

3.3 FRENCH (501)

In the year 2022, KCSE French Examination was tested in the following three papers;

Paper 1 (501/1) – tested Listening Comprehension, Dictation and Creative Writing.

Paper 2 (501/2) – tested Reading Comprehension, Grammar and Functional Writing.

Paper 3 (501/3) – tested Reading Aloud, Exposé and Conversation. This is an Oral Paper.

CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows the performance of candidates in French (501) in the years 2018 to 2022.

Table 15: Candidates' Overall Performance in French for the years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022

Year	Paper	Candidature	Max Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2018	1	3,697	45	19.59	8.06
	2	3,697	30	11.6	5.3
	3	3,705	25	19.28	3.9
	Overall	3,706	100	50.4	17.26
2019	1	3,901	45	22	7.76
	2	3,901	30	8	5.08
	3	3,899	25	19	3.81
	Overall	3,901	100	50.49	15.26
2020	1	4,225	45	23.58	7.59
	2	4,225	30	13.32	5.73
	3	4,225	25	20.02	3.53
	Overall	4,225	100	56.66	15.46
2021	1	5,048	35	14.43	5.85
	2	5,045	40	17.86	6.81
	3	5,036	25	20.37	3.3
	Overall	5,049	100	52.59	14.46
2022	1	5,292	35	15.94	5.83
	2	5,292	40	18.00	6.9
	3	5,298	25	20.73	3.26
	Overall	5,299	100	54.63	14.33

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- (i) There was an increase in candidature by **250** from the previous year.
- (ii) There was an increase in the overall performance from a mean score of **52.59** to **54.63**
- (iii) All the three papers posted positive deviations in the mean scores by **1.51**, **0.14** and **0.36** respectively.

3.3.2 French Paper 1 (501/1)

This paper consists of three sections:

Section 1: LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Passages 1 - 4

This section deals with different situations such as advertisements, interviews, news items, etc. and is marked out of 15. The candidates are required to listen twice to the recorded material with in-built pauses then answer the questions. This year the paper sampled the following:

QUESTION/ PASSAGE	TESTED	WEAKNESSES
1.	Knowledge of nationalities, months of the year/dates and professions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candidates were unable to give duration.• Confusing adjectives with names of people.
2.	Knowledge of different types of foods in French, quantities, conjugation of RE verbs and changing nouns to verbs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inability to change nouns into verbs.• Use of English verbs for French foods.• Wrong spelling.
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usage/knowledge of technological terms.• Use of “infinitif”.	Candidates were not familiar with the terms used and required for example “téléviseur”.
4.	Knowledge parts of the body, the alphabet and types of food in French.	The candidates were unable to differentiate between some letters such as G/J and D/B.

Advice to teachers

- Teach students how to give duration while teaching dates.
- Teach *nominalisation*, *les faux amis* and transparent words like *banane/banana*.
- Teachers should expose students to shapes, machines/equipment, colours and adjectives.
- Teach the alphabet, *l'infinitif* and *l'obligation*.
- Emphasize correct conjugation of all groups of verbs.

Section 2: Dictation

Dictation consists of a passage recorded on a Compact Disc (CD), with various punctuation marks and is **marked out of 5 marks**. The passage is read **three times**. The first time it is read through for the candidates to acquaint themselves with the text. The second time, it is read with pauses calculated to enable the candidates to write down what they have heard. The third and the last time, it is read without pauses to enable candidates to make any necessary changes in their work.

Weaknesses

- Inability to put accents where required.
- Wrong conjugation of verbs.
- Wrong punctuation marks.
- Difficulties in subject-verb agreement.
- Inability to identify liaison used in particular parts of the sentence.

Advice to teachers

- Expose students to more listening/audio stimuli.
- Emphasize more on grammatical aspects.
- Encourage students to do extensive reading.

Section 3: Creative Writing

This section is marked out of **15** and requires candidates to write a composition in French of between **150** and **180** words. Candidates were expected to interpret the instruction and write a composition based on the described situation. They were to choose and write one composition on either of the following situations:

6. (a) We heard noises. My friends rushed towards...

Or

(b) It was my last chance to...

Weaknesses

- Candidates had problems linking the given situation to their story.
- Confusion of the tenses especially imparfait, plus-que-parfait and passé composé.
- Cramming of stories from other texts and presenting them as their own.
- Inability to correctly interpret the instruction.
- Lack of vocabulary to develop the story.

