrity of the assessment.
- Availability of access arrangements should be checked by centres at the start of the course. Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Please contact us at the start of the course to find out if we are able to approve an arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.
- Some access arrangements are not allowed in this syllabus because they affect the assessment objectives:
 - candidates are not allowed to use voice-activated software to dictate their written work
 - candidates are not allowed to use word processing technology which uses word prediction and/or phrase prompting
 - candidates are not allowed to use human readers.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades A*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International A Level. A* is the highest and E is the lowest grade.

‘Ungraded’ means that the candidate’s performance did not meet the standard required for the lowest grade (E). ‘Ungraded’ is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

On the statement of results and certificates, Cambridge International A Level is shown as General Certificate of Education, GCE Advanced Level (GCE A Level).

School feedback: ‘Cambridge International A Levels are the ‘gold standard’ qualification. They are based on rigorous, academic syllabuses that are accessible to students from a wide range of abilities yet have the capacity to stretch our most able.’

Feedback from: Director of Studies, Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand

How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

Cambridge International A Level

Assessment at Cambridge International A Level has two purposes:

- 1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus, to the levels described in the grade descriptions.

- 2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career.

Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give an indication of the standards of achievement candidates awarded particular grades are likely to show. Weakness in one aspect of the examination may be balanced by a better performance in some other aspect.

Grade descriptions for Cambridge International A Level French Language & Literature will be published after the first assessment of the A Level in 2025.

Changes to this syllabus for 2025, 2026 and 2027

The syllabus is new for first examination in 2025.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

Changes to syllabus code	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new code for this syllabus is 9898. This syllabus replaces Cambridge International A Level French (9716).• The last examination series for Cambridge International A Level French (9716) is June 2024.
Changes to syllabus content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The list of topic areas has been revised. It is the same as the topic list for AS Level French Language (8028).• We have provided some examples of what could be included in the topic areas, but these are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive.• The sub-skills to be taught are identified and listed under the relevant skills in the subject content section.• We have introduced a list of grammar and structures. The list is intended as a guide for teachers to assist in the planning of lessons and schemes of work. It is not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive.
Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The assessment objectives (AOs) have been revised.• The structure of the assessment is different from A Level French 9716.• Paper 1 – Reading has been updated. The test will consist of five exercises including multiple-choice, matching and gap fill exercises. Candidates will respond on a separate answer sheet.• Paper 2 – Writing has been updated. Candidates respond to two writing tasks.• Paper 3 – Literature has been updated. Candidates respond to two set texts, one from Section A and one from Section B. There will be a choice of six set texts.• The mark schemes for Paper 2 – Writing and Paper 3 – Literature have been revised.

In addition to reading the syllabus, you should refer to the updated specimen papers. The specimen papers will help your students become familiar with exam requirements and command words in questions. The specimen mark schemes explain how students should answer questions to meet the assessment objectives.

School feedback: ‘While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.’

Feedback from: Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We are always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us at **info@cambridgeinternational.org** with the subject heading: Digital accessibility. If you need this document in a different format, contact us and supply your name, email address and requirements and we will respond within 15 working days.

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