

IM SYLLABUS (2026)

FRENCH

IM 12

SYLLABUS

**French
Syllabus****IM 12**(Available in September)
Oral (10 mins) + 1 Paper (3 hrs)**AIMS**

- (1) This syllabus assumes knowledge of the subject at SEC level. It aims to consolidate this knowledge and extend it to include more advanced concepts which are dealt with in a broad manner. Most of these new concepts are included to provide a general and coherent view of the subject and they will not be treated with the same rigour and at the same depth as in the Advanced Level course in the subject.
- (2) This syllabus therefore aims at encouraging students to:
 - (a) understand the spoken and written forms of the language from a variety of registers
 - (b) be able to read coherently and articulate French linguistic sounds and French prosody in a context
 - (c) communicate clearly, confidently and as accurately as possible both in spoken and written French
 - (d) increase their interest in a greater awareness of French culture and civilisation
 - (e) appreciate French literature through the introduction of an integral text
 - (f) take further interest in France and French-speaking countries, French language, literature, culture, civilisation and *francophonie*.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The examination will test the candidate's ability to:

- (a) respond to the language spoken at normal speed
- (b) communicate effectively in the spoken language by exchanging ideas, opinions and information
- (c) respond to written language by showing an understanding of French and by using the correct grammar and syntax to express opinions and ideas
- (d) identify the main ideas in a text and reproduce them correctly and succinctly
- (e) demonstrate knowledge and understanding of aspects of French civilisation and culture
- (f) demonstrate a critical appreciation of an integral text.

SUBJECT CONTENT**Introduction**

One written paper is set. An oral examination will also be held for all candidates. All instructions will be given in French. All passages are non-literary in style and their content is never specialised. Passages may be descriptive, narrative, argumentative, or any combination of these forms.

Examination*The Oral Examination*

The oral examination (25% of the global mark) is of 10 minutes duration. It will be divided into two parts: a reading passage in French, and a dialogue entirely in French.

Reading passage (10 marks): Each candidate will be allowed a short time to prepare the reading passage (190-210 words) which will be taken from modern and contemporary French. The objective of this exercise is to test the candidate's articulation of French linguistic sounds and French prosody in a context.

Dialogue (15 marks): The first part of the dialogue will consist of two questions set on the reading passage (5marks). The objective of this exercise is to test the candidate's ability to understand the passage. This exercise will be followed by free conversation (10 marks). The conversation is intended to test the candidate's ability to communicate in good spoken French.

The Written Examination

The written examination (75% of the global mark) is of 3 hours duration. This paper will consist of:

- (a) Free composition (25 marks). Candidates will be required to write 230-250 words on a set topic. Topics may be of the narrative, descriptive and argumentative types. Candidates may also be asked to write a letter, a dialogue, or draw up a report.
- (b) *Contraction de texte* (20 marks) – a passage of modern French of 250-300 words will be set. Candidates have to summarise the set passage to a third of its length. The passage will be non-literary in style and non-specialised in content. The passage will be descriptive or narrative or argumentative or any combination of these types.
- (c) Prescribed texts (15 marks): A question (with one alternative), requiring an answer in essay form, will be set in French on each of the two prescribed texts. Candidates must answer only one

question. Answers may be given in French, Maltese or English. No extra credit will be given for answers in French. In their answers candidates are expected to show a knowledge of the text and of the author.

The following are the prescribed texts:

Philippe Delerm, *L'Envol*, édition Hachette, Bibliocollège, 2009.

Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt, *Oscar et la dame rose*, Magnard Classiques et contemporains, 2001.

(d) Civilisation (15 marks)

Prescribed text: Denis C. Meyer, *Clés pour la France*, Hachette, 2010, pages 12, *Café et croissant*; 24, *Macarons*; 38, *Abbé Pierre*; 44, *Les Bleus*; 68, *Châteaux de la Loire*; 76, *Jeanne d'Arc*; 102, *Métro, boulot, dodo*; 112, *Tour Eiffel*; 130, *Festival de Cannes*; 146, *Tintin*; 160, *Chiens et chats*; 170, *Salutations*.