Advice to teachers

- Encourage students to write more compositions and emphasize on originality.
- Discourage candidates from cramming compositions and encourage creativity.
- Emphasize on correct tenses and spellings

3.3.3 French Paper 2 (501/2)

This paper consists of 3 sections.

Section 1: Reading Comprehension

This section is marked out of **15** and consists of a number of passages which the students are to read, understand and correctly answer questions based on the content of the passages.

Weaknesses

- Too much lifting of long sentences by candidates which distorts answers.
- Candidates' inability to interpret vocabularies used in the passage so as to provide synonyms.

Advice to teachers

- Learners should practice paraphrasing.
- Encourage extensive reading among learners so that they can develop their vocabulary.

Section 2: Grammar

This section is marked out of **15** and tests French grammatical aspects such as the use of pronouns, prepositions, nouns, adjectives, verbs and modes.

Questions 4, 5 & 6

QUESTION	TESTED	WEAKNESSES
4	Rewriting of sentences while applying grammatical structures learnt	Candidates' inability to manipulate grammatical structures.
5	Filling in blanks with one word to form a coherent passage.	Candidates' inability to link morpho-syntactical elements such as prepositions and conjunctions.
6	Matching items to form semantically coherent sentences	Fairly performed

Advice to teachers

- Integrate Grammar when teaching Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading.
- Encourage extensive reading by learners to enhance their vocabulary.

Section 3: Functional Writing

This section is marked out of **10** and requires candidates to write a composition in French of between **120** and **150** words. Candidates were to pick between writing a programme or an official letter as follows:

7 (a) You are organising a party in your home. Prepare a program.

Or

(b) The condition of the French room is not good. Write a letter to your teacher asking for action.

Weakness

Failure by some candidates to number their pick out of the two options.

Advice to teachers

Emphasize on formats for all functional writings.

3.3.4 French Paper 3 (501/3)

This is a face to face examination administered by assessors. It tests the candidates' knowledge of communicative and grammatical skills as well as vocabulary. It also tests their ability to understand the input stimulus and instructions and respond by using their skills in an oral context. The paper has 3 sections which are marked out of 25.

Section 1: Reading Aloud

This section is marked out of 5 and requires candidates to read a passage aloud in French while paying attention to pronunciation, liaison, rhythm, articulation, punctuation and intonation. It could be a dialogue, a monologue or a description. Both cards are of equal difficulty and more or less the same length.

Weaknesses

- In card A, some candidates had difficulties in having liaison when pronouncing word patterns like “*quelques années*” and words like *obligé, dehors, frustré, façon, regard, and accès*. In card B, candidates had difficulties in having liaison when reading word combinations like *plusieurs années, c'est-à-dire, est assuré* and pronouncing words like *pendant, allant, compose, magique*. Others could not pronounce letters like *M, Y, B, K*.

Advice to teachers

- Expose learners to the right pronunciation of words from Form One.
- Emphasis should be on phonetics, right pronunciation of words, liaison.
- Integrate poems and songs while teaching French.

Section 2: Exposé

The section is marked out of 5 and requires candidates to pick a card at random out of the 4 provided. They were to analyse and synthesize their ideas in a coherent and logical manner with appropriate vocabulary and expressions. Candidates were to do oral presentation on a given topic while paying attention to fluency, relevance, intonation, articulation and coherence. They were given two minutes to talk on the topic of choice. See the table below on the theme contained in each card;

CARD	THEME
A	Health and environmental issues.
B	The school and related activities.
C	The socialisation aspect of humanity.
D	Media and information technology.

The English translation of the task contained in each card:

CARD	TASK
A	Domestic animals are more valuable than wild animals. Discuss.
B	School holidays are necessary. What do you think?
C	Certain places are dangerous for adolescents. Discuss.
D	Describe your preferred film.

Weaknesses

CARD	WEAKNESSES
CARD A	Some candidates had difficulty in understating the word <i>valeur</i> and could not compare the two types of animal.
CARD B	Some candidates could not understand the meaning of <i>les vacances</i> .
CARD C	Some candidates could not understand the meaning of the word <i>endroits</i> .
CARD D	Some candidates had difficulty with the keyword <i>Decrivez</i> . Some just mentioned a film with no details.

Advice to teachers

- Expose learners to French clubs and poems.
- Enable learners to participate in French days and French music festivals.

Section 3: Conversations

Candidates were required to engage in a conversation in French with the assessor based on a minimum of 4 topics that are in the syllabus such as school life, family, technology, environment, transport, hobbies and tourism.

Advice to teachers

- Emphasise on communication skills by exposing learners to French drama, poems and French days.
- Use communicative approach when teaching French.