Eight questions, of which six have to be answered will be set. The questions will be based on the *Lire* section of each theme. Other exercises such as multiple choice questions, *exercices d'association*, meaning of *sigles* and exercises of the *Vrai ou Faux?* type may also be included. This exercise is compulsory and must be answered in French.

The use of a monolingual dictionary is permitted.

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

The examination consists of one three-hour written paper and an oral examination. All instructions are given in French.

The Written Examination (75 marks)

The paper consists of a Free Composition which carries 25 marks. 4/5 topics will be given and candidates will be required to write 230-250 words on a topic of their choice.

In the second exercise, *contraction de texte* (20 marks), candidates will be required to summarise a passage to about a third of its length.

In the third exercise, candidates will be required to answer in essay form in French, Maltese or English one out of 4 questions based on the two literary texts in the syllabus. This question carries 15 marks.

The last exercise which carries 15 marks is based on aspects of French civilisation set in the syllabus. Eight questions, of which six have to be answered will be set. The questions will be based on the *Lire* section of each theme. Exercises, such as multiple choice questions or *exercices d'association*, etc. meant to test the candidates' knowledge of French civilisation may be set. The marks allotted for each question will be indicated in the examination paper. Other details regarding the written paper may be found under the heading Subject Content.

The Oral Examination (25 marks)

The oral examination consists of a reading passage in French carrying 10 marks, followed by two questions set on the reading passage (5 marks), and a free conversation (10 marks). On entering the examination room, candidates will be asked to draw two topics of conversation out of five. They will be asked to choose one of these two topics; the topic of their choice will be the subject of the conversation exercise. They will then be given the reading passage and will be allowed about 10 minutes during which time they will prepare both the reading passage and the topic they would have chosen for the conversation. Spontaneous corrections are accepted. Free conversation will be based on topics of a general interest within the reach of a candidate of this level. Candidates are not tested on their general knowledge, but on their ability to carry on a conversation fluently without errors of grammar and pronunciation. Other details concerning the oral examination may be found under the heading Subject Content.

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Grade A is awarded to candidates who

(a) in the oral examination

- are able to respond readily and to speak fluently
- are able to develop their answers and to express themselves in idiomatic and correct French
- demonstrate accurate pronunciation and intonation and only occasionally hesitate or make some slight mistake

(b) in the written examination

- communicate ideas and information clearly and effectively
- possess an adequate range of vocabulary, idioms and syntax, except for some minor errors
- show a clear understanding of the written texts and an ability to identify the main arguments and make a summary of them without repeating the vocabulary or construction in the text

- demonstrate a general understanding of the literary text and an ability to reproduce its main arguments in a concise form by focusing on the topic in question and through clear, concise and logical arguments supported by relevant references and quotations
- demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the civilisation topics.

Grade C is awarded to candidates who

(a) in the oral examination

- respond by showing total understanding but find some difficulty in expressing themselves
- show lack of confidence due to restricted vocabulary or interference from other languages

(b) in the written examination

- communicate ideas and information with limited imagination and vitality but adequately
- demonstrate a limited knowledge of French grammar and syntax which does not constitute gross errors
- demonstrate a general understanding of the written texts and an ability to reproduce the main arguments in a concise form though some difficulties may arise mainly because of restricted vocabulary
- demonstrate a limited knowledge of the literary text by failing to discuss important arguments relevant to the question and/or by not supporting arguments by references and quotations
- demonstrate a limited knowledge of the civilisation topics.

Grade E is awarded to candidates who

(a) in the oral examination

- are hesitant, lack fluency, and communication is restricted with the result that their language becomes unintelligible
- make basic errors of grammar and syntax
- demonstrate that their pronunciation and intonation is influenced by interference from other languages

(b) in the written examination

- communicate ideas and information in a rather confused manner and with some repetition
- demonstrate a very limited knowledge of French grammar and syntax and make basic errors
- make repeated orthographical errors
- demonstrate a very limited vocabulary which often leads to repetition and shows interference from other languages
- do not plan their literary essay and lose sight of the question, sometimes reproducing memorised material
- do not support their literary arguments by any references or quotations
- demonstrate very limited knowledge of the civilisation topics, often confusing one topic with another.